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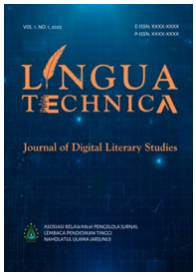

Authorship after automation: originality, attribution, and creative responsibility in AI-assisted literary production

Lam H. Tran [1*]

[1] English Lecturer, Air Force Academy, Vietnam
** Corresponding author. Email: lamth.1985@gmail.com*

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A B S T R A C T

Background: Generative artificial intelligence has unsettled conventional literary authorship by separating textual production from creative control, public attribution, and accountability across writers, platforms, publishers, and institutions. **Objective:** This study examines how originality, credit, disclosure, and responsibility are configured in publicly documented cases and governance materials concerning AI-assisted literary production. **Method:** A qualitative multiple-case documentary analysis was conducted on 27 verified public records, comprising primary, secondary, and contextual sources coded through matrices of creative control, attribution–disclosure alignment, and responsibility. **Results:** Stronger authorship claims appeared where human actors directed narrative purpose, selected alternatives, transformed generated material, and authorised publication. Attribution was most credible when disclosure specified the extent, function, timing, and audience of AI involvement, whereas delayed, private, or absent disclosure weakened correspondence between contribution and credit. Responsibility was distributed across authors, publishers, platforms, professional bodies, and model providers according to their control over production, classification, access, remuneration, and enforcement. **Implication:** Literary governance should align authorship claims and accountability obligations with demonstrable contribution, institutional capacity, and remedial power rather than with bylines or tool use alone. **Novelty:** This study offers an integrated, process-based framework that distinguishes textual generation, transformative originality, attributional transparency, and layered creative responsibility within one comparative, publicly available corpus.

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INTRODUCTION

AI-assisted literary production has moved from experimental practice into publishing, prize culture, and platform governance, making authorship a problem. Documented cases illustrate this shift: Stephen Marche's *Death of an Author* was promoted as approximately 95% machine-written and 5% human-written, while Rie Kudan reported that about 5% of her prize-winning novel reproduced ChatGPT sentences verbatim. Professional concern is visible. A Society of Authors survey reported that more than eight in ten respondents believed generative AI devalued human-made creative work, while Amazon KDP distinguishes AI-generated from AI-assisted content for disclosure purposes (Pushkin Industries, 2023; Agence France-Presse, 2024; Society of Authors, 2024; Amazon KDP, 2026). These developments matter because attribution, originality, and responsibility are redistributed across prompts, models, editors, platforms, and publishers rather than concentrated in one writer. Research therefore addresses conflict over who controls expression, receives credit, and remains answerable when automated language enters literary circulation (Formosa et al., 2024; Samuelson, 2023).

Previous scholarship has established key foundations. Studies of human–AI writing have examined perceived authorship, ownership, disclosure, and creative agency (Draxler et al., 2023; Formosa et al., 2024), while copyright research has clarified the centrality of human intellectual contribution in AI-assisted works (Hugenholtz & Quintais, 2021). Experimental research further suggests that generative AI may enhance individual creativity while narrowing collective diversity, complicating claims of improvement (Doshi & Hauser, 2023). Other studies have investigated attribution judgments in co-creation and audience evaluations of AI-generated writing (He et al., 2025). However, this literature remains fragmented across law, psychology, HCI, publishing ethics, and literary studies. What remains insufficiently examined is how creative control, transformative contribution, public attribution, and responsibility operate together across documented literary-production processes. This study addresses that gap through a corpus of creator disclosures, policies, contracts, platform rules, and institutional statements, thereby connecting production evidence with the public and institutional representation of authorship.

This study investigates how authorship is reorganised when literary production incorporates generative systems across ideation, drafting, selection, revision, and publication. It asks four questions. First, how are human and computational contributions distributed across production processes? Second, how is originality justified when generated language is retained, transformed, rearranged, or minimally edited? Third, how do writers, publishers, platforms, and institutions represent contribution through bylines, disclosure statements, certification schemes, and eligibility rules? Fourth, who is assigned responsibility for copyright risk, factual error, stylistic imitation, misleading attribution, and reader trust? These questions require a process-oriented account of authorship rather than a binary distinction between human and machine production. Accordingly, this study combines creative-control analysis, attribution–disclosure alignment, and responsibility mapping to examine whether authorship claims correspond with documented contributions. This design permits comparison across literary cases and institutional settings without treating descriptive patterns as causal effects, consistent with multidimensional approaches to human–AI authorship (Hutson, 2025).

This study advances the provisional argument that authorship after automation should be assessed through four dimensions: decisive creative control, transformative contribution, attributional transparency, and acceptance of responsibility. Here, textual generation alone does not establish authorship, but neither does machine assistance automatically dissolve human authorship. A defensible claim depends on whether human participants determine narrative direction, select among alternatives, reshape generated material, disclose relevant assistance, and remain answerable for publication consequences. This argument extends control-based legal approaches by incorporating process evidence and institutional representation, while refining collaborative models that sometimes treat co-creation as sufficient without examining accountability (Joo, 2026). Its implication is that literary authorship is becoming a layered and contested institutional status rather than a description of who typed the words. This study therefore tests whether contemporary practices support a differentiated model in which originality, credit, and responsibility may overlap, diverge, or become strategically separated across human and computational actors.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Authorship in AI-assisted

Authorship in AI-assisted literary production no longer denotes only the individual who physically composes sentences. Copyright-oriented scholarship generally reserves authorship for humans who exercise intellectual creation, expressive control, or meaningful selection (Hugenholtz & Quintais, 2021; Xiao, 2022; Samuelson, 2023). HCI and media studies, however, describe authorship more relationally, emphasizing interaction among writers, prompts, models, interfaces, and editorial decisions (Draxler et al., 2023; Formosa et al., 2024; Hutson, 2025). These perspectives differ in emphasis: legal approaches ask who qualifies for protection, whereas collaborative approaches ask how agency is distributed. This study treats authorship as a process-based claim publicly recognized by institutions.

Authorship can be operationalized through four interrelated indicators: initiation, control, transformation, and authorization. Initiation concerns who establishes narrative purpose; control concerns who directs plot, voice, and stylistic constraints; transformation concerns whether generated material is substantively revised; authorization concerns who approves publication and accepts attribution. Prompting alone may not demonstrate sufficient control, particularly when outputs remain largely unaltered (Mazzi, 2024; Militsyna, 2023; Fritz, 2025). Conversely, extensive selection, restructuring, and semantic redevelopment may strengthen human authorship claims. He et al. (2025) further show that credit judgments depend on perceived contribution. Accordingly, authorship requires evidence across production stages, not merely a final byline.

Originality

Originality is similarly contested because generative systems produce unfamiliar combinations without necessarily supplying human intentionality. Legal scholarship defines originality through independent human intellectual contribution rather than novelty (Hugenholtz & Quintais, 2021; Mazzi, 2024). Creativity research instead emphasizes novelty, usefulness, surprise, and transformation, allowing machine outputs to appear creative even when responsibility remains human (Garcia, 2024; Ismayilzada et al., 2024). Literary studies add another position, viewing originality as aesthetic reconfiguration within inherited conventions and digital forms (Prabowo & Asmarani, 2025; Oshiesh, 2025). This study therefore distinguishes textual novelty from authorial originality, reserving the latter for demonstrable human configuration, judgment, and revision.

Four indicators clarify originality in AI-assisted writing: conceptual novelty, transformative revision, contextual specificity, and stylistic distance. Conceptual novelty concerns whether a writer contributes an independent premise; transformative revision assesses structural or semantic change; contextual specificity evaluates grounded decisions; stylistic distance examines whether outputs imitate recognizable voices. Doshi and Hauser (2023) suggest AI can improve individual creativity while reducing collective diversity, exposing tension between novelty and systemic repetition. Studies of poetry and playwriting report differences between human and AI production without resolving authorship (Stańko-Kaczmarek et al., 2024; Elias et al., 2025). Originality should thus be coded as graduated transformation, not newness.

Creative responsibility

Creative responsibility concerns who must answer for decisions embodied in an AI-assisted literary work. Ethical scholarship anchors responsibility in human actors because systems cannot justify intentions, accept sanctions, or repair harm (Al-Kfairy et al., 2024; Formosa et al., 2024). Publishing research extends responsibility to institutions that establish disclosure, review, and attribution procedures (Moffatt & Hall, 2024; Yoo, 2025). Legal analyses distribute responsibility among authors, publishers, platforms, and model providers when copyright, training data, or misleading attribution is involved (Bayer, 2024; Senftleben, 2023). Responsibility is broader than authorship: a person may receive credit, while multiple institutions remain accountable for publication consequences.

Responsibility can be examined through bearer, domain, mechanism, and strength. Bearer identifies whether accountability rests with writers, publishers, platforms, editors, or developers. Domain specifies copyright, factual accuracy, stylistic imitation, disclosure, eligibility, labour, or reader trust. Mechanism

captures contracts, platform rules, certification, editorial review, litigation, and professional guidance. Strength distinguishes informal concern from enforceable obligation. Saxena et al. (2025) emphasize responsible attribution standards, while Wu et al. (2025) show that contribution distinctions shape judgments of credit. This study consequently adopts a differentiated framework: authorship concerns control, originality concerns transformation, and responsibility concerns answerability across human and institutional actors within literary production.

METHOD

This study examines 27 publicly accessible documents concerning AI-assisted literary production, comprising 14 primary, five secondary, and eight contextual records. Units of analysis are document-level statements and, where available, disclosed production processes involving prompting, generation, selection, revision, attribution, and publication. Primary materials include official policies, contracts, award rules, platform guidelines, creator disclosures, publisher statements, and an original literary publication. Secondary materials include reputable reportage, survey summaries, and professional market evidence, whereas contextual materials cover government reports, international guidance, industry positions, and Indonesian digital-literary scholarship. Table 1 presents corpus composition, while Table 2 specifies evidentiary functions across source categories and regions.

A qualitative multiple-case design was adopted because authorship claims emerge through heterogeneous production and institutional settings rather than a single event. This design supports comparison among creator accounts, publishing rules, platform classifications, professional standards, and copyright frameworks without implying causal relationships. Cases were treated as bounded documentary configurations, and complementary sources were retained only when they contributed distinct evidence about one production process or policy stream. Process-oriented comparison followed approaches that conceptualise human–AI writing as distributed but uneven collaboration (Formosa et al., 2024; Hutson, 2025).

Information was drawn from official government agencies, professional author organisations, publishing platforms, literary associations, publishers, reputable media, international institutions, and peer-reviewed scholarship. Core sources included the U.S. Copyright Office, Authors Guild, Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing, Writers Guild of America, Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers Association, Society of Authors, UK Government, European Commission, UNESCO, and International Publishers Association. Creator-level evidence included Vauhini Vara's published disclosure and Stephen Marche's publisher account and transcript interview. Source selection prioritised directness, institutional authority, traceability, and relevance to literary authorship. Secondary and contextual documents were used to interpret, not replace, primary evidence concerning production practices.

Data collection proceeded through structured searching, eligibility screening, metadata extraction, verification, and deduplication. Searches combined terms for AI-assisted writing, literary production, authorship, originality, attribution, disclosure, responsibility, and human-authored certification. Included documents had to be publicly accessible, attributable, relevant to at least one analytical dimension, and published between 2021 and 11 July 2026, except undated dynamic policies recorded by access date. Each item received a unique code and metadata covering title, creator, institution, date, region, document type, AI system, URL, context, and verification note. Duplicate syndicated reports, superseded policies, mirrored interviews, unverifiable claims, and full copyrighted literary documents were excluded entirely.

Analysis followed three sequential instruments. First, the Creative Control and Transformative Contribution Matrix coded production stage, controlling actor, human control, transformative intervention, and originality frame. Second, the Attribution–Disclosure Alignment Framework compared contribution evidence with disclosure status, audience, specificity, credit model, and attributional correspondence. Third, the Creative Responsibility and Accountability Matrix identified responsibility bearers, risk domains, accountability mechanisms, safeguards, and formalisation strength. Coding proceeded from verified excerpts to document-level categorisation, followed by cross-case comparison and analytic memoing. Consistent with responsible attribution research (He et al., 2025; Saxena et al., 2025), initial codes require independent review, reconciliation, and an auditable decision trail.

Table 1. Composition of the dataset

Code	Data type	Principal sources	Location	Period	Number	Main characteristics
AUTH-P001–P002	Primary regulatory documents	U.S. Copyright Office	United States	2023–2025	2	Human-authorship, copyrightability, creative control, and registration disclosure
AUTH-P003–P011	Primary institutional documents	Authors Guild, Amazon KDP, WGA, SFWA, Society of Authors	United States and United Kingdom	2023–2026	9	Contracts, publishing rules, award eligibility, certification, consent, and disclosure
AUTH-P012–P014	Primary production cases	*The Believer*, Pushkin Industries, The Creative Penn	United States and international	2021–2023	3	Original literary publication, creator disclosure, publisher account, and interview transcript
AUTH-S001–S002	Secondary media evidence	AFP/Taipei Times and Associated Press	Japan and United States	2023–2024	2	Reported creator disclosure and literary-field reportage
AUTH-S003–S005	Secondary professional evidence	Society of Authors and SFWA	United Kingdom and United States	2023–2025	3	Survey findings, consultation responses, and editorial-market evidence
AUTH-C001–C003	Contextual industry and government documents	Publishers Association and UK Government	United Kingdom	2024–2026	3	Licensing, remuneration, policy consultation, and post-consultation assessment
AUTH-C004–C007	Contextual governance documents	European Commission, UNESCO, International Publishers Association	European Union and international	2023–2025	4	Training transparency, copyright compliance, labelling, and litigation
AUTH-C008	Contextual scholarly document	*Lingua Technica*	Indonesia	2026	1	Algorithmic poetry, distributed authorship, and platform-mediated textuality
Total	Integrated corpus	Official, professional, literary, media, and scholarly sources	Six geographical categories	2021–2026	27	Authorship, originality, attribution, disclosure, and responsibility

Table 2. Evidentiary structure and analytical function

Evidence layer	Unit examined	Core variables	Analytical function	Validation procedure
Production evidence	Prompting, generation, selection, revision, and publication accounts	Production stage, controlling actor, human control, transformative intervention	Reconstruct distribution of creative agency	Compare creator, publisher, and textual disclosures
Attribution evidence	Bylines, acknowledgements, labels, award statements, and platform declarations	Disclosure status, audience, specificity, credit model	Assess correspondence between contribution and public credit	Link each code to a verified excerpt
Responsibility evidence	Contracts, policies, guidelines, and institutional statements	Responsibility bearer, risk domain, mechanism, safeguard	Map allocation and formalisation of accountability	Distinguish legal, contractual, professional, and ethical rules
Contextual evidence	Government reports, international guidance, and scholarly studies	Copyright, training transparency, cultural policy, digital textuality	Interpret institutional and theoretical environments	Use context to explain rather than substitute primary evidence
Visual and audiovisual evidence	Certification marks, page layouts, promotional images, and transcript-bearing audio	Image description, visual actor, symbol, colour, layout, timestamp, transcript	Examine visible authorship and authority cues	Retain only source-described or directly observable features

RESULTS

Creative control and transformative contribution in AI-assisted literary production

Creative control across the corpus was organised as a relation among production stage, controlling actor, transformative intervention, and originality frame. Classification was not reduced to a human-versus-machine distinction because several documents addressed legal thresholds, contractual allocation, market eligibility, certification, or platform governance rather than a completed literary work. Ten mutually exclusive subcategories were therefore constructed from coded records, while four broader configurations preserved differences between decisive human control, shared or curatorial control, absent or displaced control, and normative evidence without a case-level score. Frequencies refer to documents, not writers, works, or populations. Percentages use the full corpus of 27 records as denominator, ensuring that policy texts and production cases remain visible without being treated as equivalent empirical units.

Decisive human control accounted for ten documents, including seven regulatory or contractual thresholds, two certification or labelling schemes, and one human-majority production case. Shared or curatorial control appeared in five documents, most clearly in three disclosed co-writing cases. Vara stated, "I authored the sentences in bold and GPT-3 filled in the rest" (AUTH-P012), while Marche described legal authorship despite machine-produced wording (AUTH-P014). Platform-classified assistance and distributed algorithm–platform authorship each appeared once. One document recorded absent human control through automated submission volume, noting that "the sheer volume materially interferes with the running of these magazines" (AUTH-S005). Eleven documents supplied normative context without assigning a process-level control score, particularly through policy, licensing, provider-governance, and professional-position evidence.

Table 3. Creative-control and transformative-contribution configurations across the corpus

Main configuration	Subcategory	Operational indicator	Frequency	Percentage	Data variation	Verified textual evidence	Data codes
Decisive human control	Regulatory and contractual authorship thresholds	Human expression, revision, consent, credit, or eligibility remains decisive	7	25.9%	Regulatory guidance, copyright report, model clauses, professional guidance, labour rules, award rules, and author-rights policy	"Prompts alone do not provide sufficient human control"	AUTH-P001; AUTH-P002; AUTH-P003; AUTH-P004; AUTH-P007; AUTH-P009; AUTH-P010
	Human-origin certification and market labelling	Public authorship claim depends on text being written by a human	2	7.4%	Certification registry and professional labelling scheme	"The text of the book was written by a human and not generated by AI"	AUTH-P005; AUTH-P011
	Human-majority literary production	AI-generated language forms a limited, quantified part of a predominantly human work	1	3.7%	Reported creator disclosure concerning a prize-winning novel	"About 5 percent of the book quoted verbatim the sentences generated by AI"	AUTH-S001
Shared or curatorial control	Platform-classified assistance	Human publisher retains responsibility although AI assistance does not require platform disclosure	1	3.7%	Commercial self-publishing guideline	"You are not required to disclose AI-assisted content"	AUTH-P006
	Disclosed human–AI co-writing	Human initiation, prompting, selection, arrangement, and publication coexist with machine-generated wording	3	11.1%	Original literary publication, publisher disclosure, and transcript interview	"I authored the sentences in bold and GPT-3 filled in the rest"	AUTH-P012; AUTH-P013; AUTH-P014
	Distributed algorithm–platform authorship	Literary output is shaped jointly by system design, algorithmic operations, curation, and platform affordances	1	3.7%	Peer-reviewed Indonesian digital-literary study	"Algorithmic poetry challenges conventional notions of authorship"	AUTH-C008
Absent or displaced human control	Automated submission and editorial burden	Generated submissions exhibit no documented transformative human contribution while transferring screening work to editors	1	3.7%	Professional market and submission evidence	"The sheer volume materially interferes with the running of these magazines"	AUTH-S005
Normative or	Market and	Institutions discuss eligibility, value,	4	14.8%	Association statement,	"Markets may bar work	AUTH-P008; AUTH-S002;

contextual evidence	professional interpretation	disclosure, or collaborative practice without documenting one complete production process			field reportage, survey summary, and consultation response	that is AI-written, -developed, or -assisted"	AUTH-S003; AUTH-S004
	Rights, policy, and licensing context	Human creativity is protected through consent, remuneration, licensing, and output transparency	4	14.8%	Industry policy, government consultation, parliamentary report, and UNESCO guidance	"A copyright and AI framework that rewards human creativity"	AUTH-C001; AUTH-C002; AUTH-C003; AUTH-C006
	Model-provider governance and litigation	Responsibility is assigned through copyright policies, training summaries, compliance duties, or legal claims	3	11.1%	European AI governance code, regulatory Q&A, and institutional litigation report	"Providers must put in place a copyright policy and publish a training content summary"	AUTH-C004; AUTH-C005; AUTH-C007

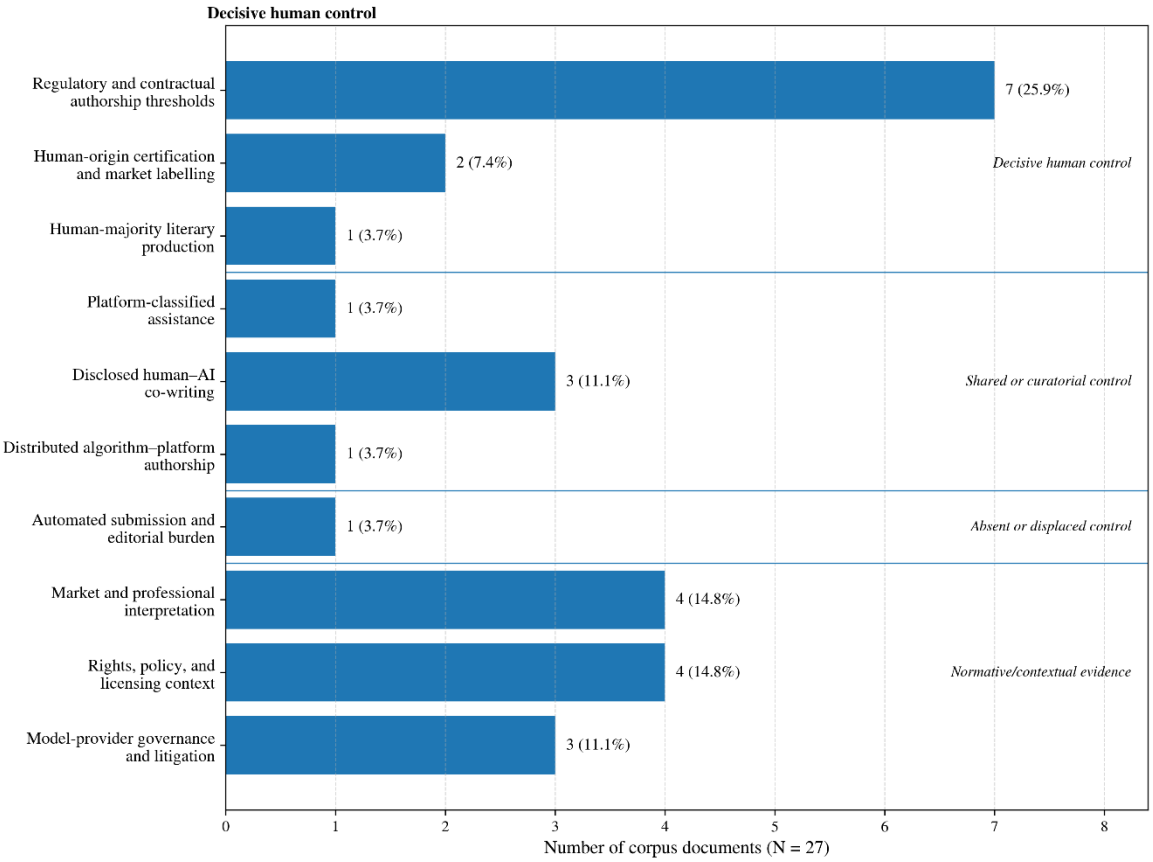

Figure 3. Creative-control configurations across the corpus

These patterns support a graded account of authorship in which control depends on consequential decisions rather than physical sentence production alone. Human authorship is strongest where actors determine expressive direction, select alternatives, transform outputs, and authorise publication, consistent with control-based copyright reasoning (Hugenholtz & Quintais, 2021; Mazzi, 2024). Shared configurations complicate binary models because generated wording can coexist with human intentionality, arrangement, and curatorial judgment, as collaborative-authorship research also suggests (Formosa et al., 2024; Hutson, 2025). Yet contribution must remain distinguishable from attribution: perceived ownership may persist even when users exercise limited control (Draxler et al., 2023), while credit judgments vary with contribution type (He et al., 2025). Creative control is therefore treated as an evidentiary continuum, not a categorical property automatically conferred by prompting.

Attribution and disclosure regimes in ai-assisted literary production

Attribution and disclosure were examined at the same document level used for creative-control analysis, preserving 27 records and identical AUTH codes. Each document was assigned to one disclosure regime and one alignment outcome based on declared audience, specificity, credit model, and correspondence with documented contribution. Formal obligations included registration, contracts, platform rules, labour provisions, award eligibility, and provider documentation. Public certification, creator-led disclosure, professional advocacy, and policy-oriented transparency were retained as separate regimes because they operate through different institutional mechanisms. Alignment was coded as aligned, partially aligned, misaligned, or normative and indeterminate. Consequently, frequencies describe documentary configurations rather than authors, literary works, or national populations, ensuring direct comparability with the preceding analysis and preventing heterogeneous evidence from being treated as interchangeable.

Table 4. Disclosure regimes and attribution–contribution alignment across the corpus

Disclosure regime	Attribution configuration	Primary audience	Specificity	Alignment outcome	Frequency	Percentage	Verified textual evidence	Data codes
Formal mandatory or conditional disclosure	Regulatory, contractual, labour, and award requirements accurately identify human contribution	Copyright office, publisher, employer, writer, and award voters	Moderate–high: contribution, tool use, or eligibility conditions specified	Aligned	6	22.2%	"Applicants have a duty to disclose the inclusion of AI-generated content"	AUTH-P001; AUTH-P002; AUTH-P003; AUTH-P004; AUTH-P007; AUTH-P009
	AI-generated material must be reported to a platform, but AI-assisted material need not be disclosed to readers	Publishing platform	Moderate: origin category identified without mandatory reader-facing explanation	Partially aligned	1	3.7%	"You are not required to disclose AI-assisted content"	AUTH-P006
	Transparency is required or advocated at provider and rights-governance levels rather than attached to one literary work	Developers, publishers, regulators, and rightsholders	High: copyright policy, documentation, or training summary required	Normative or not case-specific	3	11.1%	"Providers must put in place a copyright policy and publish a training content summary"	AUTH-P010; AUTH-C004; AUTH-C005
Certification and public labelling	Human-written status is communicated through certification, registry, or visible market label	Readers, booksellers, publishers, and public registry users	Moderate: human textual origin identified through a formal label	Aligned, conditional on certification accuracy	2	7.4%	"The text of the book was written by a human and not generated by AI"	AUTH-P005; AUTH-P011
Voluntary creator or publisher disclosure	Human and machine contributions are differentiated through process explanation, typography, percentages, or acknowledgement	Readers, publishers, and literary markets	High: production process, contribution extent, or textual division specified	Aligned	3	11.1%	"I authored the sentences in bold and GPT-3 filled in the rest"	AUTH-P012; AUTH-P013; AUTH-P014
Post-publication creator disclosure	AI-generated material is quantified publicly after a	Award audience and general	High: approximate extent of verbatim AI	Partially aligned because	1	3.7%	"About 5 percent of the book quoted	AUTH-S001

	work has entered prize or publication circulation	public	incorporation specified	disclosure was retrospective			verbatim the sentences generated by AI"	
Market variability and professional advocacy	Automated submissions lack reliable disclosure and transfer verification work to editors	Editors and literary magazines	None: AI involvement is absent or unverifiable	Misaligned or absent	1	3.7%	"The sheer volume materially interferes with the running of these magazines"	AUTH-S005
	Markets, writers, and associations advocate disclosure but apply variable definitions and thresholds	Editors, writers, readers, and professional communities	Low–high: ranges from general concern to detailed transparency recommendations	Normative or indeterminate	4	14.8%	"Transparency is key at both the input and output levels"	AUTH-P008; AUTH-S002; AUTH-S003; AUTH-S004
Policy, training-source, and contextual transparency	Attribution concerns training provenance, licensing, remuneration, output labelling, or distributed authorship	Governments, developers, rightsholders, cultural institutions, and academic readers	Moderate–high: sources, rights, or output status are identified	Normative or not case-specific	6	22.2%	"Works that were generated through AI should be clearly indicated"	AUTH-C001; AUTH-C002; AUTH-C003; AUTH-C006; AUTH-C007; AUTH-C008

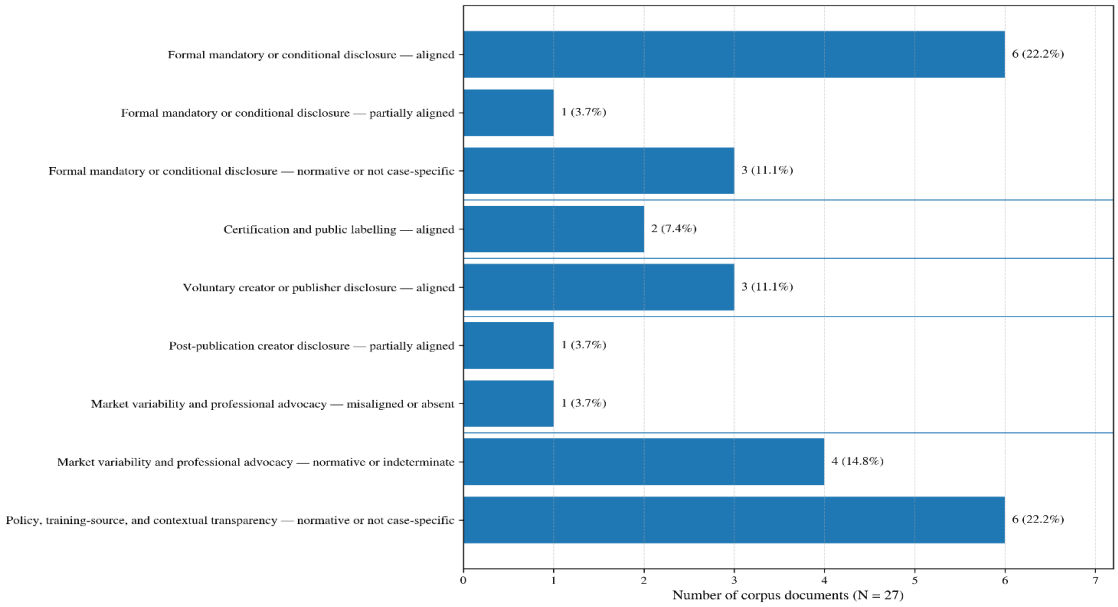

Figure 4. Disclosure regimes and attribution–contribution alignment

Normative or non-case-specific alignment formed the largest outcome, covering 13 documents, while 11 records showed attribution corresponding with documented contribution. Formal mandatory arrangements contributed six aligned documents but also one platform-based partial alignment and three provider- or rights-oriented normative records. Voluntary creator disclosure was usually specific and aligned: Vara distinguished her sentences from GPT-3 continuations (AUTH-P012), and publisher documentation quantified machine and human participation in Marche's novella (AUTH-P013). By contrast, Kudan's reported disclosure followed publication, producing partial alignment despite its quantified detail (AUTH-S001). The clearest misalignment concerned automated submissions, where absent disclosure shifted verification costs to editors and "materially interferes with the running of these magazines" (AUTH-S005), exposing the institutional consequences of unverifiable authorship claims within open literary submission markets.

These distributions indicate that attribution is not secured merely by naming a human author or acknowledging an AI tool. Credible attribution depends on whether public representation corresponds with contribution, timing, and audience. This position extends work showing that users may claim authorship despite weak perceived ownership (Draxler et al., 2023) and that credit judgments vary according to contribution type (He et al., 2025). Disclosure frameworks therefore require proportionality: generic acknowledgements cannot represent extensive machine generation, whereas exhaustive disclosure may be unnecessary for minor assistive use. Wu et al. (2025) similarly connect originality judgments to distinguishable contributions, while Saxena et al. (2025) stress responsible attribution standards. Attribution after automation is thus an institutional alignment problem, not simply a disclosure checklist.

Creative responsibility, institutional accountability, and safeguards

Creative responsibility was analysed through the same document-level unit applied to creative control and attribution, retaining all 27 records and identical AUTH codes. Each document was assigned to one mutually exclusive accountability configuration based on its primary responsibility bearer, dominant risk domain, governing mechanism, stated safeguard, and degree of formalisation. Strength was coded as formal obligation, professional expectation, or contextual concern, reflecting whether accountability appeared through enforceable rules, institutional guidance, or broader interpretive debate. This procedure prevented legal duties, contractual requirements, ethical recommendations, and scholarly arguments from being collapsed into one category. Frequencies therefore represent documentary configurations rather than individual authors, literary works, institutions, or jurisdictions, enabling direct comparison with earlier analyses while preserving differences among evidentiary roles over time.

Table 5. Accountability configurations, responsibility bearers, and safeguards across the corpus

Accountability configuration	Primary responsibility bearer	Dominant responsibility domain	Accountability mechanism	Strength composition	Frequency	Percentage	Principal safeguard	Verified textual evidence	Data codes
Copyright registration and claim accuracy	Applicant or human claimant	Copyrightability, authorship claims, and registration accuracy	Registration disclosure and case-specific assessment	Formal: 2	2	7.4%	Disclosure of generated material and limitation of claims to human expression	"Applicants have a duty to disclose the inclusion of AI-generated content"	AUTH-P001; AUTH-P002
Contractual, platform, and labour compliance	Author, publisher, platform user, employer, and writer	Consent, manuscript delivery, content classification, credit, and compensation	Publishing clauses, platform rules, and collective bargaining provisions	Formal: 3	3	11.1%	Prior consent, platform verification, disclosure, and grievance procedures	"Author shall not be required to use generative AI"	AUTH-P003; AUTH-P006; AUTH-P007
Certification, award, and professional safeguards	Author, certifying institution, award body, and professional association	Reader trust, authorship authenticity, eligibility, stylistic imitation, and disclosure	Certification registry, award rules, labels, and professional guidance	Formal: 2; professional: 2	4	14.8%	Public certification, eligibility screening, human review, and transparent AI-use statements	"The text of the book was written by a human and not generated by AI"	AUTH-P004; AUTH-P005; AUTH-P009; AUTH-P011
Creator and publisher answerability	Human creator, editor, and publisher	Accuracy, selection, attribution, creative decisions, and commercial representation	Creator disclosure, publisher paratext, typography, and process explanation	Professional: 4	4	14.8%	Detailed production disclosure and differentiation of human and generated text	"I am its author legally, but a machine wrote it based on my instructions"	AUTH-P012; AUTH-P013; AUTH-P014; AUTH-S001
Market integrity and editorial burden	Writer, submitter, literary market, and editor	Submission integrity, editorial workload, unverifiable authorship, and market access	Submission policies, editorial screening, and professional norms	Professional: 2; contextual: 1	3	11.1%	Clear market rules, candid disclosure, and rejection of noncompliant submissions	"The sheer volume materially interferes with the running of these magazines"	AUTH-P008; AUTH-S002; AUTH-S005
Consent, remuneration,	AI developer, government,	Training consent, remuneration,	Consultation, legislation, licensing,	Formal: 2; professional: 4;	7	25.9%	Opt-in licensing, payment, source	"Author consent should be	AUTH-P010; AUTH-S003;

and policy governance	publisher, cultural institution, and rightsholder	licensing, discoverability, cultural diversity, and output labelling	professional advocacy, and international recommendations	contextual: 1			transparency, metadata credit, and output identification	required before their work is used by an AI system"	AUTH-S004; AUTH-C001; AUTH-C002; AUTH-C003; AUTH-C006
Provider transparency and litigation	General-purpose AI provider and litigating institutions	Training provenance, copyright compliance, documentation, and infringement	AI governance code, statutory obligations, public summaries, and litigation	Formal: 3	3	11.1 %	Copyright policies, public training-content summaries, regulatory oversight, and judicial remedies	"Providers must put in place a copyright policy and publish a training content summary"	AUTH-C004; AUTH-C005; AUTH-C007
Distributed algorithmic context	Designers, platform actors, curators, and interpreters	Literary agency, aesthetic value, platform mediation, and interpretive responsibility	Scholarly analysis and critical contextualisation	Contextual: 1	1	3.7%	Transparent identification of system design, algorithmic operation, and platform mediation	"Algorithmic poetry challenges conventional notions of authorship"	AUTH-C008

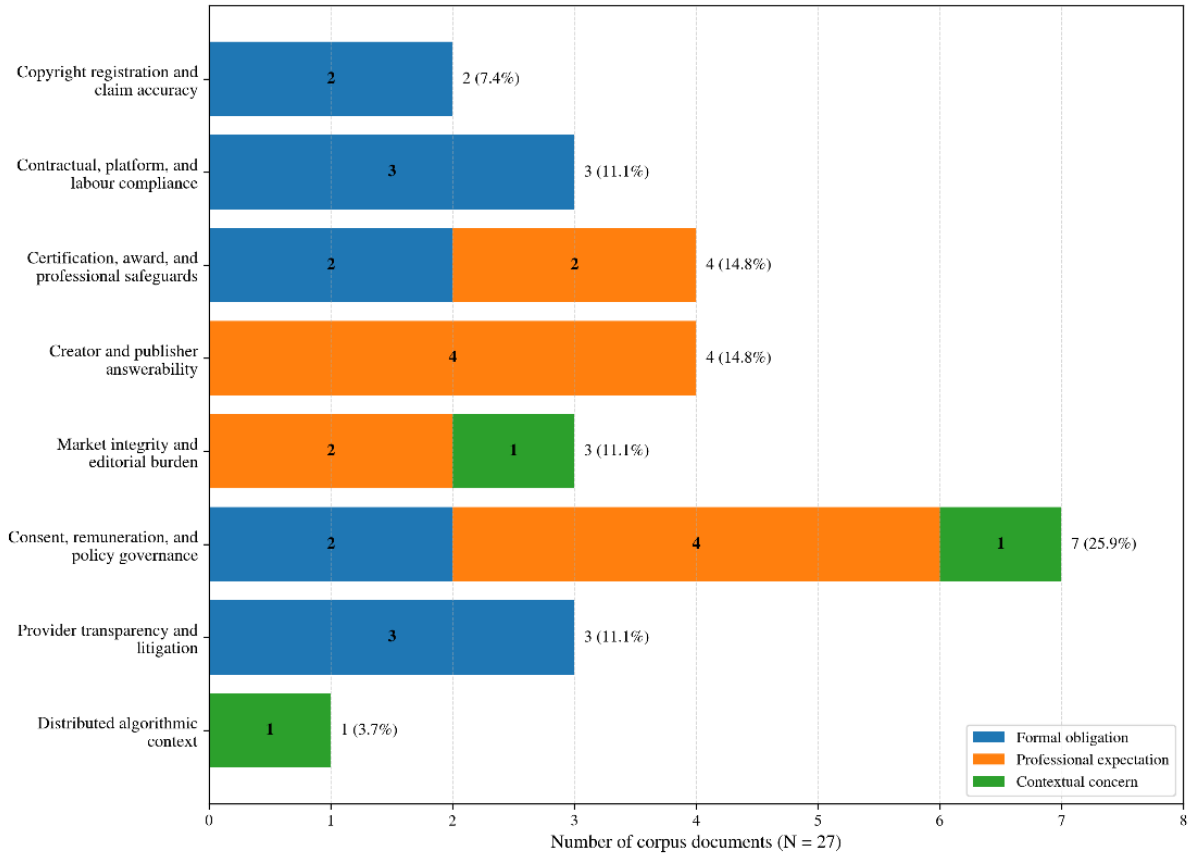

Figure 5. Accountability mechanisms and responsibility strength

Consent, remuneration, and policy governance formed the largest configuration, comprising seven documents, followed by four documents concerning certification or award safeguards and four addressing creator or publisher answerability. Formal obligations and professional expectations each accounted for 12 records, whereas three documents articulated contextual concerns without a direct enforcement mechanism. Registration materials assigned responsibility to applicants for accurate claims, while platform and labour documents placed obligations on publishers, employers, or writers. Creator disclosures retained human answerability even when wording was machine-generated. Provider-level governance was explicit in the requirement that providers "put in place a copyright policy and publish a training content summary" (AUTH-C005). Editorial risk was also visible where automated submission volume "materially interferes with the running of these magazines" (AUTH-S005).

Responsibility consequently extends beyond whoever receives the byline. Human creators remain answerable for selection, revision, disclosure, and publication decisions, but publishers, platforms, employers, award bodies, and model providers acquire distinct obligations when they control access, classification, remuneration, or enforcement. This differentiated pattern supports ethical accounts that reserve answerability for human and institutional actors capable of giving reasons and accepting correction (Al-Kfairy et al., 2024; Formosa et al., 2024). It also develops publishing and legal scholarship that distributes duties across editorial systems, contracts, and copyright infrastructures (Bayer, 2024; Moffatt & Hall, 2024; Senftleben, 2023). Creative responsibility after automation is therefore best understood as layered accountability whose legitimacy depends on clearly specified actors, risks, mechanisms, and remedies across the entire production chain.

DISCUSSION

Creative control matters because it determines whether AI assistance remains an instrument of authorship or becomes a mechanism that obscures authorship's evidentiary basis. Findings showing stronger authorship claims where human actors directed narrative purpose, selected alternatives, transformed outputs,

and authorised publication indicate that control functions as a legitimacy filter. This supports Hugenholtz and Quintais (2021), Mazzi (2024), and Fritz (2025), who link copyrightable authorship to identifiable human intellectual contribution. It also extends Hutson's (2025) collaborative framework by showing that collaboration alone is insufficient unless contributions remain distinguishable. A contrasting implication emerges from Draxler et al. (2023), where users may self-identify as authors despite weak ownership perceptions. This tension means authorship can function institutionally while remaining experientially unstable. For literary practice, the implication is not that machine-generated language invalidates authorship, but that authorship becomes more defensible when creative decisions leave a traceable process rather than appearing only as a final byline.

The concentration of stronger authorship claims around decisive human intervention appears to arise from a structural asymmetry between linguistic production and normative agency. Generative systems can supply fluent text, but they do not independently establish literary intention, justify choices, negotiate revision, or assume institutional consequences. This helps explain why prompting alone was treated as insufficient in control-based accounts, whereas selection and transformation carried greater weight. Formosa et al. (2024) similarly distinguish perceived creatorship from responsibility, while He et al. (2025) show that credit varies according to contribution type. Yet Doshi and Hauser (2023) complicate any human-superiority narrative by demonstrating that AI can enhance individual creativity even while reducing collective diversity. The underlying structure is therefore not opposition between human and machine creativity, but an uneven division of capacities: systems expand generative possibility, while humans retain evaluative and normative functions. This division makes process documentation central to judging authorship after automation.

Attribution and disclosure have significance because they mediate trust between production processes and public claims. Findings showing aligned attribution where contribution was specified, and partial or weak alignment where disclosure was delayed, private, or absent, indicate that transparency functions only when it is proportionate and audience-relevant. This supports Wu et al. (2025), who connect attribution judgments to distinguishable contribution, and Saxena et al. (2025), who argue for responsible attribution standards. It also qualifies permissive collaborative accounts by showing that naming an AI tool does not necessarily clarify who shaped a work. Over-disclosure may burden minor assistive use, whereas under-disclosure can conceal substantial generation. The dysfunction lies in treating disclosure as a checkbox rather than a representation of process. For literary institutions, meaningful attribution should communicate extent, timing, and function of AI involvement, allowing readers, publishers, and award bodies to evaluate authorship claims without assuming that every computational intervention is equivalent.

Variation in attribution appears to reflect fragmented institutional environments through which literary works circulate. Copyright offices, platforms, publishers, awards, and professional associations address different risks and audiences, so they define disclosure according to operational priorities. A platform may require private reporting of generated content while leaving readers uninformed; an award body may emphasise eligibility; a publisher may focus on contractual warranties; and creators may disclose retrospectively through interviews. Lund and Naheem (2023) document similar inconsistency across journal policies, while Yoo (2025) shows that editorial boundaries for AI use remain uneven. This fragmentation explains why attribution can be formally compliant yet publicly incomplete. It also clarifies why aligned disclosure appeared most often when creator, publisher, and audience-facing accounts converged. Rather than resulting from individual dishonesty alone, misalignment may arise from incompatible institutional vocabularies of authorship. A coherent regime would require shared interoperable categories distinguishing assistance, generation, transformation, and responsibility across settings.

Creative responsibility is consequential because it prevents authorship from becoming a credit-only status detached from answerability. Findings distributing responsibility among authors, publishers, platforms, professional bodies, and model providers indicate that literary production now operates through layered accountability. This supports Al-Kfairy et al. (2024) and Moffatt and Hall (2024), who emphasise human and institutional duties in AI-mediated creation, and Senftleben (2023), who foregrounds remuneration and copyright infrastructures. The functional value of layered responsibility is that different actors can address different risks: authors can review and disclose, publishers can verify and contract, platforms can classify and enforce, and providers can document training practices. Its dysfunction emerges when responsibility is

displaced downward, especially onto writers or editors who lack control over model development or market scale. This study suggests that credible creative responsibility depends on matching obligations to actual capacities, rather than assigning all consequences to whichever human name appears on a work.

The distribution of responsibility appears to follow control over resources, access, and enforcement rather than textual contribution alone. Authors control selection and publication decisions, publishers control contracts and market entry, platforms control classification and visibility, and model providers control training documentation and system design. Bayer (2024) and Samuelson (2023) similarly show that legal responsibility in generative media extends across production infrastructures, while Formosa et al. (2024) note that responsibility judgments do not map neatly onto creatorship. This structural separation explains why a person may deserve literary credit yet lack capacity to remedy training-data misuse, or why a provider may bear copyright obligations without qualifying as an author. It cautions against collapsing accountability into human oversight, because oversight is ineffective without access to information. Creative responsibility after automation is relational: it becomes workable when authority, knowledge, and remedial power are aligned. Where these elements diverge, accountability becomes symbolic rather than operational.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that authorship after automation is best understood through assessment of creative control, transformative contribution, attributional transparency, and responsibility. Its central lesson is that machine-generated wording neither automatically negates human authorship nor establishes machine authorship; legitimacy depends on traceable human judgment across production stages. Methodologically, this study strengthens inquiry by integrating documentary corpus analysis with three matrices linking process, disclosure, and accountability. This framework refreshes debates by moving beyond binary classifications and by distinguishing textual generation from authorial agency, public credit, and institutional answerability. It therefore offers a transferable model for examining AI-assisted literary production across platforms and settings.

This study remains limited by its reliance on publicly available documents, uneven disclosure practices, jurisdictional variation, and document-level coding that cannot reconstruct private drafting histories or reader interpretations. Corpus composition also privileges English-language sources and institutions with policies, which may underrepresent less formal literary communities and non-Western publishing contexts. Future research should incorporate multilingual corpora, archived prompt histories, version-controlled manuscripts, interviews with authors and editors, and comparative audience studies. Longitudinal designs could examine how attribution standards evolve, while cross-jurisdictional analyses could clarify legal and cultural differences.

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Lam H. Tran: conceptualization, methodology, formal analysis, data curation, writing – original draft, writing – review and editing (all lead, sole author).

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The author states no conflict of interest.

AI USE DECLARATION

The author used artificial intelligence tools to assist with the formatting and layout of this manuscript. AI was not used to generate the substantive content, conceptualization, data, analysis, or conclusions of the research, all of which remain the sole responsibility of the author.

INFORMED CONSENT

Not applicable – this study did not involve direct human participants. Data consisted solely of publicly accessible documents and governance materials.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

This research did not involve human or animal subjects; it analyzed publicly available documentary records concerning AI-assisted literary production, and therefore no institutional review board approval was required. Where research does involve human subjects, the author affirms that such research would be conducted in full compliance with all relevant national regulations and institutional policies, in accordance with the tenets of the Declaration of Helsinki, and would be approved by the author's institutional review board or equivalent committee.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The corpus/data analyzed in this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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