

AI Source Verification

Category: Artificial Intelligence in Education

AI source verification is the process of determining whether a source named, summarised or implied by an AI system exists, is accurately represented and provides appropriate evidence for the claim being made. It requires examination of the original source rather than confidence in a generated citation or summary.

Verification is distinct from merely finding matching words online. The researcher must match authorship, title, date, publication and persistent identifier; access the item; locate the relevant passage; and judge its authority and context. AI output remains a lead, not evidence ([Walters & Wilder, 2023](#)).

Verification Process

1. **Parse the claim:** Identify precisely what is asserted and which source is said to support it.
2. **Match metadata:** Confirm the author, title, date, venue, edition and DOI or other stable identifier.
3. **Locate the original:** Use library databases, publisher pages, repositories or official records—not an AI summary.
4. **Read in context:** Check the relevant passage, method, population, limitations and whether the claim is overstated.
5. **Corroborate and record:** Compare independent evidence and preserve an accurate citation and verification trail.

Examples in Practice

An AI system attributes a statistic to a 2022 journal article. A student searches the DOI, finds that it belongs to a different paper and locates the likely original report. Reading the methods shows that the figure describes one national sample, so the student narrows the claim accordingly.

Why It Matters

Generated references may be fabricated or may combine real bibliographic details incorrectly. Lateral reading—leaving the initial page to investigate the source and trusted coverage—helps learners resist surface credibility and build claims on traceable evidence ([Brodsky et al., 2021](#)).

Further Reading

6. Walters, W. H., & Wilder, E. I. (2023). [Fabrication and errors in the bibliographic citations generated by ChatGPT](#). *Scientific Reports*, 13, 14045.
7. Brodsky, J. E., et al. (2021). [Improving college students' fact-checking strategies through lateral reading instruction](#). *Cognitive Research: Principles and Implications*, 6, 23.
8. Association of College and Research Libraries. (2016). [Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education](#). ACRL.

Related Terms: AI Hallucination Awareness | Information Literacy | Lateral Reading | Evidence Evaluation