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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Section: *Digital Humanities***AI-enhanced narratives and digital identities: A discourse analysis of personal expressions in social media**

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¹Department of English, College of Education for Humanities, University of Thi-Qar, Iraq*Correspondence: saddam-s@utq.edu.iq**ABSTRACT**

The main goal of this paper is to examine how artificial intelligence on social media platforms impacts the creation of digital identities while also affecting user engagement methods and communication approaches. In order to better understand consumer behavior toward these machine-generated writings, the study also explores how users interact with and react to AI-generated stories when they encounter human interactions as well as how authentic self-expression and personal presentation transform due to technological mediation. Discourse analysis serves as the research method in this study to examine both the linguistic and structural aspects of AI-generated material in addition to its interaction with user-generated discourse on the well-known social media platforms Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. The selected sites collect user-generated qualitative data to better understand user interactions with AI-generated materials, as well as user responses and the resulting influence on their online communication practices and self-presentation. The research project delivered multiple essential findings, such as AI stories allow users to engage through active participation that transforms the digital identities of those users, but they also create confusion regarding the distinction between machine-made material and human origin, thus opposing established narrative consistency principles. Implications of the research include the fact that the piece stresses that we must rethink standard approaches to the identification of communicative agents when discussing narratives that originate from algorithms. Finally, the analysis provides an original contribution because it analyzes the interface between user-generated texts and AI-generated content to detect the evolution of hybrid online personae.

KEYWORDS: discourse analysis, AI-generated narratives, digital identity, communicative agency, social media discourse

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I. INTRODUCTION

Social media platforms operate as vibrant networks that help people connect while enabling them to present themselves and create digital identities during the modern digital era. Consumers now generate online identities and engage with others through new modes of algorithmically processed conversations using artificial intelligence models, primarily including generative models such as ChatGPT and other large language systems. AI algorithms now generate full or partial texts that participate with users to develop their online personas and dialogues while building social meaning across Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter platforms beyond simple customer service bots and content-based tools. AI technologies in digital environments make users interact, distribute content, and create personalized communication methods. Through technological developments in artificial intelligence during the last decade, the methods we exchange information have evolved alongside communication itself. AI has deeply embedded itself into social media, online messaging, content generation, and virtual assistance to fulfill desires about personal and professional relationships. Performance-based online communication experiences have been greatly transformed by artificial intelligence technology. AI algorithms evaluate user behaviors alongside their preferences for the preparation of customized recommendations regarding information and advertisements and suggestions. The process of personalization produces relevant content for users because it matches their interests, which increases the value and interest of communication platforms. The way people interact with social media content through AI functions guides online discussions along with developing personal life stories.

AI systems have brought about new capabilities to create automated written content. AI systems on Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok assist users in creating eye-catching content. Social media platforms provide users with automated content tools to create better stories and photo editing features together with AI musical effects. The capability of creative content creation through AI diminishes the distinction between human-placed content and machine-created material, which affects the digital expression's status and originality base. Machines now process and speak language differently because of advances in AI. OpenAI's NLP models with GPT (the current one) are capable of generating rich content, ensuring better dialogue and translation, while also detecting emotional tone and analysis of sentiment. AIs contribute to better information sharing on the internet by making it possible for users to share feelings as well as messages, all done more efficiently. Revolutionary transformations are being brought to gadgets and internet technology by Siri, Alexa, and Google Assistant. Assistants do this by allowing people to talk to them and get the information they need with their hands remaining free. Chatbots made with AI now make it difficult for users to tell if a conversation is happening with a human or software, which makes communication much easier and faster.

Using AI for communication online leads to serious ethical and social problems. As AI technology advances, there are problems appearing, such as people misusing their online identities, wide-scale monitoring, and false information created by AI. Using artificial intelligence for expressing their identity may cause some to build an unreal and uninformed online image that separates them from who they truly are. Lots of challenges on social media bring about problems with privacy and low credibility and bring down quality interactions due to how personal experiences are often used to promote products in exchange for money. Today, social networking is a major part of personal identity. People share their lives online via Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok. Social media posts, pictures, videos, and messages together make someone's online identity. Investigating personal identities in social media improves the world's understanding of how technology changes the way we present ourselves.

People form certain parts of their identity, such as how they behave in groups, while interacting on the internet. Shared material, engagement with others, and the way people represent themselves help develop this identity. Moreover, since people share who they are or who they wish to be when presenting themselves online, self-presentation tools can help them show their individuality to others and let them know what a person stands for and aspires to become. Thus, to create their social media identities, they need others on the platform to accept and verify them. Receiving digital reactions, such as likes and comments, as well as having their postings go viral and gaining more followers, all contribute to an individual's increasing digital social value. Individual communication is guided by the established parameters, resulting in content that other people find appealing and desirable. Even though these designs could present something different from their real identity, people today construct their social media posts with a focus on performance while aiming to gain online acceptance.

Digital platforms provide users with multiple alternative identities that might be in direct opposition to one another. The majority of people maintain different online profiles that adapt to their various social networks. People often show their professional side on LinkedIn, but they share different, and more personal, content on Instagram and Twitter. The diverse range of internet interactions, together with user adjustments of their digital identities, determines these variations. What is more, some users have broken personalities because they can craft and edit various digital identities.

People use visual communication to create their social media identities. Since social media communication primarily consists of picture and video content along with other visual materials, people use these visuals to create narratives about their experiences, appearance, and way of life. Digital identity authenticity is further compromised by filters, photo editing tools, and AI-powered upgrades. These tools enable creative expression, but they can distort or idealize digital identities, putting pressure on individuals to achieve social or digital beauty, success, and happiness norms. Social media also allows people to combine their online and offline identities. Individuals use social media to express themselves and socialize in their personal lives, business, and social life. Influencer culture is made possible through hybrid identities, through which individuals perform highly specific identities to large numbers of people. Influencers and bloggers occasionally present highly stylish images of their life in fashion, beauty, traveling, or sports to shape the opinion of the population and trends online.

Discourse analytically, this development begs very important questions concerning the authorship, authenticity and changing voice of the narrative. Discourse is not just a form of language, it is a social practice that creates realities, promotes ideologies, and locates subjects (Fairclough, 1992; van Dijk, 1997). In this regard, the application of the AI in the creation of social media content should be subject to serious consideration not only due to the technological influence, but also to the manner in which it alters the communicative standards and discursive structures within which the identity is negotiated. Users are also interacting more with documents that obscure the distinctions between human authorship and machine production, and that cut across conventional lines of purpose and desire, and attaching relational meaning.

In this paper, the researcher examines the nature of the interactions between AI-generated narratives and user-generated content across social media and how such interactions lead to the (re)construction of digital identities and discourse processes. Through the discourse analysis methodologies, the study focuses on textual features, intertextuality, power relations and identity performances that are produced by this hybrid communicative space. The argument presented in the paper is that AI discourses are not passive and neutral tools, but rather discursive agents that mediate, and in some cases, disrupt the co-construction of self and meaning on the Internet.

The study aims are two-fold to test how AI-generated information can influence the social media users digital identities and to test the discursive practices and user reactions to AI-generated texts using the critical discourse analysis method.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

People actively research the integration of artificial intelligence with social media discourse because of its impact on identity construction and authorship along with its communicative agency. More recent studies focus on artificial intelligence technology and marketing without assessing its discursive outcomes. This section uses discourse analysis to explain how digital communication can evaluate AI-generated content.

Two research studies led by Cui and Yasserli (2024) and Edwards et al. (2025) state that artificial intelligence creates articles that lack context but show recognizable communication habits of humans. Because of this change, traditional views about narrative agency and authorship become confused. Meaning is formed when discourse components interact with ideology, as scholars such as Foucault (1972) and Fairclough (1992) believe.

Language establishes identity through self-presentation, as explained by Goffman (1959) and Gee (2014). Users of the internet currently use AI to create materials that help them stand out on the web. Deciding whether or not to trust machine stories influences consumers, yet it raises doubts about the realness of stories.

Researchers can use the CDA model developed by Fairclough (1995) to look into the ways artificial intelligence creates social practice texts. Being neutral, this puts the communication tone on the same level and

shifts power dynamics (van Dijk, 2006).

Using bibliographical analysis, Reyes (2023) conducted a study of the underlying theories that connect communication to social identity formation. According to his research, social contacts and communicative processes cause identity to change dynamically rather than remain fixed. Within the framework of the digital age, media and social networks were significant in determining how people saw and interacted with others. Reyes came to see that communication served as a means of conveying cultural values and common meanings, thereby helping people define themselves in respect of their social surroundings. Furthermore, he highlighted the increasing importance of digital technology and artificial intelligence in shaping online identity building.

Feher (2021) looked at personal tactics for controlling online presence and compiled changing scholarly viewpoints on digital identity by means of exploratory and comparative research. The study based on 60 qualitative interviews conducted in Central and Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia revealed that 70 percent of the user control over their digital identities was conscious. The other 30% however, did it unconsciously on the digital platforms with unforeseen consequences, such as identity theft and privacy invasion. The research also highlighted the way individuals have preserved their personal digital identity across the cultural context and proposed a framework that is to be used as a reference framework in the future research in the area. It also brought about generational differences. The outcomes of Feher especially challenged a certain degree of established wisdom in the area and pointed out unexplored areas of digital identity research.

Tai and Wu (2023) took the discussion a step further by exploring the concept of digital people and their possible impact on identity building. Their research followed the evolution of digital humans through three stages, namely, image identification, embodied engagement, and identity construction. On the principle of embodied cognition, their PhD work made a proposal according to which digital humans were considered as the extensions of the self. The article shown that the advancements in artificial intelligence, motion capture and cloud rendering had fundamentally altered the way individuals engaged with technology and represented themselves in the online world. By making the argument of a more multifaceted knowledge of digital identity in the multidisciplinary context, Tai and Wu at last returned the subjectivity of human presence in digitally mediated environments.

Bouvier and Machin (2020) conjectured that CDA must be modified to suit the changed nature of text, ideology, and readers in the web. In their opinion, due to user-generated content, many modes, and quick interactivity, old-fashioned tools of CDA became useless in the analysis of non-portable, institutionally produced books. They also stated that it is complex to research digital discourse that combines language, images, design, computer programs, and data. They believed that, due to the interactive and automated side of publishing on the internet, CDA researchers had to come up with different strategies. They claimed that the roles of writers and viewers had become hazy and that the creation of meaning was no longer top-down but rather a joint discussion and ongoing process of change. These disorders demanded a re-theorizing of fundamental CDA presumptions and the construction of analytical models responsive to digital intertextuality and platform dynamics.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study's analytical lens is guided by Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which emphasizes the interplay between discourse, power, and ideology. This model consists of textual analysis, discursive practice, and social practice. Additionally, van Dijk's socio-cognitive model facilitates the investigation of hidden concepts, stances, and power dynamics embedded in both AI-generated and user-generated speech. Additionally, the work situates identity work in electronically mediated spaces by utilizing Goffman's concept of self-presentation.

A. Research Design and Data Sources

Data was gathered via interactions across Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, as well as publicly available social media posts. The dataset comprises AI-generated posts (totally or partially written by ChatGPT), user replies to AI-generated material (retweets, captions), AI-augmented advertisements, and auto-suggested content. Relevant hashtags included #AI, #Chatbot, and #ChatGPT, and data was filtered so that only posts that clearly referenced or displayed AI-generated characteristics were included.

B. Sampling Strategy

Targeting social media interactions reflecting active involvement with AI-generated narratives, the sampling used a deliberate approach. Posts were chosen using criteria including direct references or visible use of AI-generated content, user remarks expressing approval, opposition, or language alterations, and discursive markers suggesting self-presentation or narrative framing.

C. Analytical Methods

The analysis proceeded in three stages:

1. Textual Analysis: Linguistic and rhetorical features of AI-generated texts were examined.
2. Discursive Practice Analysis: Focused on how users resist or appropriate AI-generated content
3. Social Practice Analysis: Addressed implications on identity norms, power relations, and social meanings.

D. Ethical Considerations

The study follows ethical standards for studies employing freely available digital content. Every user's identity was stripped. With an eye towards language and discourse rather than humans, the objective is analytical rather than evaluative.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The discourse-analytic perspective on how artificial intelligence-generated narratives impact digital identity, self-presentation, and communication dynamics on social media is presented in this part. The study finds language patterns, interactional changes, and identity negotiations resulting from user interaction with AI-generated writings by means of thematic analysis, discourse analysis, and qualitative content analysis.

A. AI and the Discursive Construction of Self

Users frequently combined AI-generated writings with tools for creating public-facing personalities. Many consumers used artificial intelligence to create more polished or authoritative status updates or caption generation. These events show a type of strategic self-positioning (Goffman, 1959), in which the person supports a desired digital identity by matching with the alleged objectivity or eloquence of artificial intelligence.

“My post today came from the AI; it feels more real” (Kant, 2016, p.33).

Relying on an artificial agent to seem “authentic” exposes a new rhetorical hybridity in which the lines separating actual self-expression from algorithmic enhancement blur. Though the source is machinic, users deliberately recontextualize AI-generated language to project legitimacy, intelligence, or emotional resonance.

B. Resistance and Reclamation of Narrative Voice

Not every user welcomed AI material without a second thought. Users separating themselves from what they considered sterile or impersonal AI messages led to a notable debate on authenticity and emotional absence.

“This AI post is misleading; I would rather write from my own perspective” (Wang & Huang, 2024, p.39).

These terms are used to express both an ideological distance between mechanical speech and physical self-expression and a reinstatement of the human authority. This can be described as a discursive struggle as described by Fairclough (1992), where two parties are in opposition, AI vs. human, which tries to be right in the sense-making. The tendency of the user to use his own voice demonstrates how the sphere of conversation becomes a place of opposition and self-affirmation.

C. Narrative Structures and Emotional Thinness

The tendency towards formal, declarative, and emotionally flat language evidently characterized AI-generated content in language. The typical arrangements include impersonal orders, the lack of hedging, and the minimal

application of affective signals. As indicated in Table 1 the linguistic characteristics of AI-generated texts appear as follows:

TABLE 1
KEY LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF AI-GENERATED TEXTS

AI Language Feature	Example	Discursive Effect
Formal Tone	“As per the guidelines, we recommend...”	Projects authority but reduces intimacy
Lack of Emotion	“This is the most efficient method...”	Undermines relational cues
Transactional Phrasing	“AI will automate this task for you.”	Suggests service logic over engagement

Figure 1. Conceptual Model of Hybrid Narrative Construction

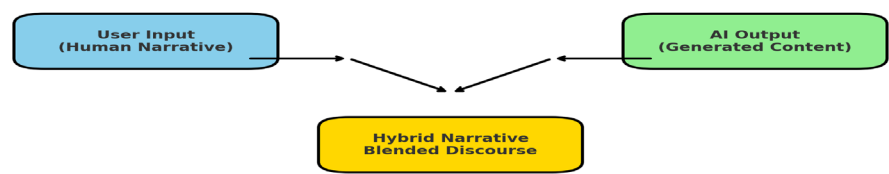


Figure 1 Conceptual Model of Hybrid Narrative Construction in AI-Human Discourse

Figure 1 shows AI-human discourse model of hybrid narrative construction. Discourse-pragmatically, this strategy may stop the co-construction of emotional resonance, therefore altering the affective economics of online interaction (Wetherell, 2012). Communications face the risk of losing the human relational cues hence creating a communicative space that appears to be sterile or depersonalized.

D. Human-AI Narrative Blending

Most users would edit AI-generated text, reaching a more expressive goal by changing tone, structure, or diction to better align AI-generated text to their expressive goals. This methodology presents the user with interaction in intertextual appropriation, which is one of the essential concepts of discourse analysis based on a hybrid authorship model. Rather than passively receiving artificial intelligence content, users inject themselves discursively, by applying human voice to an algorithmic structure.

“I changed some of the phrasing here to sound more human” (Guzman & Lewis, 2020, p.150).

This suggests a negotiated discourse space in which the user polishes the text to integrate intentionality, emotion, or social subtlety while AI provides the structural skeleton of the communication.

E. Interactional Shifts and Communicative Flattening

The stories that AI produces maintain a consistent nonhostile language style that makes readers less likely to experience profound engagement or think deeply about concepts. Artificial intelligence systems encourage polite speech behavior through their approaches, but they diminish the variety of conversational depth.

“AI’s response was so formal, it made our discussion feel robotic” (Peterson, 2022, p.23)

According to van Dijk (2006), these language patterns duplicate fundamental mental frameworks present in computer systems that learn from extensive nonpartisan data repositories that standardize noncontroversial subjects while omitting complex dimensions of communication. The technical delivery presents major problems regarding internet conversation because it makes difficulties disappear and inhibits innovative speaking styles and abstracts emotional work during digital interaction.

F. The Politics of AI-Enhanced Advertisements

People gave conflicting opinions regarding ads enhanced by AI, particularly when they were personalized. Some users acknowledged the significance of adapted advertisements yet questioned how this substance monitoring comes together with automated targeting methods. The artificial intelligence capability to emulate user understanding results in an interactive personal relationship that users may accept or negate.

“See this AI-curated product list for me!” (Alinejad,2023 , p.144).

Reflecting Foucault’s (1977) ideas of subjectification and the gaze in digital capitalism, personalization functions here discursively to position the user as knowable, trackable, and targetable. Participating in a kind of algorithmic interpellation, the user becomes both consumer and data subject.

Table 2 presents the findings of discourse analysis as shown below:

TABLE 2: DISCOURSE FINDINGS

Theme	Discourse Insight
AI as identity tool	Users use AI to craft idealized self-presentations
Resistance to machine-authorship	Users express skepticism toward AI’s emotional and narrative limitations
Flattened interaction	AI narratives reduce dialogic depth and emotional nuance
Narrative hybridity	Users co-construct content, mixing personal voice with AI structure
Advertisements as surveillance text	AI-curated content constructs the user as a knowable, targetable digital subject

The results of this study confirm and build upon other studies on digital identity, authorship, and the part artificial intelligence plays in forming online communication. The dual function of artificial intelligence as both a tool of empowerment and a site of contestation for identity performance and authorship drives the centrality of this conversation.

In line with earlier research (e.g., Bucher et al., 2018), the present study reveals that consumers deliberately exploit AI-generated material to improve their self-presentation. Users of systems like ChatGPT reach refined, authoritative communication by outsourcing the linguistic work of creating elegant postings. Goffman’s (1959) dramaturgical paradigm comes back in handy here since the digital self starts to be a co-authored performance between algorithmic structure and human intention. AI-mediated expression is not passive, as Liao et al. (2022) contend; rather, it is part of a regulated identity ecosystem in which users make intentional decisions about how much authorship to give or recover.

Nevertheless, there are also periods of opposition of these exchanges. The study is in agreement with Wang and Huang (2024), who have observed the presence of a steady level of distrust towards machine-generated texts in social media. Within the frames of the given study, AI content was often dismissed by the users due to its emotional one-dimensionality and the absence of subjectivity, thus pointing to a persistent drive of authenticity in digitally mediated communication. This is in accordance to the affective publics suggested by Alinejad (2023), which demonstrates the emotional aspect in an online social chat. Furthermore, these AI products fail to satisfy the need by the customers to feel touched or engaged emotionally.

This text goes a long way in demonstrating communicative flattening, whereby dialogic meeting is minimized through the formal and neutral nature of AI responses. In this case the socio-cognitive approach by van Doufi (2018) is a convenient lens, the large training corpus permits artificial intelligence systems to encode cognition models on which avoid, often, politically or emotionally sensitive language. According to Khabarova (2024), these systems are generality and conflict avoidance; politicians prefer to remain with their simple language, disregarding the possibility of having deep-level discussions. Moreover, in certain cases, the manner in which the user interacts with their friends is the product of broad social and cultural influences which complicate the discussion and introduce a higher level of contradictions than in unnaturally social networks.

In research such as that of Huang (2020), users typically adapt AI content to the form in which they wish to express themselves, thus AI and human writing styles may blend in their social media texts. Then, the fact is that individuals who are reading AI-generated content are representatives of the discourse who bargain intertextually and outside of it, on a larger scale. The current paper emphasizes that users have a creative agency

in such changes and the need to ensure that users control what their voice is saying based on the instructions given by artificial intelligence.

Divergent responses to artificial intelligence-powered marketing. The study is an indictment of surveillance capitalism by Preston (2022). Customized AI advertising acts as a discursive performance of knowing the user, thereby posing questions about consent, visibility, and data exploitation. Similar objections also appear in Kant (2016), who studies algorithmic interpellation—when users are guided to act in certain ways by predictive data models. Many people feel and notice these algorithms at work, which means they are establishing a critical awareness of them.

It is clear from the evidence that AI speeches are more swayed by ideology than usefulness. It affects how people view themselves, their social lives, and the way they see a world of technology. The research adds to a large collection of works, proving that AI is not an unbiased technology but is involved in shaping identities, work, and communication (e.g., Guzman & Lewis, 2020).

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

AI-created stories transform the way digital identity and authorship are affected in internet communication. Because of how genuine and beautiful it looks, AI often creates authenticity debates and changes relationships between humans and machines. In this paper, discourse analysis is used to explore how AI-made stories influence digital identity, online appearances, and internet communication. Fairclough, van Dijk, and Goffman's analysis points out that using AI changes both how users present themselves and how they decide whether to be "true to themselves." While some users like that artificial intelligence enhances their profiles, others are put off by its standard approach, its lack of real emotion, and its effects on original human creativity. Using AI to create humanoid content is hard since it is hard to control the impact of human authors. In addition, AI-assisted ads highlight how surveillance and algorithmic categorization are part of the discussions, which means users are treated both as consumers and as data in the world of digital capitalism. As a result, the research points out that AI-driven communication fits firmly into cultural and ideological systems, which makes it necessary for everyone to keep evaluating the changes in human communication and relationships caused by AI.

These results lead to the following suggestions. First, there should be a boost in AI discourse transparency, particularly in user-facing situations, where social media channels and artificial intelligence creators should properly mark AI-generated material. This helps consumers to interact critically with the authority and source of the conversation they come across. Second is the need to create emotionally intelligent AI models. To more accurately depict the emotional and interpersonal dynamics typical of social conversation, there is an urgent need to improve the affective capacities of AI language models. Although emotional authenticity cannot be exactly duplicated, the imitation of nuance helps to increase relational resonance. Third, there should be an advancement of ethical artificial intelligence discourse practices. Considering not only data privacy but also the discursive impacts of language outputs—especially in forming identity, power relations, and trust—developers must set ethical rules considering the performative and ideological power of AI-generated language. Finally, it is recommended to promote upcoming studies on algorithmic discourse. An investigation into how various social groups—by gender, age, or culture—interpret and interact with AI-generated stories is still needed. Comparative analysis across platforms and languages would also help us to better grasp how algorithmic speech moves across digital environments.

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