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THE PERSONIFICATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN GOOGLE ASSISTANT

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Abstract

Artificial intelligence (AI) has permeated many facets of human life in the digital age, notably through virtual assistants like Google Assistant. This research applies Fairclough's Critical speech Analysis (CDA) method to examine the speech that Google Assistant uses to create AI personification. Direct communication with Google Assistant was used to collect the data, which was then examined using the three-dimensional CDA model. The study's findings demonstrate how Google Assistant uses language techniques to present AI as a perceptive, intelligent, and human-like being. The limits of AI, however, continue to influence users' expectations and engagement styles with this technology. This study sheds light on the construction of discourse in AI and its consequences within the ethical and social framework of AI. These results emphasize how crucial it is to comprehend how users' experiences and perceptions of artificial intelligence are impacted by language tactics in AI.

Keywords: *Artificial Intelligence, Google Assistant, human-machine interaction*

Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology has permeated many facets of human life in the current digital era, and one of the most obvious examples of this phenomenon is the integration of virtual assistants into smart devices and digital platforms, such as Google Assistant, which are no longer merely functional tools but have evolved into entities that communicate with users using natural language. The phenomenon of AI personification in virtual assistants is important to research because it has far-reaching implications for how people interact with technology, how AI is perceived, and even how society is constructed in the digital age (Floridi et al., 2018) (Should, 2010). A thorough examination of the discourse employed in virtual assistants is necessary to comprehend how AI personification is constructed and what effects it has in a social context because language, the main medium of interaction between humans and virtual assistants, plays a crucial role in this personification process, influencing how users perceive, trust, and relate to non- human entities (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2024)

One of the most popular virtual assistants, Google Assistant, actively use language techniques to give the appearance of being intelligent, sensitive, and even human-like. The use of greeting names, the capacity to comprehend and reply to intricate inquiries, the

provision of tailored recommendations and suggestions, and the application of intonation and linguistic styles that resemble human speech are just a few examples of the ways in which this personification is demonstrated (Bolton et al., 2021). One specific example is Google Assistant's capacity to "learn" from user interactions, provide more relevant answers over time, and even have casual conversations. This personification extends beyond Google Assistant's ability to respond to queries, as it also includes proactive information, schedule reminders, and even humor or empathy in its responses (Hoy, 2018). Google Assistant's discourse, both through textual and verbal responses, implicitly and explicitly creates a representation of AI as a being with cognitive and social characteristics typically associated with humans.

Many different aspects of AI personification and its effects have been emphasized in earlier studies. In their groundbreaking study The Media Equation, for instance, (Soash, 1999) demonstrated how people often approach computers and other new media in the same manner as they do people and other social entities. A theoretical framework for comprehending how personification in virtual assistants might affect user behavior and perception is provided by this study on Computers as Social Actors (CASA). Additionally, users attribute personalities to virtual beings and even engage in reciprocal social activities, according to a 1999 research by Nass et al.

Research by (Følstad et al., 2018) emphasizes the significance of credibility and trust in user interactions with chatbots and virtual assistants, which is determined in part by the degree of personification. According to a different study by (Mariani et al., 2023) personifying virtual assistants can improve user happiness and engagement. However, studies also highlight the possible drawbacks of over-personification, including the possibility of emotional manipulation (Bickmore & Picard, n.d.) and irrational expectations of AI skills (Stern, 2020). There has also been discourse study of encounters with virtual assistants. (McTear, 2020), for instance, examined the language techniques and conversational patterns employed by chatbots. In summary, these research emphasize how crucial it is to comprehend how language is utilized to create AI personification and its effects on users.

Similar to other research, this study acknowledges the significance of AI personification and the mediating effect of language. Additionally, it aligns with studies that employ a discourse analysis methodology to comprehend human-computer interaction. This study, however, is different from other research in a number of important ways. First, a critical discourse analysis of personification in Google Assistant is the primary subject of this work. This critical method challenges personification's ideological, power, and social connotations in addition to describing how it is created (Baker, 2021). The primary goal of this study is to examine critically the language that Google Assistant, the virtual assistant, uses to personify itself. It is intended that this critical discourse analysis will help researchers better grasp how language is used to build AI personification and its ramifications in a social setting where human-machine contact is becoming more and more prevalent.

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study chooses a qualitative approach utilizing the Critical Discourse Analysis method, primarily based on (Fairarclough & Bek, n.d.) theory. This strategy was selected to expose the social and ideological connotations concealed in Google Assistant's vocabulary, as well as the ways in which these discursive practices influence power dynamics and perceptions in digital society.

Research Subject

This study uses voice and text from Google Assistant encounters rather than human participants, and the sample is chosen purposefully, that is, by choosing data that is thought to be representative and pertinent to the personification, gender prejudice, and ideological difficulties in AI.

Instruments and Data Collection Techniques

The following methods were used to collect data:

a. Direct observation and light experiments, direct interaction with Google Assistant in a variety of conversational contexts.
b. Systematic recording of conversational language forms, word choices, voice intonation, and AI communication patterns.

Data Analysis

The following phases were used to analyze the data:

a. Description: Determining the linguistic patterns (sentence structure, word choice, and voice tone) that Google Assistant employs.
b. Interpretation: Looks at how societal standards, including gender prejudice or AI personification, are reflected in AI replies.
c. Justification: Exposing the philosophy underlying Google Assistant's language usage and how it affects communication between humans and machines.

Results and Discussion

Results

Personification in Google Assistant

Google Assistant utilizes linguistic strategies that give the appearance of human personality. Some of the primary patterns discovered in the interactions are:

First-person pronouns (I, me) are used in this sentence: *"I'm here to help you.(Saya di sini untuk membantu Anda)".* Google Assistant employs language techniques intended to give the impression that the AI is like a human. This is demonstrated by the usage of first-person pronouns, which are common in interpersonal communication and include *"I"* and *"me."* Phrases like *"I'm here to help you"(Saya di sini untuk membantu Anda)"* are used to foster emotional intimacy in addition to communicating functionality.

Additionally, the AI frequently employs sentimentally upbeat expressions like "*I'm glad I could help you! (Saya senang bisa membantu Anda!)"* The mechanism is emotionless in theory. When combined with a responsive tone and gentle voice inflection, Google Assistant provides a conversational experience that the user finds comfortable and welcoming.

From a linguistic point of view, this strategy demonstrates how the use of words, speech style, and sentence structure can shape users' perception of the technology's identity. The personification aims to increase users' comfort in interacting with the technology while creating emotional engagement that can drive frequency of use. The tone of voice is friendly and responsive, which adapts to the context of the user's question.

Gender Bias in AI Personification

Although users can select from a range of voice options, the default voice used by Google Assistant is typically female and has a soft, high-pitched, friendly-sounding voice. This indicates that AI design has embraced many social stereotypes of women as helpful, obedient, and always willing to assist. This tendency toward gender-neutral representation is evident in the personification of Google Assistant.

This portrayal is further supported by the linguistic style employed by Google Assistant. For instance, the AI prefers to speak in a kind manner, refrain from being forceful, and exhibit a modest manner. Example lines like *"Let me help you ("Maaf, saya belum bisa membantu dengan itu)" or "Sorry, I can't help with that yet (Izinkan saya membantu Anda)"* demonstrate how the AI is made to be non- confrontational even when it is asked a question or receives a request that it is unable to respond to.

The Ideology behind AI Personification

Personification in AI represents the interests of tech companies in addition to trying to enhance the user experience. Among the beliefs embodied in the personification of Google Assistant are:

Normalization of human-machine interaction: Google Assistant's personification has an ideological component in addition to making communication easier. AI is intended to communicate "naturally," that is, in a manner that is similar to how people talk in daily situations. This tactic normalizes AI's presence in consumers' daily lives and normalizes

machine-human contact.

User commoditization: Google Assistant is not only a tool; it is also a component of Google's business plan, which involves gathering information about user interactions. Additionally, the tech corporation uses this personification as part of its effort to help people develop a close relationship with their digital goods. The more users communicate with AI, the more information the system gathers.

AI design bias: AI also replicates societal standards, such as how "friendly" or "nice" should sound. This demonstrates that although AI seems impartial and objective, it is actually a cultural product that reflects the ideals of its designers. In the context of the discussion of technology and power, when technology is no longer only a tool but also an actor influencing social reality, this is significant to highlight.

Discussion

Personification in Google Assistant

The perception of AI as a social being is shaped by Google Assistant's usage of human language. This lends credence to the media equation hypothesis put out by (Nass & Moon, 2000) which explains why people often approach media the same way they do actual people. When engaging with AI, consumers feel more at ease and transparent due to this social illusion.

On the other hand, there is a conflict between AI's appearance of "life" and the reality that it is still a scripted, algorithm-based system. Personification has the ability to deceive users who are unaware of the boundaries of the technology, which presents ethical questions.

Gender Bias in AI Personification

The implicit gender bias in Google Assistant's voice and conduct is based on preconceived notions about women being helpful and subservient. Although users have the option to select a male or gender-neutral voice, the default feminine option perpetuates long-standing conventions.

Feminized depictions of AI frequently perpetuate inferior perceptions of women in social and technical institutions, as demonstrated by (Xue et al., 2024) in a UNESCO study. This implies that design choices help to maintain gender inequality in the digital sphere and that AI programming conveys non-neutral social values.

The Ideology Behind AI Personification

It is possible to view personification in Google Assistant as a tactic that advances the commercial and ideological objectives of digital firms. Users are more receptive to contact when AI is made to feel "close" and "friendly," which increases the likelihood of extensive personal data acquisition.

This result supports the claim made by (Hafner et al., 2015) that the way virtual assistants communicate verbally and visually reflects not just the technology but also the goals and values of the organizations that developed them. In addition to being a technology, artificial intelligence is a component of the digital capitalism system that treats user data as

a commodity.

According to the study's findings, Google Assistant employs language techniques that both overtly and covertly present AI as a creature that is similar to humans but yet has limitations. In contrast to other studies (Hafner et al., 2015)(Diederich et al., 2022), these results demonstrate that AI is personified as a conversation partner with specific constraints in addition to being a tool. This conclusion suggests that a better knowledge of how AI language might affect users' expectations of AI and how it affects human-machine interaction is necessary.

Furthermore, this conclusion is pertinent to the ethics of AI as over-personification might result in inflated expectations for AI's potential. According to research by (Nass & Moon, 2000), people have a tendency to form social bonds with human-like technology, which may have an impact on trust and AI reliance.

Conclusion

According to this study, Google Assistant employs a variety of language techniques to create discourse that personifies artificial intelligence. Through the use of Critical Discourse Analysis, this study offers fresh perspectives on the representation of AI in digital communication. The results may be used as a starting point for creating more moral AI and comprehending how users perceive it. As a recommendation, future studies might examine the long-term effects of personifying AI on users' perceptions and the consequences for human-technology interaction patterns.

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