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Discourse Analysis of Selected Blog Posts Framing AI as a Threat or Opportunity to Jobs

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Abstract
This research examines the discourse surrounding AI and its impact on jobs. Through a thematic analysis of a corpus of blog posts, this study identifies key discursive strategies employed by authors to frame AI. These strategies include exaggerating job loss, highlighting skill mismatches, and fear-mongering. Conversely, authors also frame AI as an opportunity, emphasizing job creation, productivity gains, and skill enhancement. By analyzing the rhetorical devices, target audiences, and underlying ideologies, this research provides insights into how AI is perceived and understood by the public. Understanding these diverse perspectives is crucial for navigating the complex landscape of AI and its potential impact on the future of work.

Key words: blog posts, Al as threat, Al as opportunity, job loss, discourse analysis, artificial intelligence

Introduction

The term *artificial intelligence* stirs emotions. For one thing there is our fascination with intelligence, which seemingly imparts to us humans a special place among life forms. Questions arise such as "What is intelligence?", "How can one measure intelligence?", or "How does the brain work?". All these questions are meaningful when trying to understand artificial intelligence. However, the central question for the engineer, especially for the computer scientist, is the question of the intelligent machine that behaves like a person, showing intelligent behavior. The attribute artificial might awaken much different associations. It brings up fears of intelligent cyborgs. It recalls images from science fiction novels. It raises the question of whether
our highest good, the soul, is something we should try to understand, model, or even reconstruct. With such different offhand interpretations, it becomes difficult to define the term artificial intelligence or Al simply and robustly. (W Ertel, 2024)

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Artificial Intelligence (AI) has rapidly emerged as a transformative technology with the potential to revolutionize various industries and aspects of human life. From self-driving cars to medical diagnosis, AI is increasingly becoming an integral part of our daily lives. However, the rapid advancement of AI has also raised concerns about its potential impact on the job market.

A significant body of discourse has emerged, with varying perspectives on whether AI will create or destroy jobs. Some argue that AI will lead to widespread job displacement, while others contend that it will create new jobs and industries. This research aims to analyze this discourse and understand how AI is framed and perceived by the public. Specifically, this study will investigate the discursive strategies employed by authors to present AI as either a threat or an opportunity to jobs. By examining blog posts, we will identify key themes, such as job displacement, job creation, and skill gaps. Additionally, we will analyze the rhetorical devices used by authors to persuade readers and shape public opinion.

The findings of this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex and multifaceted nature of the discourse on AI and jobs. By identifying the dominant narratives and underlying ideologies, we can inform policy decisions and help to mitigate the negative impacts of AI while maximizing its benefits.

Literature Review

Artifcial intelligence (AI) is being increasingly integrated into enterprises to foster collaboration within human machine teams and assist employees with work-related tasks. However, introducing AI may negatively impact employees' identifcations with their jobs as AI is expected to fundamentally change workplaces and professions, feeding into individuals' fears of being replaced. (Mirbabaie et al, 2021)Employees fearing a loss of competence or independence due to AI perceive higher AI identity threat. Perceived changes to job roles and responsibilities, triggered by AI, contribute to increased AI identity threat. A positive AI identity (viewing AI as indispensable) reduces AI identity threat. (Wang et al, 2020)

There is a significant difference in AI understanding based on educational background ($P < 0.05$); higher education correlates with a more optimistic view of AI's impact on employment. 99.3% of respondents have heard of AI, but only 5.8% possess deep knowledge of it. 55.6% support faster AI development, while 28.3% see it as a threat and advocate for restrictions. 29.7% worry AI will eliminate jobs, but 56.9% remain optimistic about AI offering new

opportunities. Over 80% of respondents believe mastering computer and software skills is crucial for future competitiveness in an AI-driven world. Universities should integrate AI-related curricula, focus on professional ethics, and enhance employability through practical. (Mirbabaie et al, 2021)

AI and digital technologies will significantly change the nature of work, necessitating new political and philosophical approaches to govern this transition responsibly. Protecting jobs or offering financial compensation (e.g., Universal Basic Income) is insufficient; instead, a Responsible Innovation approach is needed to embed freedom and justice into future work structures. Freedom and justice can best be promoted by recognizing different virtues and

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values in various activities, guided by Walzer's 'spheres of justice' and a virtue ethics perspective. The development of individual capabilities and human agency must be a design priority in AI-driven work. Mental capacities should be recognized as valuable capital in the digital economy and rewarded accordingly. Early applications of these ideas have been explored in healthcare robotics, citizen science, and digital platforms. (Santoni de Sio et al, 2021)

CDA helps identify hidden biases in AI systems, such as gender and racial biases in AI-driven processes like hiring. It reveals how AI technologies reproduce and reinforce existing power dynamics in society. It can inform the development of AI systems that are more transparent and accountable by examining ideological assumptions in algorithms. Applying CDA to AI can lead to more inclusive systems that promote diversity, democratic values, and social justice. Successful integration of CDA in AI research requires collaboration between humanities scholars and computer scientists, posing potential methodological challenges. (Roozafzai Z. , 2024)

AI could lead to job losses in sectors prone to automation, but also create new jobs and improve productivity. The impact of AI on employment varies across countries, industries, and occupations, making it complex and context-specific. Future research should focus on developing nuanced models that capture the varied effects of AI across different sectors and regions. Effective policy responses, such as reskilling programs, universal basic income, and social protection, are crucial to managing AI-induced labor disruptions. Collaboration between researchers, policymakers, and businesses is necessary to ensure AI benefits are shared and negative impacts on employment are minimized. (Jiaxing Du, 2024)

Research using Facebook Prophet reveals significant risks of automation to the global labor force. By 2030, nearly 30% of the workforce may be at risk of job loss due to artificial intelligence. The rise in automation is expected to shift employment dynamics, particularly affecting jobs with repetitive tasks. Existing inequities in the labor market will be exacerbated, disproportionately impacting certain groups. Urgent action is needed from governments, corporations, and individuals to address automation-related job displacement. Investment in education and training programs is crucial to equip workers with digital-era skills. Development of inclusive policies is essential for job creation and economic resilience. Collaboration among various stakeholders is vital for managing the transition to a future where automation and human labor coexist. Thoughtful adoption of automation can enhance productivity, drive innovation, and create new societal advancements. (Fatima et al, 2024)

Significance of study

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to understanding the complex discourse surrounding AI and its impact on the job market. By analyzing the various ways in which AI is framed, the study can inform policymakers, businesses, and individuals about the potential benefits and risks of AI. By identifying the dominant narratives and underlying ideologies, the research can help shape public opinion and guide policy decisions. Moreover, the study can contribute to a deeper understanding of the ethical implications of AI and the need for responsible development and deployment of AI technologies.

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Methodology

Research Design

This research employed a qualitative research design, specifically a discourse analysis approach. According to Snape and Spencer (2003, p. 200), discourse analysis originates from the discipline of sociology and is about: "Examining the way knowledge is produced within different discourses and the performances, linguistic styles and rhetorical devices used in particular accounts. By analyzing the language used in blog posts, we gained insights into how AI is framed and understood by the public.

Data Collection

The data for this study was collected from a variety of blog posts. These blog posts were identified through a combination of keyword searches. Keywords such as "AI," "artificial intelligence," "job market," "automation," "AI as threat or opportunity" and "future of work" were used to identify relevant blog posts.

Data Analysis

The collected blog posts were subjected to a thematic analysis. This involved a systematic process of identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns within the data. The following steps were involved in the analysis:

1. **Familiarization:** I carefully read and re-read the blog posts to gain a general understanding of the content.
2. **Coding:** Key themes and subthemes were identified and coded. These codes were then grouped into broader categories.
3. **Theme Development:** The coded data was analyzed to identify patterns and relationships between themes.
4. **Theme Review:** The identified themes were reviewed and refined to ensure their relevance and coherence.
5. **Interpretation:** The themes were interpreted in the context of the broader discourse on AI and its impact on the job market.

By analyzing the language used in the blog posts, I was able to identify the dominant discourses, the rhetorical strategies employed, and the underlying assumptions about AI and its impact on jobs. This analysis provides valuable insights into how AI is framed and understood by the public.

Research Objectives

1. To analyze the discursive strategies employed by authors to present AI in blog posts.
2. To examine whether the presentation of AI in blog posts frames it as a solution or a challenge to jobs

Research Questions

1. What discursive strategies do authors use to present AI in their blog posts? 2. Does the presentation of AI frame it as a solution or a challenge to jobs?

Discussion and Analysis

Discursive Strategies

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Discursive strategies are the deliberate linguistic choices and rhetorical techniques employed by authors to shape meaning and influence their audience.
These strategies can be used to persuade, inform, or manipulate. (IGI Global, 2021) By analyzing the discursive strategies used in a text, we can gain insights into the underlying ideologies and power relations at play. This can help us to critically evaluate the information presented and to identify potential biases or misrepresentations.

1. Framing AI as a Threat
A significant portion of the discourse surrounding AI presents it as a potential threat to jobs. This framing often involves exaggerating the negative consequences of AI, such as job displacement and economic disruption.

Exaggerating Job Loss: Many blog posts employ hyperbolic language to emphasize the extent of job losses due to AI. For instance, a post claimed, *"AI is poised to decimate entire industries." (Social Europe, 2024).* By using such dramatic language, authors evoke fear and anxiety among readers, leading them to perceive AI as a destructive force. *"Millions of Jobs at Risk"* This is a common trope in many AI-related articles. By quantifying the potential job losses, authors created a sense of alarm and fear. Blog post highlighted that millions of jobs in manufacturing, transportation, and customer service will be automated in the near future.

Highlighting Skill Mismatch: Another common strategy is to highlight the skills gap between the current workforce and the future AI-driven economy. Blog posts often emphasize the need
for significant upskilling, suggesting that many workers will be unable to adapt to the new technological landscape. *"Many workers lack the necessary skills to thrive in an AI-driven economy." (LinkedIn, 2024).* This framing created a sense of urgency and a need for immediate action**.** *"Upskilling for the AI Age: Preparing for the Future of Work" (Innopharma Education)***.** The blog posts focus on the importance of upskilling and reskilling to adapt to the changing job market. It emphasizes the need for continuous learning and development to stay relevant in the age of AI.
Fear Mongering: Some authors employ fear-mongering tactics to portray AI as an existential threat. By emphasizing the potential for AI to be misused or to fall into the wrong hands, they create a sense of distrust and fear among the public. This strategy can be seen in various blog
posts and media articles. *"The rise of AI could lead to a dystopian future where machines control humanity." (Forbes, 2024). "AI-Powered Surveillance and Privacy Concerns"* By highlighting the potential for AI to be used for mass surveillance and privacy invasion, authors captured the public's attention and generate widespread concern about the possible negative impacts of AI.

2. Framing AI as an Opportunity:
In contrast to the threat narrative, some blog posts frame AI as a potential opportunity for economic growth, job creation, and societal advancement.

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Emphasizing Job Creation: Some blog posts highlighted the potential of AI to create new jobs and industries. By focusing on the positive aspects of AI, such as increased productivity and innovation, authors present AI as a driver of economic growth. *"AI will create new jobs and industries, driving economic growth." (Forbes, 2024)* According to a report by M*cKinsey & Company*, AI is expected to create **20-50 million** new jobs globally by 2030. These new jobs will be in a range of industries, including healthcare, manufacturing, and finance. (InnoPharma Education)

Focusing on Productivity Gains: AI is often portrayed as a tool that can significantly increase productivity and efficiency. *"AI can automate routine tasks, freeing up workers to focus on higher-value activities." (Forbes, 2024)* By automating routine tasks and improving decision making, AI can free up human workers to focus on more creative and strategic work. For instance, AI-powered automation tools can handle repetitive tasks such as data entry, customer service inquiries, and report generation. This frees up human workers to focus on tasks that require critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

Highlighting Skill Enhancement: Some authors argue that AI can be used to enhance human capabilities and create new opportunities for innovation. Such as *"AI can be used to enhance human capabilities and create new opportunities for innovation." (InnoPharma Education)*. By emphasizing the need for upskilling and reskilling, they suggest that AI can help workers adapt to the changing job market and develop new skills.

3. Using Rhetorical Devices:
To make their arguments more persuasive, authors often employ a variety of rhetorical devices. Rhetorical devices are linguistic tools that use sentence structure, sound, or pattern of meaning to evoke a specific reaction from an audience. They are often used to construct an argument or make an existing argument more compelling. (ThoughtCo, 2024)

Metaphors: Metaphors can be used to simplify complex ideas and make them more relatable. Authors in blog posts described Al as a *"double-edged sword" or a "Pandora's box."* By using such vivid imagery, authors captured the attention of the reader and create a lasting impression.

Personal Anecdotes: Sharing personal stories made the argument more compelling and relatable. For instance, an author shared their own experiences with AI and the experiences of others to illustrate the potential benefits or drawbacks of the technology. *"I recently spoke with a CEO who shared how AI has transformed their business."*

Expert Opinions: Citing experts and research studies added credibility to the author's claims. By referencing the work of renowned academics and industry leaders, authors strengthened their arguments and convince readers of the validity of their perspective. *"According to a recent study by McKinsey, AI could created trillions of dollars in economic value." (Wiwi, 2024)*

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Conclusion

The discourse surrounding AI and its impact on jobs is multifaceted and often contradictory. This research has explored the various discursive strategies employed by authors to frame AI as either a threat or an opportunity. By analyzing a range of blog posts, I have identified key themes and trends in the discourse. The discourse on AI and jobs is complex and evolving. While there are concerns about job displacement and economic inequality, AI also offers significant opportunities for innovation and economic growth. By understanding the various perspectives and arguments presented in the discourse, we can make informed decisions about the future of work and the role of AI in society.

Key Findings:

Framing AI as a Threat: Many authors employ fear-mongering tactics to emphasize the potential negative consequences of AI, such as job displacement and economic disruption. By highlighting the skills gap and the risk of technological unemployment, these authors created a sense of urgency and anxiety.

Framing AI as an Opportunity: Conversely, other authors emphasize the potential benefits of AI, such as increased productivity, innovation, and economic growth. By focusing on the positive aspects of AI, these authors present a more optimistic view of the future.

Rhetorical Devices: Authors use various rhetorical devices, including metaphors, personal anecdotes, and expert opinions, to persuade readers and strengthen their arguments.

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