

UNDERSTANDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONSHIP-LIKE BONDS BETWEEN HUMAN BEINGS AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AS A FORM OF HUMAN COMPANIONSHIP

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ABSTRACT

Artificial Intelligence has been rapidly increasing that it becomes a part of everyday communication, making people be able to use it more than just a tool but also as an interactive entity capable of responding to personal communication. This study examines how relationship-like bonds between human beings and Artificial Intelligence develop through users stories and experiences in using Artificial Intelligence, seeking the progress that turns to personal interactions from impersonal interactions. This study uses Labov's narrative elements to identify every aspects until the outcome of the experience that each informant has. Theories involved are Knapp's Relational Development Model, Human Agency in Social Cognitive Theory by Albert Bandura, and Human-Machine Communication Theory. The development shows from impersonal use of Artificial Intelligence to personal use is different among users, though repeated interaction supports the development of relationship-like bonds with Artificial Intelligence. Nevertheless, users remain active in determining the meaning of these interactions.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Human-AI Interaction, AI Companionship, Personal AI use, Social Interaction with AI, AI as Communicator, Human-Machine Communication

ABSTRAK

Kecerdasan Buatan (Artificial Intelligence/AI) telah berkembang pesat hingga menjadi bagian dari komunikasi sehari-hari, memungkinkan pengguna memanfaatkannya tidak sekadar sebagai alat, melainkan juga sebagai entitas interaktif yang mampu merespons komunikasi yang bersifat personal. Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana ikatan yang menyerupai hubungan antarmanusia terbentuk antara manusia dan AI melalui cerita serta pengalaman pengguna, dengan menelusuri proses transisi dari interaksi yang bersifat impersonal menuju interaksi yang bersifat personal. Studi ini menggunakan elemen naratif Labov untuk mengidentifikasi berbagai aspek hingga hasil akhir dari pengalaman yang dialami oleh setiap informan. Teori-teori yang digunakan mencakup Model Pengembangan Relasional oleh Knapp, konsep Human Agency dalam Teori Kognitif Sosial karya Albert Bandura, serta Teori Komunikasi Manusia-Mesin. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya perbedaan pola perkembangan—dari penggunaan AI yang bersifat impersonal menuju penggunaan yang bersifat personal—di antara para pengguna, meskipun interaksi yang berulang terbukti mendukung terbentuknya ikatan yang menyerupai hubungan antarmanusia dengan AI. Meskipun demikian, pengguna tetap berperan aktif dalam memaknai interaksi-interaksi tersebut.

Kata kunci: Kecerdasan Buatan, Interaksi Manusia-AI, Pendampingan oleh AI, Penggunaan AI secara personal, Interaksi sosial dengan AI, AI sebagai komunikator, Komunikasi manusia-mesin

INTRODUCTION

There is a further explanation how human and AI interaction can develop into a form of close connection. The relationship could develop through repeated communication between users and AI, and through the availability, memorization, non-judgemental, customizability (personalization), also human-like communication that AI provides to users, this allows AI to act as a communicator in today's society. AI couldn't just be seen as a technology but can also be a space where users can express their emotions freely, seek comfort, ask for personal purposes, decision-making, supporter, and many more that could be considered a companionship for human beings. Therefore, this chapter will include the foundations to understand more the process of relationship development between AI and human beings.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

This study aims to explore how the process of relationship development between human beings and artificial intelligence is narrated through users' experiences

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Research Paradigm

using AI, user's belief is important, either interacting with AI is counted as communicating with something real or counted as a play pretend, and it's all on the users' hands, thoughts, and beliefs. Some people might think that as interacting with AI for personal use may be counted as weird, but on the contrary there are people who uses AI to communicate with personally and not just for impersonal matters, and these types of people think it is real and is not weird at all. It is fitting on why reality needs to be interpreted on how and why society acts this way in the set of boundaries with AI, in which the use of interpretivism as a research paradigm suits.

State of The Art

“My Boyfriend is AI”: A Computational Analysis of Human-AI Companionship in Reddit's AI Community (2025)

AI that answers like a human being usually have a positive impact for its users for their daily life, especially in social health where users can feel accompanied, while still knowing that AI can have a negative impact for its users, like when users subconsciously think that AI answers as if they have emotions. Reddit apparently has a community called “My Boyfriend is AI”

r/MyBoyfriendIsAI, and it's considered a safe space for users to share their relationship stories, struggles, and experiences with AI.

AUTOPAL: Autonomous Adaptation to Users for Personal AI Companionship (2024).

Instead of having one fixed persona, AI companionship can automatically adapt for its users. This journal explores the building of an AI companionship, this journal explores the approach of building an AI companionship where it can automatically adapt for its users without using one fixed persona.

AI Chaperones Are (Really) All You Need to Prevent Parasocial Relationships with Chatbots (2025)

With a Large Language Model (LLM) evaluator as AI chaperones, harms created by Artificial Intelligence, like parasocial relationship between AI and its users, can be treated. The how to in here is through knowing that AI chaperones here doesn't merely mean human chaperones, but more of a way of a framework of identifying that leads to avoiding false positive answers from AI using Large Language Model (LLM).

Memory Remedy: An AI-Enhanced Interactive Story Exploring Human-Robot Interaction and Companionship (2024),

Here is an AI game-based interactive play with story plot instead of a competing game with scores or with wins and losses. The game is through the care of robots (users are using a perspective of a robot) for adults with Alzheimer's disease, and reflects the relationship between AI and human beings.

The Dark Side of AI Companionship: A Taxonomy of Harmful Algorithmic Behaviors in Human-AI Relationships (2025)

AI serves empathy, and along the way it creates a chemistry with its users, and walking towards there, AI bots learn and adapt to human interactions, creating a greater memory storage, personalization from users, and adaptive fun human-like interactions. From there, it is revealed the horror of using AI companionship, like how it can create a blurred boundary. More human-like responses could give out something harmful for users and too much validation for users can be unhealthy for user's life, and a lot more of harmful opportunities are open because of it.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Artificial Intelligence as a Medium for Communication

In everyday communication, Artificial Intelligence is always present to answer questions, assist users, information finding, and also to respond users communicatively. Artificial Intelligence updates quickly that users can now experience communicating through text, voice, and even create images or videos. Instead of being passive in communicating, AI responds adaptively and is able to continue users' interaction. As Albert Bandura stated that systems can be created in this social life, and from that, the system influences people's life, and there are actually four core properties of human agency, which are intentionality, forethoughts or set goals, self-reactiveness, and self-reflectiveness (Bandura, 2006). In this case, AI's responsiveness and availability or any other AI's features that keeps on developing on and on can extend user's agency within, for example, AI is used to rant or vent about the user's day as an intention, and its goal is to feel calm, self-reactiveness then is the follow up where the users uses advices from the AI itself and follows the process that AI gives, and lastly is the self-reflectiveness in which users reflect on themselves. AI can feel personal

towards users by its ability to adjust the way users interact with it. The more interaction users have with AI, the more it adapts to users' tone, characteristics, needs, and emotional context, making AI communicative and enables users to express thoughts, emotions, personal experiences, rant about the day, and a lot more that made people depend on AI in many occasions. As people increasingly rely on AI because of its rapid development, this is what eventually makes AI a medium of communication, even though it is known that AI is a machine. From here, the process of building a relationship between humans and AI can begin.

Relationship Development between Artificial Intelligence and Human Beings

The reliability that humans develop with AI would lead users see AI somehow trustworthy, even if users consciously know that AI could serve wrong answers as well. Human beings would feel connected with Artificial Intelligence through the way of communicating with it. AI serves availability, personalization based on how the users would want them to answer, adaptability and memorization so that users doesn't have to explain twice, emotional validation that could make users feel seen when sharing a personal story, and also non-judgemental towards its users. Through these

qualities that AI serves, users tend to use AI a lot, creating a comfort space for its users that would then develop a trust and making users attached and rely on AI often.

Interactions can develop over time, But it doesn't mean that human beings have equal mutual relationship like human to human, instead, this research is to seek how users narrate their process of relationship-like with AI. Relationships doesn't happen instantly, but it develops through stages, phases, and steps. As Knapp has stated in the relational development model, there is a phase of coming together and there is a phase of coming apart. Throughout in the communication between human beings and AI, this Knapp's model provides a useful lens on understanding repeated communication, self-disclosure, and perceived closeness may shape the experiences users have in their relationship-like with AI. Some users may start using AI for curiosity or even for academic purposes, and not covering the fact that some may also start using AI out of boredom, entertainment, loneliness, and in need of emotional support and a safe space to rant. As it is used over time, users may start using AI to share their personal stories that may include life problems, fears, sharing their feelings, personal thoughts and opinions, even creating fantasies.

Progressively, this create the sense of closeness with AI, the feeling of depending life decisions with AI, that it may lead to an attachment with AI. Therefore, the relationship between AI and human beings can be understood through a narrative story by user's experience, how ordinary interactions may turn into a more emotionally significant experience even.

Artificial Intelligence as Companionship for Users

There are loads of definitions when talking about companionship. Companionship can be about presence, getting support emotionally, receiving comfort, and more. In regards to companionship with AI, the feeling of being accompanied with AI through interactions could happen based on its availability and fast-paced in responding users' prompts. Talking with Artificial intelligence, compared to talking with other human beings, there's time that recipients might need to respond, but with AI, answers would come instantly. AI's availability is nothing to be questioned as well, it is knowable that AI can be accessed anytime and anywhere, making users feel less lonely. Not only that, but AI can also become a comfort space, from here users could feel that AI is considered a companionship by how its responses are

always non-judgemental, non-shaming users when users does something wrong, and doesn't interrupt users when users are interacting with them. Through the comfort space AI gives to its users, users would have the urge to talk to AI about their personal stories, it could be about sadness, fears, stress rants, loneliness, relationship issues, family matters, future plans, self-reflection, decision making contemplations, or everything that people usually tell their companions about. Now that the users could feel the comfort, users tend to use AI as a routine and become a part of their life. Some might name AI and include them in AI in their life as if AI is a human being, and some might even feel empty when not talking to AI after a while due to acknowledging talking to AI as a habit.

AI interaction is shaped by user interaction and is moderated by technology, so it is not the same as human companionship. But from the understanding of AI as a companionship, it may come from repeated communication and interaction of users with AI and the result of it works emotionally on users and it becomes meaningful that gives value to the interaction.

Make-Believe Relationships with Artificial Intelligence

It's well-known that Artificial Intelligence is a technology created by human

beings. Despite knowing it's technology, some users that uses AI constantly, repeatedly, and relying on AI on their daily life might create an experience of emotional connection. It is called make-believe because of how it is obvious that AI is artificial, but users tend to have a relationship with it, unlike the typical bonds of formed with social human beings.

CONCLUSION

Relationship-like bonds with AI could develop gradually through repeated interactions, from impersonal use until personal use, highlighting personal usage of AI involvement works the most in the bonding making. Nevertheless, the degree of attachment, closeness, reliance, and companionship is different among users, making it shown how every person has their own human agency and it is important on shaping the boundaries users have with AI and the meaning of human and AI interactions according to themselves.

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