The Discourse of Authority in AI Interfaces: A Critical Discourse Analysis

Zahraa M Al-Tallal
Faculty of Medical Sciences, Jabir Ibn Hayyan University for Medical and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Najaf, Iraq

* Corresponding Author: **Zahraa M Al-Tallal**

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Abstract
More and more, AI interfaces (like virtual assistants, chatbots, and recommendation systems) are changing the way people interact with computers, transforming the way people think and behave. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is used in this essay to analyze language of authority in AI interfaces. The research paper investigates the impact of language, design, and contact patterns in standard AI systems on power in AI-based communication, its support, and challenge. This paper examines the way AI systems shift the power balance based on the CDA theory introduced by Fairclough and concepts provided by discourse studies and human-computer interaction. Conversation logs and features from Siri, Alexa, and Google Assistant are utilised in this piece to demonstrate their capabilities, keep users on track, and illustrate how AI can leverage these features as examples of AI that accomplish these tasks. The polls reveal what people genuinely think about technology and what they believe others should do. Additionally, they demonstrate how speech from authorities influences AI settings in terms of freedom, trust, and dependency. That's because of this study from different areas. It helps us understand the political and social sides of AI words better. It also enables us to develop AI systems that are more beneficial for people by being more transparent, fair, and accountable.

Keywords: AI interfaces, authority, critical discourse analysis, discourse, power

1. Introduction

Bots, virtual assistants, and guidance systems are all AI tools that people have utilised extensively in the past few years. People don't have to just search for things or finish jobs to use these sites.

They also transform the manner in which people utilize and perceive technology. Among the ways AI changes things, a large portion is the manner in which it discusses power. In this instance power is the ability to command the other individuals on what to do. This is frequently carried out through words, tone and how things are assembled.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) can be a helpful perspective in understanding how social situations and situations in general lead to and preserve power among people. It examines the interrelationship of language, power and thought (Fairclough, 1995) [6]. The CDA demonstrates that algorithms and premeditated discussions that appear objective cover up the political opinions about technology, dexterity and the manner in which individuals utilize it.

This discussion does not only transform the extent to which individuals rely and have faith in AI, but also the approach, by which individuals and computers collaborate to make decisions and maintain things in a check.

This paper will discuss the ways in which individuals converse and interact with large virtual assistants such as Siri, Alexa, and Google Assistant to identify how power is discussed in AI interfaces. It posits: How are power accumulated in a conversation with words and signs that AI run? What are the effects of power changes of these relationships? What decisions benefit or damage these power relations in relation to design?

The address to these issues will help us get to know more about the political and social impacts of the AI conversation, which will ultimately result in the development of more honest and moral platforms.

The following are the arrangements of the paper. After this introduction, the literature review discusses the key concepts of the Critical Discourse Analysis, authoritative discourse, and studies on AI interfaces. The part on past research summarises research findings concerning AI discourse and authority. The procedure outlines the data gathering procedure, the data analysis procedure, and the CDA application technique. The analysis section focuses on the determination of authority in AI conversations and interface components. Lastly, the conclusion and discussion deal with the future outlook of the AI, user experiences, and digital ethics.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Power and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) examines how language and communication patterns influence and reveal power dynamics and social inequality (Fairclough, 1995; Wodak & Meyer, 2009) [6, 20]. Fairclough's three-dimensional framework looks at discourse on three levels: textual, discursive practice, and social practice. It connects language elements to larger ideological settings. Many people have used CDA to examine authority in political speeches, the media, education, and increasingly, digital communication (van Dijk, 2008) [18].

2.2. Power in Conversation

Authority in discourse is a form of power that arises from using language and signs to establish trust, persuade others to act as desired, or influence societal behaviour (Drew & Heritage, 1992) [5]. Fairclough (2010) [7] suggests that authority can be apparent, as when someone gives orders or directions, or it can be hidden, such as when someone uses tone, modality, and interactional norms to convey authority. In institutions, authority discourse establishes hierarchies and controls access to information (Sarangi & Candlin, 2003) [16].

2.3. AI Interfaces as Talkative Agents

AI interfaces, such as chatbots and virtual assistants, communicate with users in scripted or pre-produced language, which affects how they utilise the system and what they do (Cowan *et al*., 2020) [4]. Most of the time, these systems display institutional authority by delivering expert advice, information, and guidance. Researchers claim that AI interfaces assist in developing technical authority by changing how much users trust, follow, and perceive experts (Luger & Sellen, 2016; Seering *et al*., 2019) [10, 17].

2.4. Language and how people and AI talk to each other

Studies of talks between people and AI have shown that language traits like politeness, phrasing, and modality can change how people think about the power and agency of AI (Lind *et al*., 2019) [9]. Design choices also have the ability to transform power, such as the way to respond to errors, rotate, and react. (Luo *et al*., 2020). Both science and social factors affect the language that AIs use when they talk to each other. They think about what people want and how computers work at the same time.

2.5. What it does to society and morals

Researchers emphasise the moral importance of being transparent and allowing people to control AI systems. They also caution about ambiguous power that might result in the lack of freedom among people (Zhou *et al*., 2020) [21]. The ways in which critical discourse methods are useful include revealing hidden power relations and suggesting changes in the design that would render the relations between AI and humans more democratic. (Bietti, 2020) [1].

3. Previous Studies

The interface between language, human-computer interaction (HCI), and critical theory is a new area that is being explored.

3.1. Giving Power to Virtual Assistants

Luger and Sellen (2016) [10] studied customers in 2016 and discovered that virtual assistants, including Siri and Alexa, tend to change their voice to make an individual feel more empowered. This alters the degree of belief and adherence among people to their advice. Also, in their research, they found the perceptions of people of the intelligence of AI and the fear of becoming too addicted to it and losing control over it.

3.2. How People and AI Talk to Each Other: Power and Control

Seering *et al*. (2019) [17] explored the AI platform in terms of determining who is going to talk first and when, and how it handles the conversation. Artificial intelligence alters the manner in which individuals communicate and behave without their understanding. That is what the power behind the scenes does. The study revealed that these things influence the ways in which people use AI and the way they perceive it.

3.3. How AI Talks and Texts to Have Conversations

To determine the way people consider the social position and the strength of an AI, Lind *et al*. (2019) [9] examined the way it speaks and the way it communicates through gender, politeness, and words. The study by researchers was based on the assumption that individuals would be more accepting of and trusting of language models that are less comprehendible.

3.4. A thorough look at how AI works

In Bietti (2020) [1], CDA was utilized to examine the work created by AI and discovered hidden concepts concerning technology, power, and ability. The study found that people who are making AI should be keen not to employ words that sound too strong.

3.5. AI tools should be honest and easy to understand.

Zhou *et al*. investigated the ethical issues that arise when AI is talking to individuals in 2020. According to them, it was good to be honest and open to make sure that people do not misuse their power. They believed that AI should be added with speech recognition to provide people with more power. They show that the AI systems use words and dialogue to present their intelligence. This alters the level of trust and control of people to them. Here is where the analysis of critical speech comes in.

This may aid us to know the functioning of power, and guide our decision-making procedure to make ethically developed AI.

4. Methodology and Data Collection

4.1. Outline of the Study

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a qualitative research approach that is applied to the distribution of power and influence by AI systems. The research focuses on the elements of language, the ways of connecting and interface that enable fruitful discussions.

4.2. Data Collection

Among the three popular AI virtual assistants which we used to find information, there are Siri by Apple, Alexa by Amazon and Google Assistant. The data will include the transcripts of 100 talks (around 3000 words) of the real and fake persons posing questions.

Interface screenshots which demonstrate both text- and image-based design features that are associated with power cues.

4.3. Theoretical Framework

The framework that the particular study was founded on was the three-dimensional CDA framework by Fairclough:

1. Textual analysis: examining the use of language such as imperatives, ways of being polite and the use of words to indicate who is in authority.
2. Discursive practice: It involves watching the way in which people initiate conversations, the way in which they turn taking turns and the way in which they react to indicate who is in command.

The questions that we address in social practice are: 1) how authoritative speech is accommodated in broader social and technological contexts, and 2) the relationship between people and the AI and power.

4. Method

The texts were split into two categories: speech acts (e.g. commands, ideas, and approvals) and signs of power in language.

The role of tone signs, character design, and feedback messages among other visual indicators in aiding or undermining authority was investigated.

The three AI systems were demonstrated to be similar and different as a result of a study.

5. Results

1. Command speech actions are frequent among the three helpers such as imperatives and optional phrases to indicate the person in control.
2. To be nice the Siri and Alexa do not do the same things, such as balancing and easing. Siri will use words that are softer, and Alexa is more direct.
3. Patterns of turn taking demonstrate that AI determines the topic of conversation or interrupts without being noticed.
4. An example is that the interface is professionally styled in image and approval messages that make AI look more convincing.
5. In the vast majority of cases, users respond in such a manner that they express their preference to AI control. But there are users who feel enraged when they feel that they are being deprived of their freedom.
6. The investigation demonstrates that AI platforms have a complicated power organization that draws language, interaction, and images to create and sustain power dynamics with users.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

Through research, the researchers demonstrate that AI assistants, including Siri, Alexa, and Google Assistant use all kinds of language, interaction design, and visuals to show that they can be trusted. The CDA system used by Fairclough shows that power in such systems is not so much about giving orders, but also about language and interface components that are not obvious but yet, still have an impact on thinking and behaviors of people.

This is because the AI uses a lot of commands and optional verbs indicating it is a dominant agent. The way to express kindness can be different, and this fact implies that there are many other variants of balancing telling people what to do, and making them feel secure. The manner Siri speaks is such that it makes it less domineering and people may be more accepting of it. Conversely, the use of easy language by Alexa could make it sound credible. It may cause things to appear not so transparent but it may also enable the people to accomplish things in a quicker manner.

Another manifestation of the AI being authoritative and exerting an insidious influence on the connectivity and following behaviors is that it determines who is talking and the flow of the conversation. The fact that even though the machine is merely a tool of service, it continues to control the conversation and it interrupts people or alters the topic also speaks of the disposition of power.

The visual representation of the AI and its operation can be used to make it look more trustworthy with the assistance of approval prompts, feedback signs, and the use of AI models. People should have trust in you and adhere to the rules and these behaviour cues are all that they need. It demonstrates that the language adopted mostly by human beings and AI is multidimensional.

Such outcomes indicate that AI systems carry implicit assumptions regarding what users ought to do, the amount of information they ought to possess about technology, and the way they might successfully manage it. They make us think about the idea of being open and granting people their freedom and the dangers of putting too much hope in AI. It is positive that there is some control over relationships and confidence building, but users are not well advised in that they have to comply to what they have been told or that they have no power.

Finally, the present work allows us to comprehend the political and social nature of communicating with the help of AI as it shows that words and contact create power. It implies that those who develop AI interfaces must learn how people perceive authority and take more open and friendly methods to interact with them. Researchers might also take a look at the perceptions of authority among individuals belonging to various cultures and the way in which the skill of AI to communicate with humans in a more natural manner will change the balance of power between users in the future.

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