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Artificial Intelligence in Communication, Language and Culture

The rapid rise of artificial intelligence in the work and lives of everyone in the past few years is something that we thought we would only witness in science fiction movies a decade ago. Now, it is certain that AI is no longer a far-fetched sci-fi idea but a widely-used technology that has permeated our everyday lives. In the communication sphere, AI has a profound impact on how humans communicate, share information, and process voluminous amounts of data. Over the past few years, we have seen how AI has impacted digital communication, political communication, language use, and adoption. While the potential of AI in communication is huge, we need to be cognizant of its implications, both positive and negative, where issues about bias, trust, ethics, privacy, identity, culture, and overdependence on AI emerge.

This thematic issue was specially curated to bring together research that specifically looked at the nexus of AI with communication, language, and culture to enrich the corpus of knowledge in this domain, especially from the local, grassroots level. The response to the call for papers was overwhelming, and we thank all those who submitted to this thematic issue. Nevertheless, in keeping with the scope of the thematic issue and presenting an interesting mix of perspectives, we are pleased to present six articles that provide insight into issues that communication and language scholars will appreciate.

The first article, *Governing the Narrative: Algorithmic Power, Propaganda, and the Ethical Resistance of Filipino Journalists in the 2022 Philippine National Elections* by Kim Bernard G. Fajardo, Anna Ruby P. Gapasin, and Milagros M. dela Costa, provides a compelling discourse on algorithmic power in influencing political outcomes. More specifically, they examined how digital platforms and algorithmic systems influence visibility, public attention, and narrative formation during highly contested political events, as well as the ethical challenges faced by Filipino journalists in an environment shaped by both propaganda and platform logic.

The second article, *Anglophone Narratives in Artificial Intelligence: Mapping Research on Cultural Bias and Ethical Concerns in Data-Driven Communication* by Valentine Kirimi Muriira, Venoth Nallisamy, Jane Gikonyo, and Hussein Barabwd, is timely as it examines the cultural bias and ethical concerns stemming from AI-related communication research. They employed co-citation and co-word analyses to map the development of this interdisciplinary field to identify avenues for future studies in this area and the need for an integrated approach to examine the various dimensions of AI in communication studies.

Sakiroh Yaena Benharoon and Hamdia Mudor's article titled *Communication Strategies for Strengthening Cultural Identity in Community-Based Tourism in Thailand's Southernmost Provinces: An Analysis Based on the SMCR Model*. Using the Source, Message, Channel, Receiver (SCMR) Model of Communication as the theoretical framework, they delved into the role of communication strategies in enhancing entrepreneurial capacity and sustainable tourism development for community-based tourism (CBT) management in Thailand. This study provides interesting insights into the benefits of participatory communication and the intertwined nature of both AI and technology in the everyday lives of the communities examined.

The fourth article, *Reconsidering Student Agency in the Era of AI Writing Tools: A Quantitative Study from Pakistani Higher Education* by Iram Hassan, looks at the use of AI writing tools among Pakistani university students. This is a timely study as students and academics worldwide are faced with the widespread and prevalent use of AI writing tools among students. The study adds to the corpus of knowledge on AI-assisted academic writing in EFL contexts, as well as the need for guidance to ensure that students acquire the necessary skills to use AI writing tools in more responsible and effective ways.

The fifth article, *Assessing AI Literacy and Readiness for AI-Based Teaching Approaches Among Language Academics at USIM* by Wan Muhammad Shaker Wan Adnan, Azlan Shaiful Baharum, Nurkhamimi Zainuddin, and Muhammad Izuan Abd Gani, investigates AI literacy and readiness among language academics at the university. This study responds to the limited empirical attention on AI literacy from a language education perspective, where pedagogical interaction, communicative competence, and ethical considerations are important. The authors drew on a multidimensional AI literacy framework to conceptualise AI literacy as a dual construct reflecting both competency and pedagogical readiness.

The final article, *AI and Human Interpretation of Multilingual Feminist Discourse: A Study of Aurat March Comments* by Esha Shakoor, explores AI and human interpretation in multilingual feminist discourse on the Aurat March which is among one of the more prominent feminist activist moments in Pakistan. While useful, the study found that AI tools can categorise comments in English, Urdu, and Roman Urdu; however, there are limitations in their ability to detect rhetorical devices such as sarcasm and humour. Hence, there is a need to further refine these tools to effectively handle political and culturally sensitive discourses set in multilingual contexts.

This thematic issue is exciting because it brings together diverse perspectives on how AI and technology affect the way we communicate and shape our cultural practices. We invite you to enjoy reading the articles in this collection and hope that they may be useful for your work and practice as a communicator or language expert.

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