

Decoding Human-AI Interaction: A Discourse-Historical Analysis Approach of ChatGPT's Representation on Social Media

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The present study focuses on the macro and micro dimensions of the discursive construction of ChatGPT in social media platforms. In terms of its scope on questioning the discourse on AI within society and underscoring the complex relations between human users and AI technology, the study differs from the prevailing research about social media discourse on ChatGPT that often presents generalized overviews of user sentiment, focuses on AI's impact in specific domains like education or ignores the OpenAI component present in the discourse as AI developers. On the one hand, our study reveals historically, and contextually constructed aspects of ChatGPT's representation in social media users' digital practices. On the other, it targets micro dimensions by exploring the linguistic construction of ChatGPT and its developers as distinct others alongside the power dynamics between ChatGPT, OpenAI, and users. In this context, the study explores the discourse about what ChatGPT is, what features and qualifications it has, in what argumentative schemes it is discussed, from what perspective it is represented, and what attributions of it are intensified and mitigated. Accompanying these ends, our study employs the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), complemented by Social- Media Critical Discourse Studies (SM-CDS), to analyze the representations of AI within user interactions on Quora and Reddit. By analyzing a robust dataset comprising 12 Reddit discussions with 2,968 comments and 13 Quora questions with 364 answers, this research illuminates the multifaceted ways in which ChatGPT and its developers, OpenAI, are represented and discussed within user discourse. Analyzing question-answer interactions on Quora and hypertextual discussions on Reddit, the study reveals ChatGPT as a linguistically distinct 'other' and OpenAI as an influential one. It also suggests that the users typically refrain from ascribing human-like characteristics to ChatGPT and regard it as a functional, non-human tool that lacks human emotion or depth. Besides, they regard developers at OpenAI as social actors with social power and control over the user experience. These findings are vital as they advance our perception of ChatGPT as an AI technology entrapped in the simplistic binary views before and contribute to a more sophisticated discourse analysis. Our approach emphasizes the complex nature of human-AI interactions and the need for AI developers to consider the sociopolitical and historical

contexts in which their technologies operate. In investigating the triangulated discourse revolving around AI developers, users, and ChatGPT itself, our study unveils the layered contextuality and temporality of discourse revealing a panoramic view of the societal understandings of ChatGPT as an AI technology.

Keywords: ChatGPT, OpenAI, Social-Media Critical Discourse Studies (SM-CDS), Discourse Historical Approach (DHA)

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