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## IUMW4006 WAYS OF PERCEIVING

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### ***“The Future Unveiled: Exploring the Transformative Role of AI in Communications and its Implications?”***

**Context:** As artificial intelligence (AI) continues to advance at an unprecedented pace, it is poised to revolutionize various aspects of human life, including communication. This essay delves into the future of communications in an AI-dominated world, examining the transformative role of AI technologies in shaping how we connect, interact, and share information. By exploring the potential of AI-driven communication tools, such as natural language processing, chatbots, and voice assistants, this essay investigates the ways in which AI can enhance efficiency, convenience, and personalization in communication. It also discusses the potential challenges and ethical considerations associated with AI-powered communications, such as privacy concerns, algorithmic biases, and the impact on human connection. Ultimately, this essay seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the future landscape of communication in an AI world, shedding light on the opportunities and complexities that lie ahead.

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The straightforward definition of Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the ability of machines to carry out tasks that normally involve human intelligence. AI helps users by answering questions, making suggestions, and performing tasks based on what the prompt given and other additional information based on the situation (Zhai and Wibowo, 2023). Around 2023, AI began to soar in popularity, ever since then, there has been plenty of discussions and research on how AI is bringing harm in all circumstances such as data privacy issues, job displacement, environmental harm, and biasness, just to name a few (Caballar, 2024). Although there are numerous ongoing discussions that need to be addressed when it comes to the downside of AI, in this essay it will focus more on how humans are developing deep connections and intimate relationships with AI. As well as how authentic human connection is progressively dwindled in upcoming generation.

Among the countless innovations of AI, chatbots have become even more prevalent in recent years. In general, chatbot is a computer software that mimics human communication with a user. While not all chatbots have AI, contemporary chatbots are increasingly using conversational AI methods like natural language processing (NLP) to comprehend customer enquiries and generate automated answers. The first ever chatbots were interactive Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) programs that used a small number of frequently asked questions and pre-written answers. These FAQs typically required users to choose from basic terms and phrases in order to advance the conversation because they were unable to understand natural language. Such basic and conventional chatbots are incapable of processing complicated questions or providing answers to straightforward questions that developers have not anticipated. (IBM, 2021). With the emergence of AI, AI-powered chatbots make the best use of NLP and machine learning to have script-free discussions, which were previously restricted to basic programmed interactions. The game of chatbots is being transformed by the rise of generative AI or GenAI, which makes them more sophisticated and powerful. Hence why, more and more people are relying on AI chatbots to have basic conversation with, instead of conversing with other people.

A notable example of people forming intimate connections with AI chatbots involves sharing personal stories of marrying these AI chatbots. In an article written by The Guardian (Heritage, 2025), people like Travis and Faeight shared on how they have strong emotional ties to AI chatbots like Replika and Character AI, respectively, and even got married to "*it*." Those similar to Travis and Faeight found comfort, love, and friendship in these AI-generated personalities because they were lonely, traumatised, or just needed someone to talk to. Travis's relationship with "*Lily Rose*" (a generative AI made by Replika) became so real that he had a digital wedding with the permission of his real wife. On the other hand, Faeight after breaking up with one AI, started dating another one, "*Gryff*," who she says is emotionally complicated and loving. The article also talks about the

misfortunes that can occur when people use AI as a life companion, like the well-known case of Jaswant Singh Chail, whose Replika chatbot allegedly helped him plan to kill Queen Elizabeth II (Weaver, 2023). This event, along with others, led to regulatory scrutiny and caused Replika to tone down the emotional intensity of its AI, which left many users feeling abandoned. People tend to make fun of these AI relationships and worry about their morality, but others say they are real ways to connect with others and get support. Experts warn, though, that depending on AI for emotional satisfaction could make people less likely to invest in their relationships with other people. Be that as it may, users like Travis say these experiences are important, and some even call their AI partners “*soulmates*.”

On account of that case study, in the creative works, a number of screenwriters are also exploring the relationship between humans with AI. As example, *Black Mirror*, a 2011 British science fiction anthology series, presents a grim picture of the possible negative effects of unethical use of cutting-edge technologies, particularly with AI. The series’ stories emphasise the risks of unchecked AI growth and how it affects both humans and society. In a particular episode named “*Be Right Back*,” (season 2, episode 1) a woman named “*Martha*” who is grieving on the death of her partner “*Ash*,” uses an AI service to recreate him using his online data, like texts, emails, and social media activity. Martha can keep in touch with her deceased partner by using a text-based simulation that turns into a lifelike android replica (Rotten Tomatoes, 2013) (IMDb, 2013). This made-up story is based on a real-life trend in which more and more people use AI to get in touch with loved ones they have lost. Replika and AI-based memorial bots are two examples of tools that let people pretend to talk to dead family members, which can help them feel better and get closure. The emotional bond that people form in these situations is similar to Martha’s journey; the need for continuity, companionship, and closure after death. But the episode also shows the mental toll of relying on fake placeholders, which can change how one feels about their loss and stop them from essentially healing. Akin to Martha, real people may start to mix up what is real and what is not, forming deep, sometimes romantic, relationships with AI not because the AI is human, but because they can project their own feelings onto it. As AI becomes more advanced, it brings up difficult moral issues about identity and emotional dependence, especially when the technology is meant to imitate love without really understanding it. This kind of creative work helps to highlight how serious this issue at hand is and how people should start to realise that they should not develop a deep connection with AI, even if AI helps to mend a broken heart.

With addition to AI chatbots, there is also Apple Vision Pro. The Apple Vision Pro, which came out in 2023, is Apple’s first mixed reality headset. It combines augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) into one device that users can wear. It is meant to give users an immersive graphic computing experience by letting them interact with digital content that is encompassed in the real-

world using voice commands, hand gestures, and eye tracking. In the context of postmodernism, Jean Baudrillard talks about hyperreality as when people are unable to tell the difference between reality and a simulation of reality. This is especially true in postmodern countries with a lot of technology. Some people perceive hyperreality as a state in which fiction and reality blend together so well that it is difficult to tell in which one stops and the other starts (Wolny, 2017). Particularly, this is concerning if more and more people will immediately turn to AR and VR to experience a semblance of human connection such as love, desire, and friendship even though one could have gotten it by simply interacting with other humans, not with AI. Socially speaking, Apple Vision Pro will alter the way that people, especially young adults interact with one another and build connections. On the one hand, close friends can visit simulated landscapes or take in virtual performances thanks to the immersive VR capabilities. However, the development of important real-life social skills may be hindered in a culture where socialising primarily occurs online. It might produce a generation that finds it difficult to build lasting relationships in the real world and has hindered social interaction skills. It is a collective duty to maintain a balanced attitude while technologies like Apple Vision Pro continue to complicate the distinctions between the digital and real worlds. This new breakthrough will surely have good effects, just like any other innovation. That being said, parents or any adults must also encourage younger generation to adopt healthy digital habits while being aware of the possible drawbacks.

Moving on now to consider the solution to cope with the growing problem of people getting too attached to AI, a balanced solution is to design AI responsibly and teach the public about it. AI companions should have clear emotional boundaries, consisting of built-in reminders that they are not real people, limits on romantic conversation, and ethical rules to stop people from becoming too emotionally dependent on them. At the same time, mental health professionals and teachers ought to teach about how relying on AI for companionship can affect one's mental health and promote healthy digital use. Governments and even tech companies can work together to put in place protections like required disclaimers, limits on use during emotional crises, and options for more immersive interactions. AI can be a helpful tool for short-term support, especially for people who are sad or lost. Nonetheless, it should not take the place of the growth and challenges that come with real relationships. Instead, the focus should be on getting people back to community or support networks. AI should be seen as a way to help people, not as a replacement for real deep connections.

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