

Navigating AI in Communicative Arts

Throughout history, humans have used writing to connect, communicate, and express ideas with each other. They have used a variety of tools like thesauruses, dictionaries, pens, and keyboards. Expressing yourself through text has only gotten easier and more convenient for society. Society now has an even wider disposal of tools, mostly digital, that help them achieve what they want to say like Microsoft Word and Google Docs. These tools tremendously aid in effective communication. With convenience comes cutting corners, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) is just that. AI has reshaped on how many writers, journalists, script writers, and students write in just a few short years. With its massive boom, the question of its use plagues the writing community. Is it ethical? Is it authentic? These complex questions do not necessarily have simple answers, but this is not the first time we have asked. AI has been around society much longer than most realize.

AI has become a standard in most writing software, whether writers realize it or not. Spelling and grammar checks are one of the most common forms of AI used. Grammarly, founded in 2009, specialized in this model of AI with the intent of improving writers' communication and writing skills in real time. Grammarly and tools like it are widely accepted because they help, but do not replace. Writers can choose not to accept what the programs suggest whether it be for stylistic or different spellings of something. The same way a writer whose name has a red underline always can choose not to "correct" their name, they can choose to not correct their writing. This has become acceptable in the eyes of society because there is a choice, the issue with AI arises in the creative department with Generative AI.

Generative AI, GAI, can produce anything you prompt it with. Whether that be summaries of texts, examples, outlines, or brainstorming ideas; you prompt it, it responds. While this may cut down time and be more efficient, it takes the key essential element of writing and communication out of the process. It removes the sleepless nights refining and refining, whiteboard sessions detailing whole plot lines, key research skills that are necessary when writing, it takes the human out of a human process. GAI has no bounds when it comes to creating ideas, many that writers and students plagiarize and pass off as their own independent thought. Everyone knows in the writing community, plagiarism is the number one sin one can make. GAI is not the one facing real life consequences, the writer is.

On a much larger scale, literature as an art is suffering due to GAI. The art of building a storyline with twists and turns that grab readers, causing them to feel joy, sadness, apathy, empathy, and excitement can never be replaced by a simple storyline created by GAI. In real time society is watching the hold that GAI has on writing. The SAGAFRA strike with the writers was not over a pay cut, but rather a software system replacing their very human job. GAI does not have the experiences and skillset when it comes to emotion and connection that human writers possess. GAI even pulls its responses from algorithm and online research, made by a human; we will always be the blueprint.

The debate on where AI belongs in the writing community is complicated because expression is complicated. One cannot just compile grief, joy, and embarrassment in a nice, neat, package for readers. No one can comfortably, not even AI. While AI cannot be an author of a fantasy book, it does mean it has a place in the writing community as a tool, a tool of refinement. When used responsibly and mainly as a tool of refinement, AI can greatly improve communication through increasing fluency, efficiency, and productivity. Yet, when we get lazy

and fall into the trap of convenience, we lose an art. We lose the art of literature, a skill that can never be erased or replaced.