A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF TECHNOLOGY LEADERS.

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Annotation. This study examines how technology leaders talk about artificial intelligence (AI) in public statements, using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). It looks at the language through which AI is presented either as progress or as a danger. The analysis focuses on metaphor, modality, and pronouns. Selected statements by Sundar Pichai, Andrew Ng, Elon Musk, and Sam Altman show that metaphors of electricity, fire, and demon, together with the pronoun we and modal verbs, shape how the public understands AI and who is responsible for it. The findings suggest that the language of technology leaders is not neutral.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, Critical Discourse Analysis, technology discourse, metaphor, modality, ideology.

Annotatsiya. Ushbu tadqiqot texnologiya yetakchilarining ommaviy bayonotlarida sun’iy intellekt (SI) qanday tasvirlanishini Tanqidiy diskurs tahlili (CDA) orqali o‘rganadi. Unda SI taraqqiyot yoki xavf sifatida ko‘rsatilishiga xizmat qiladigan til vositalari tahlil qilinadi. Tahlil metafora, modallik va olmoshlarga qaratilgan. Sundar Pichay, Endryu Ng, Ilon Mask va Sem Altmanning tanlangan bayonotlari “elektr”, “olov” va “jin” metaforalari, “biz” olmoshi hamda modal fe’llar jamoatchilikning SI haqidagi tasavvurini va uning uchun kim mas’ulligi haqidagi fikrni shakllantirishini ko‘rsatdi. Natijalar texnologiya yetakchilari tili betaraf emasligini ko‘rsatadi.

Kalit so’zlar: sun’iy intellekt, tanqidiy diskurs tahlili, texnologiya diskursi, metafora, modallik, mafkura.

Introduction

Artificial intelligence entered everyday life quickly, and the talk about it grew just as fast. Most people do not read research papers on AI. They hear about it in interviews, conference talks, and hearings, where technology leaders explain what AI is and what it will do. That is why the way these people speak is worth studying.

Critical Discourse Analysis starts from the idea that language helps to construct reality and does not only describe it [3]. Word choice can make a technology look natural or dangerous, and it can leave unclear who decides and who benefits [8]. Metaphor matters most here, since it explains something new through something familiar [4]. The aim of this study is to examine which metaphors describe AI in the statements of technology leaders and how modal verbs and pronouns distribute responsibility.

Research Methodology

The study uses a qualitative approach based on Critical Discourse Analysis [3; 8]. Five statements were selected: Sundar Pichai’s 2018 interview, Andrew Ng’s 2017 lecture at Stanford, Elon Musk’s 2014 talk at MIT, and Sam Altman’s 2023 Senate testimony and his 2024 essay The Intelligence Age. The speakers take different positions, from optimistic to cautious. The passages about AI were marked and examined for metaphor, modality, and pronouns, and then interpreted in terms of power and responsibility. The material is small, so the results are illustrative only.

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Results and Discussion

AI as a Natural Force

Pichai described AI as **"more profound than, I dunno, electricity or fire"** [7]. The comparison puts AI next to the biggest discoveries in history, so its importance is assumed and not argued. The casual I dunno makes a huge claim sound modest. Ng's slogan **"AI is the new electricity"** [6] works in the same way. Electricity is useful and invisible, and the audience is invited to see AI like this. The slogan says nothing about who owns and controls such an infrastructure.

AI as a Threat

Musk uses the opposite frame: **"with artificial intelligence we are summoning the demon"** [5]. The demon comes from the supernatural world, so AI becomes an evil force that cannot be controlled once it appears. Yet summoning makes people the agent, because someone has to call the demon. The pronoun we covers all of humanity and does not say who actually builds these systems. The warning is for everyone, so responsibility stays with no one in particular.

Modality and Responsibility

Altman's language mixes both frames. In the Senate he said, **"If this technology goes wrong, it can go quite wrong"** [1]. Nobody makes it go wrong in this sentence; the technology does it alone. The modal can keeps the danger possible, not certain. In his essay he writes that superintelligence may arrive in **"a few thousand days"** and that **"we will have shared prosperity"** [2]. Here will turns a prediction into a promise, and we may mean humanity, the company, or the whole industry. The benefits seem to belong to everybody, while the decisions stay with a few.

All these speakers explain AI to an audience, so the leaders appear as experts and the public as listeners who must trust, fear, or wait. Social choices are presented as technical or natural processes, which is how discourse makes power relations look normal [8].

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study shows that the public language of technology leaders about AI is not neutral. Metaphors, agentless sentences, modal verbs, and the pronoun we present AI as progress or as a danger and leave responsibility unclear. CDA helps readers ask who speaks, for whom, and in whose interest.

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