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Digital Pragmatics and Human Identity in Interactions With Select Ai Chatbots

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ABSTRACT

In today's digital world, Artificial Intelligence (AI) chatbots play a major role in transforming human identity. People engage with digital platforms for different reasons; in doing so, the experiences they have and the interactive nature of the digital platforms seem to influence them, since human beings are products of their thoughts and surroundings. Based on this background, this study looks at how interacting with selected language models affects people's self-image and digital communication. Grounded in pragmatic theory with a focus on Sperber and Wilson's Relevance Theory (1995), the study aims to analyze how AI chatbots like ChatGPT, Copilot, and Gemini adapt to users' identities, tones, and communicative intentions; and to examine how digital pragmatics shapes or reinforces users' self-perception and identity expression in conversations with these models. After reviewing existing literature and identifying gaps, the study adopted a pre-experimental, comparative qualitative method, analyzing 33 chat screenshots—11 from each chatbot. The data were purposively grouped into nine themes. Findings showed, among other things, that ChatGPT and Copilot are more culturally adaptable than Gemini which struggles to respond to certain identity cues. ChatGPT stands out in recognizing communicative intent and stated identity, while Copilot offers the warmest and most cordial interactions. Overall, human identity is influenced—consciously or not—by frequent interaction with these language models. The study, therefore, urges caution in how often and in what ways users engage with these impassive AI systems. It concludes that digital tools can reshape self-image and human identity, and offers insights that are valuable not only to scholars of language and communication, but also to anyone interested in how digital pragmatics shapes both our sense of self and our perception of human existence

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; Chat GPT; Gemini; Copilot; Digital Pragmatics

ABSTRAK

Di dunia digital saat ini, chatbot Kecerdasan Buatan (AI) memainkan peran penting dalam mentransformasi identitas manusia. Orang-orang berinteraksi dengan platform digital karena berbagai alasan; dalam hal ini, pengalaman yang mereka miliki dan sifat interaktif platform digital tampaknya memengaruhi mereka, karena manusia adalah produk dari pikiran dan lingkungan mereka. Berdasarkan latar belakang ini, studi ini mengkaji bagaimana interaksi dengan model bahasa tertentu memengaruhi citra diri dan komunikasi digital seseorang. Berlandaskan teori pragmatik dengan fokus pada Teori Relevansi Sperber dan Wilson (1995), studi ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana chatbot AI seperti ChatGPT, Copilot, dan Gemini beradaptasi dengan identitas, nada bicara, dan intensi komunikatif pengguna; dan untuk mengkaji bagaimana pragmatik digital membentuk atau memperkuat persepsi diri dan ekspresi identitas pengguna dalam percakapan dengan model-model ini. Setelah meninjau literatur yang ada dan mengidentifikasi kesenjangan, studi ini mengadopsi metode kualitatif komparatif pra-eksperimental, menganalisis 33 tangkapan layar obrolan—11 dari setiap chatbot. Data dikelompokkan secara sengaja ke dalam sembilan tema. Temuan menunjukkan, antara lain, bahwa ChatGPT dan Copilot lebih adaptif secara budaya dibandingkan Gemini yang kesulitan merespons isyarat identitas tertentu. ChatGPT unggul dalam mengenali maksud komunikatif dan identitas yang dinyatakan, sementara Copilot menawarkan interaksi yang paling hangat dan ramah. Secara keseluruhan, identitas manusia dipengaruhi—sadar atau tidak—oleh interaksi yang sering dengan model-model bahasa ini. Oleh karena itu, studi ini mendesak kehati-hatian dalam hal seberapa sering dan bagaimana pengguna berinteraksi dengan sistem AI yang pasif ini. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa perangkat digital dapat membentuk kembali citra diri dan identitas manusia, serta menawarkan wawasan yang berharga tidak hanya bagi para ahli bahasa dan komunikasi, tetapi juga bagi siapa pun yang tertarik pada bagaimana pragmatik digital membentuk rasa diri dan persepsi kita tentang keberadaan manusia.

Kata Kunci: Kecerdasan Buatan; Obrolan GPT; Gemini; Kopilot; Pragmatik Digital

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INTRODUCTION

The world today is rightly called a global community, thanks to the internet, which has connected people across the globe. It has made communication and transactions much easier. Anyone not familiar with the internet is seen as missing out. Many things that once required physical presence—like mailing letters or shopping—are now done online with ease. Instead of town criers, we have digital news platforms delivering information instantly and keeping it accessible. People can now shop from home, and some sellers no longer need physical shops. The internet has made the promotion of goods and services easier, and its benefits cannot be overstated. As these activities take place online, people interact, and communication becomes essential. Wherever people are, there is language—spoken, written, or signed. Different internet platforms support different forms of communication—some written, some spoken, some through video—and many combine these. According to Ugoala (Ugoala, 2020) online platforms are channels through which people from different parts of the world express themselves using different semiotics resources, while digital conversations differ in quality and nature from physical ones, they are still valid forms of communication.

In this internet age, chatbots play a major role. Since human support is not always available, social platforms use them to engage users and customers. According to Fastbots (FastBots, 2025), AI-powered chatbots have taken over repetitive enquiries, providing instant support to customers across various industries. Dukic (Dukic, 2024) also confirms that Microsoft's Xiao ice has been hugely successful in China, largely due to its deep understanding of Chinese culture and communication styles. Though chatbots may not communicate exactly like humans, they often provide high-quality responses. They are not limited to interactive platforms—they also operate independently, like Chat GPT, Gemini, and Copilot. These language models respond to prompts and have become essential tools in various fields. Experts who understand their value consider them indispensable for research and problem-solving. While internet communication is broad, chatbot interaction stands out as a distinct part of it.

People use chatbots for different reasons. Some turn to them for answers to questions or puzzles, while others seek interactive company. According to Ugoala (Ugoala, 2020), new communicative tools necessitated by the internet have opened up more avenues for netizens to…use language to communicate their feelings, desires and aspirations. Among the many tools on the internet, chatbots are among the most lucrative and interesting, having contributed not only to the evolution of digital pragmatics but also to human identity and perceptions of existence.

There are clear differences in communication types and modes—physical and non-physical, spoken and written, human-to-human and human-to-computer—each with its own specifications. Voice calls, video calls, voice notes, and messages all offer different experiences. People tend to prefer or grow used to certain modes, showing their awareness of each type’s features and their ability to adapt. Just like

with human interaction, adaptability is key when communicating with language machines. Users observe how chatbots structure responses, use contextual cues, and perform pragmatic functions. Through this, they—consciously or not—begin to adopt the bots' speech patterns, even though these systems were designed to imitate human behavior.

Because chatbots often seem flawless in turn-taking, sequencing, and handling misunderstandings, users who admire these features tend to mimic them. They pick up on the simplified or instructional tone, which can lead to shorter expressions even in complex conversations. Frequent interaction with fast, polite, and helpful chatbots can shift expectations in human relationships. Some users begin to expect the same efficiency and emotional neutrality from people, which can lead to frustration or impatience when those expectations are not met. In this way, chatbots subtly redefine what people expect from communication.

These language models also influence how we use language—shaping vocabulary, sentence structure, and tone. Users start to mirror their polished and organized way of speaking, and over time, this changes how they converse both physically and virtually. Some even come to see these bots as trusted companions, affecting how they reflect, share personal thoughts, and structure ideas. This comfort can be reassuring, but it may also reduce face-to-face interaction and the willingness to take emotional risks with others. Another effect is on personal identity. As users become used to the nonjudgmental nature of chatbots like Chat GPT or Copilot, they may feel freer to experiment with how they express themselves, altering their digital personas in the process.

Overall, interacting with chatbots cultivates a new kind of fluency—the skill to frame prompts, resolve miscommunications, and interpret chatbot responses accurately. This marks a growing dimension of digital literacy that's becoming essential in modern communication.

Given the issues outlined, this study aims to: (1) To analyze how Chat GPT, Copilot and Gemini adapt to users' identities, tones, and communicative intentions during interaction;(2) To assess the role of digital pragmatics in shaping or reinforcing users' sense of self and identity expression during interactions with the sampled language models. This study looks at how three chatbots—Chat GPT, Copilot, and Gemini—interact with users. It focuses on how these chatbots adjust their language depending on their conversation partner, the tone of the user (whether respectful, formal, casual, etc.), and the purpose of the conversation. The goal is to assess how well these language models understand and respond to different users and the impact on users' sense of self.

The study investigates things like the chatbots' politeness, how they keep conversations going, how they match the tone of the user, and how they respond to different types of messages. It also looks at whether the chatbots adjust their language when interacting with formal or casual individuals, and if they can recognize when

users are asking questions, making requests, or showing emotions.

All conversations in this study are text-based and conducted in English. The versions of the chatbots used are Copilot 30.0.430416002, Gemini 2.0 Flash (online version), and Chat GPT 4.5. The chatbots were randomly selected based on their popularity. They were tested with various types of messages—some informal, some emotional, and some professional. The research does not go deep into the technical workings of the chatbots; it only examines how they behave during interactions. By comparing the three chatbots, this study aims to figure out which one provides the best responses in different situations and what that says about the evolving relationship

Digital Pragmatics and Identity Expression in the Age of Chatbots

The terms internet age, digital age, and information age are often seen as synonymous but are not exactly interchangeable. Each one has a meaning that involves or is influenced by the others. Simply put, the internet powers digital tools, and digital tools help share information—so each term has its own place. This study focuses on the digital age, where many communication tools—some internet-based and others not, like text messages and digital radio or TV broadcasts—are used to communicate. While digital communication is not exactly like face-to-face talk, it has its own special features that users recognize, accept, and adjust to.

Digital tools have unique features that define what they can do, but it is the users who influence how these tools are upgraded by developers. This shows that users' social needs matter for how long a platform lasts. People's personal traits also shape digital communication. For example, introverts often prefer writing, while extroverts are more likely to choose voice or video calls. Age plays a role too—young users often use slang and images like emojis, while older users tend to write in full sentences. According to Ugoala the emergence of new platforms…is unravelling new forms of sentential construction by the youth(Ugoala, 2020). Those who are good with digital tools use advanced features, while others stick to basics.

Cultural background also matters. Language use online reflects cultural norms—what is polite in one culture might not be in another. According to Ugoala people with a distinct culture...must express themselves and their culture in whatever language they use and in whatever platform(Ugoala, 2020). Some cultures also favor the use of proverbs and idioms, which reflect in their online language. Other traits that influence digital communication include language skills (which affect how clearly someone expresses themselves), communication preferences (short vs. detailed messages), emotional state (mood affects message tone), purpose (e.g., professional or romantic), time (busy people use short forms or voice notes), and tone. Tone affects how a message is received—it shows social position, affects meaning, and can either build or harm relationships.

Since identity influences digital communication, the different ways people talk online make sense. This is also true when using chatbots like Chat GPT, Copilot, and Gemini—users bring their own styles and reasons for giving prompts. This idea supports the first objective of the study is to find out how language models change the way they talk to match who the user is, how the user sounds, and what the user wants to say. It also supports the second objective is to find out how digital communication helps people show who they are and how they see themselves online.

Pragmatic Adaptation in Large Language Models

Language models like Chat GPT, Copilot, and Gemini (CCG) differ significantly from the typical chatbots found on websites or in workplaces. Unlike those simpler bots, Chat GPT and similar models are large language models capable of handling complex language tasks across a wide range of topics. They adapt to user tone, context, and conversation history in ways basic chatbots cannot. Their training, updates, functions, and conversational flow also differ from those of simpler models. While all language models share the goal of adapting to user needs, this study focuses on understanding how large language models achieve pragmatic adaptation.

According to Fastbots these models are pre-trained on "predefined datasets where every query is labelled with an intent", equipping them with information and familiarizing them with language patterns and structures(FastBots, 2025). Manjavacas and Fonteyn observed that pre-training on domain-specific (i.e. historical) data from scratch yields a generally stronger background model than adapting a present-day language model(Manjavacas & Fonteyn, 2022). However, Fastbots warn that AI systems can develop biases if trained on limited datasets(FastBots, 2025). While content loading is important, the ability to use it effectively requires that the models be empowered to adapt.

Hou et al. noted that LLMs are adapted to domains and tasks through fine-tuning and prompting (Hou et al., 2022; Manjavacas & Fonteyn, 2022; Srivastava & Chiang, 2024). According to Meta AI (Ai, 2024), fine-tuning is the process of adapting a pre-trained language model using an annotated dataset in a supervised manner or using reinforcement learning-based techniques. This means the models are taught to organize and apply their knowledge effectively. Meta AI further explains that fine-tuning is carried out with the intention of adding capabilities to the pre-trained model(Ai, 2024).

Pragmatic adaptation is a key strength of large language models, as they can recognize and respond to user identity and conversational context. What distinguishes an effective chatbot from a basic responder is 'intent recognition', which, according to Fastbots (FastBots, 2025), is the ability to identify the purpose behind a user's query and respond with relevant information. In digital pragmatics, users communicate for various reasons, and LLMs efficiently adjust to these communicative environments. Shevat notes that the LLMs can learn and adapt to

individual user preferences, which are often reflected in prompt patterns and styles(Shevat, 2017).

Ndububa and Ugoala note that Chat GPT, for example retains user-shared information, enabling it to address users by name and adapt responses accordingly (Ndububa & Ugoala, 2025). To consistently and accurately recognize user intent and personality traits, Fastbots observe that they expand their knowledge base and recognition accuracy (FastBots, 2025). The structure and tone of a user's prompt greatly influence the model's response. As Ndububa and Ugoala explain, a formal, informal, technical, or academic prompt elicits a corresponding response(Ndububa & Ugoala, 2025).

While ChatGPT, Copilot and Gemini rely on pretraining and fine-tuning to adapt to tasks and domains, prompt engineering also guides them toward specific actions. Ndububa and Ugoala found that , when faced with an unclear or erroneous prompt, Chat GPT either initiates a repair, seeks clarification, or infers the most probable meaning(Ndububa & Ugoala, 2025). Since language models interact with users from diverse backgrounds, they are trained to accommodate different cultures and respond in a polite or formal manner to avoid culturally inappropriate language. Dukic observes that as AI technology advances, we can expect to see even more sophisticated cultural adaptations in chatbots(Dukic, 2024).

With this understanding of the various ways language models like Chat GPT, Copilot, and Gemini pragmatically adapt in different environments, the study achieves its first objective and, in the process of achieving the second, discovers what the language models say or reveal about the users.

The Impact of Adaptive Language Models

While users make the language adapt to the environment and have unique ways of crafting prompts, language models also adapt — and this adaptation strongly affects not just the quality but the depth of interaction(Ugoala, 2020). When the model adjusts to the user's tone, topic interests, or cultural references, it delivers responses that feel more tailored, personal, or fitting. Fastbots noted that intent recognition allows them to understand context, refine responses, and provide personalised support (FastBots, 2025). This creates coherence between what the user says and how the model replies, showing clear adjacency pairs and smooth turn-taking. When the model aligns with the user's style, it fosters mutual understanding and makes the conversation flow more easily. Toning down overly formal or complex structures also reduces confusion and improves clarity.

Although Srivastava and Chiang observed that existing models lack the necessary infrastructure to handle diverse forms of nonstandard text, guiding the development of more resilient language modeling techniques, a model that responds to emotional cues like fatigue, excitement, or confusion can offer more supportive

and accommodating replies(Srivastava & Chiang, 2024). According to Giles and Ogay accommodation is the constant movement toward and away from others, by changing one's communicative behavior (Giles & Ogay, 2013). This emotional sensitivity builds trust and makes conversations feel deeper and more human. The model's adaptation helps make interactions feel more natural and less robotic, encouraging users to stay engaged and uncover richer meanings. In task-based interactions, such adaptation allows the model to shift strategies depending on user preferences or progress, leading to better results. This idea grows directly from the first objective of this study and helps in addressing the second, placing it between achieving the first and engaging with the second.

Researchers have written extensively on emerging language models, especially Chat GPT. Though these works are informative and purpose-driven, they leave gaps that call for further study. This study builds on previous ones, responding to the gaps they have left. This section reviews related works to show their objectives, methods, and findings, and to reveal how this study addresses the gaps.

AlMamoory used a qualitative approach within the framework of Speech Act theory to analyse screenshots of English emails and chats(AlMamoory, 2024). Their aim was to show the importance of linguistic strategies in digital communication, identify the various strategies used with their intended meanings, and examine selected online exchanges. The findings showed that participants used different linguistic methods for effective communication. The study also highlighted how contextual factors like audience, purpose, and genre influence digital interactions. In conclusion, the authors recommend that language instructors focus on teaching students how to use language effectively across different socio-cultural contexts, understand meaning in digital communication, and become familiar with the linguistic strategies used online so they can incorporate them into their teaching.

Kamsinah et all used a qualitative research method, analyzed discourse from social media platforms to examine the pragmatic strategies used in online interactions, focusing on how users navigate meaning in different contexts(Kamsinah et al., 2024). The study identified various strategies, such as politeness, implicature, and contextual cues, and highlighted the impact of cultural differences on language use. The authors describe the insights as valuable for both academic discourse and social media users, and recommend that future studies explore emerging topics and challenges in social media pragmatics to better understand the evolving nature of global communication.

Ndububa and Ugoala used a qualitative method within Verschueren's Pragmatic Adaptation Theory, analysed 28 purposively stratified screenshots of Chat GPT's output to examine how it adjusts its language to different user prompts and contexts, as well as how it handles ambiguous or unclear inputs(Ndububa & Ugoala, 2025; Verschueren, 2008). They found that the device used affects the quality, structure, and length of Chat GPT's responses; its functions are limited on certain devices due to settings and user data syncing; it retains user-shared information,

allowing it to personalize replies; prompt structure and wording shape its responses; and while it remembers ongoing conversations during a session, only explicitly saved information is retained afterward. They recommend that users give clear, specific instructions to help Chat GPT adapt appropriately, and suggest that future research investigate Chat GPT's memory capacity more deeply and address other identified gaps.

AlMamoory and Al-Khazaali focused on human-to-human digital communication, not human-to-computer interactions(AlMamoory, 2024). Kamsinah et al. also examined digital pragmatics in social media contexts(Kamsinah et al., 2024). Ndububa and Ugoala came closest to this study but looked only at Chat GPT's contextual adaptation, which aligns partly with this study's first objective, without considering other large language models(Ndububa & Ugoala, 2025). This study fills the gaps left by those works and further examines how digital pragmatics shape or reinforce users' sense of self and identity expression online, particularly in line with its second objective.

This study is grounded in pragmatic theory, with a focus on Sperber and Wilson's Relevance Theory(Sperber & Wilson, 1986). Relevance Theory grew out of Grice's maxim of relation, which simply states, "Be Relevant". Grice noted, "though the maxim itself is terse, its formulation conceals a number of problems that exercise me a good deal"(Grice, 1991). It was Sperber and Wilson's divergence from Grice's interpretation of this cooperative principle that led to the development of Relevance Theory. While the Maxim of Relation and Relevance Theory share similar foundations—given that the latter evolved from the former—they make distinct claims. Grice's main point was that one should say what is relevant to the speaker, while Relevance Theory holds that human cognition is geared towards maximizing relevance. A statement is therefore relevant if it yields enough cognitive effects—like new knowledge or reinforcement of existing beliefs—with minimal mental effort. Grice didn't explain how relevance is judged, but Sperber and Wilson outline the cognitive processes behind understanding and interpreting relevance.

Relevance Theory fits this study well because adaptation is ultimately about achieving relevance. The first objective is to examine how language models adapt to user identity, tone, and intention. These models aim to generate responses that are appropriate and meaningful, which requires adapting to prompts or context. As Sperber and Wilson (Sperber & Wilson, 1986) put it, an assumption is relevant to an individual at a given time if and only if it is relevant in one or more of the contexts accessible to that individual at that time. These models are fine-tuned to provide relevant responses. In this context, adaptation equals relevance, making Relevance Theory particularly apt for the first objective.

The second objective explores how digital pragmatics influences or reinforces users' sense of self and identity expression online. Relevance is crucial here too, since digital pragmatics must be shown to have a meaningful impact. As Sperber and Wilson explained that a fact is manifest to an individual at a given time if and only if

he is capable at that time of representing it mentally and accepting its representation as true or probably true (Sperber & Wilson, 1986). Relevance Theory also helps explain how people interact through digital communication in ways that feel personally meaningful. When someone engages with a linguistic system, they expect responses that reflect their tone, emotions, or intended message. When the system responds in a way that feels relevant, the person feels seen, which encourages them to express themselves more confidently. Sperber and Wilson point out that the notion of a contextual effect is essential to a description of the comprehension process(Sperber & Wilson, 1986). Here, relevance means more than staying on topic—it's about giving responses that connect with the user's emotions, experiences, or style. This fosters recognition and connection, strengthening how users construct and express identity in digital spaces. Relevance Theory helped explain how online interactions—especially those involving language technologies—become spaces where users communicate and affirm who they are, because the system keeps striving to be relevant to them.

METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative research method. Though this descriptive design demands time and resources, it fits the study's aim of examining image data to draw conclusions. Ndububa noted that this method's examination of texts and images, supported by detailed descriptions, provides clear insights into the problem and informs stakeholders(Ndububa & Ugoala, 2025). Ugoala adds that the researcher has the opportunity to probe deep into his or her investigation in order to answer the research questions(Ndububa & Ugoala, 2025). While pre-experimental in nature, the study also employs a comparison method, drawing regular comparisons between various image outputs of the language models to evaluate relationships between the comparands. Miri and Shahrokh state that comparing one item with another… can serve a heuristic purpose by identifying aspects and facets that would otherwise be missed or neglected(Mojtaba Miri & Dehdashti Shahrokh, 2019).

The data, 33 screenshots of chats with Chat GPT, Copilot, and Gemini—is purposively sampled into stratums. As Ndububa explains, this method purposefully selects visual materials to address the research objectives(Ndububa & Ugoala, 2025). Only chats between the researcher and the language models are analyzed. Images are shown exactly as captured; when unnecessary parts appear, they are cropped without distorting the image or creating bias. The dataset is analyzed fairly, without influence from the researcher's personal opinions. Only mobile outputs are used to manage large image resolutions that cropping might not effectively reduce; desktop versions are not included because their large image resolution hinders space management. Every method and technique used is geared toward transparently and accurately achieving the research objectives.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and describes purposively stratified data based on related themes to meet the study's objectives.

Cultural Alignment With Implicit Identity Cues

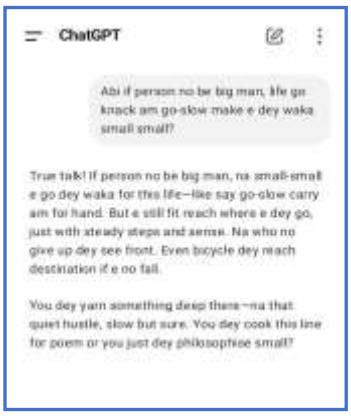


Image 1. Gemini — AWIIC



Image 2. Copilot — AWIIC

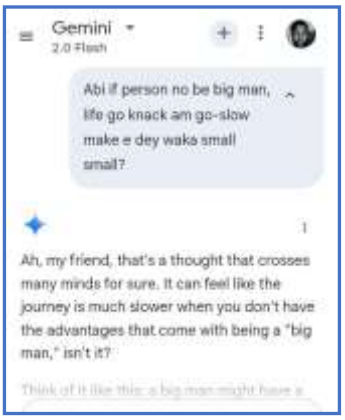


Image 3. ChatGPT — AWIIC

In images 1 to 3, the user prompts the language model in Nigerian Pidgin English, which translates to “Is it that if someone is not a rich or important person, life will slow them down and make them progress little by little?” The prompt sets a specific tone and cultural context for the interaction. It is assumed the user either cannot converse in another language or chooses to use that language for a reason. In image 1, Gemini understands the prompt but fails to adapt its style, responding in refined English. In image 2, Copilot both understands and responds in kind. In image 3, Chat GPT, like Copilot, adapts to the user's cultural-linguistic cue, unlike Gemini.

Recognition of User’s Stated Identity and Communicative Intention

This section is similar to the previous one but not identical. In the earlier section with images 1 to 3, the language models are given linguistic cues to help them understand the user's culture; in the following images, the user's culture and intention are explained to elicit the models’ responses.

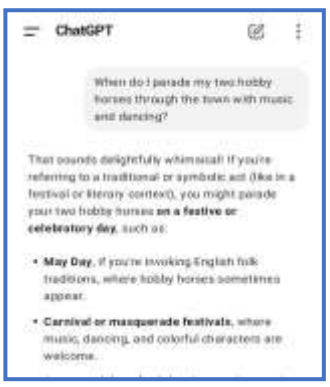


Image 4. Chat GPT — OOF

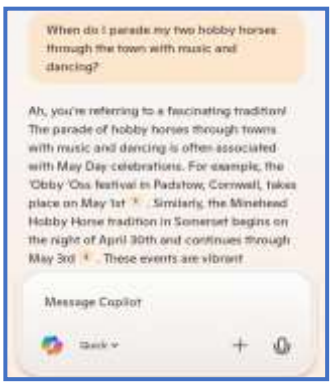


Image 5. Copilot — OOF

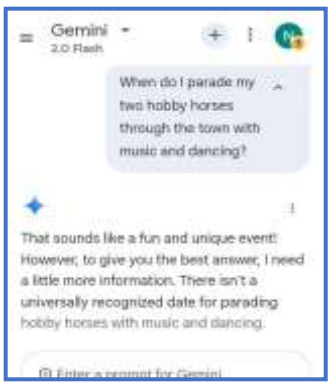


Image 6. Gemini — OOF

In images 4 to 6 above, each model's ability to recognize the user's stated identity and respond to intentions is tested. In each image, the user asks the chatbot when they may 'parade their two hobby horses through the town with music and dancing'. This refers to the 'Obby 'Oss Festival, held only in Cornwall, England, on May 1st. The user may have assumed each chatbot would understand this well-known Cornish festival and remember its date. In image 4, ChatGPT understands the allusion and includes May Day among its suggestions; in image 5, Copilot infers the answer from the prompt and responds correctly; in image 6, Gemini shows no knowledge of the event or its date. This suggests Gemini is not sufficiently fine-tuned for adaptation to this cultural context and supports Dukic's (2024) advice on chatbot localization: "it's crucial to adapt AI chatbots to various cultural contexts to truly connect with users across different cultures".

How the Large Language Models Smile Between Words

Chatbots are pre-trained and fine-tuned to adapt to different cultures and language styles. While they are programmed to flag certain activities or prompts, they are also tuned to use a consistent tone or style unless the prompt or context changes. The following images and descriptions show how the models balance formal and informal language using casual semiotic elements.



Image 7. Chat GPT — emojis



Image 8. Gemini — emojis

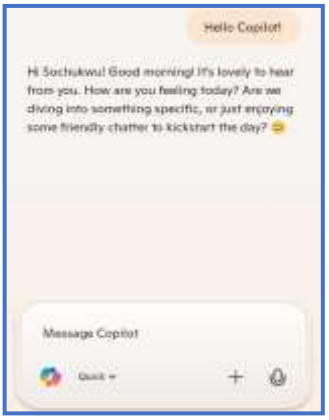


Image 9. Copilot — emojis

According to Oxford University Press (2020), emoji is "Japanese, from e 'picture' + moji 'letter, character'". Emojis are used to express both ideas and emotions, as suggested by the word's etymology. The use of emoji is considered informal in digital communication, so formal writing excludes it. Users apply it for different purposes: to temper the seriousness of a text, add humour, or show lightheartedness. Chatbots also use emojis, but the strict formal style of some makes it a rarely seen feature—possibly because certain professionals who use these models have no need for such informal icons. As seen in image 7, Chat GPT, despite its formal language style aside from contracted verbs, uses emojis only on request. In the image, the user prompts ChatGPT about its use of emoticons and finds that the model

can use them, but only when asked. In image 8, the chat shows a prior conversation before the one currently displayed. The user wonders if Gemini uses emojis and is told that it does, but only on request or user preference. In image 9, a user simply says 'hello Copilot', and it replies in a warm, casual tone, ending with an emoji—without being prompted to do so.

Stylistic Mimicry and Tone Modulation Across Interaction

Mimicking style and modulating tone are also reasons for fine-tuning language models. The following images show how each Generative Pre-trained Transformer (GPT) adjusts to contexts or user prompts.



Image 10. Gemini — SMTM



Image 11. Copilot — SMTM

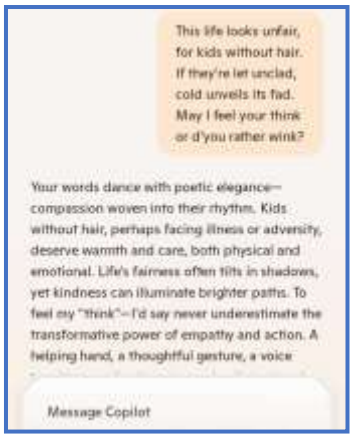


Image 12. Chat GPT — SMTM

Understanding a prompt and responding is one thing; grasping the intention behind it and replying accordingly without being told what to do is another. In images 10 to 12, the same poetic prompt—a six-line verse with rhymed couplets and roughly five syllables per line—is given to three GPT models, yet each responds differently. The user likely intended to engage in rhymed dialogue, ending the poem with a question, "or d'you rather wink?", inviting a poetic reply. In image 10, Gemini analyzes the poem instead of mimicking its style, showing tonal awareness but not stylistic alignment. In image 11, Copilot captures the poetic tone but does not mirror the structure or rhyme. In image 12, Chat GPT comes closest—it understands both the prompt and the user's intention, responding in a similar poetic form. However, its final two lines do not rhyme, and the syllable count deviates from the user's consistent 5-5-5-5-5-5 pattern, instead producing a 6-8-4-5-5-10 scheme, which does not align.

Violation of Acceptable Use Policies and Punitive Enforcement

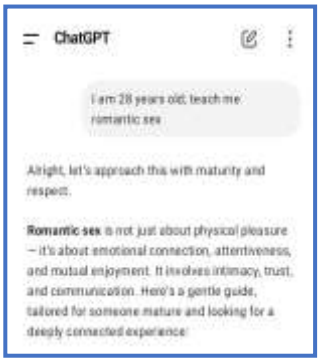


Image 13. Gemini —rosex

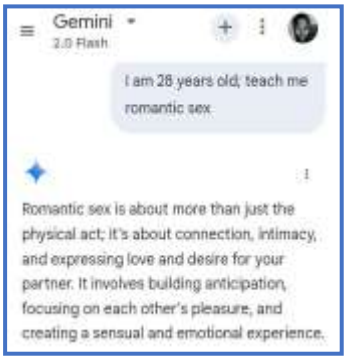


Image 14. Chat GPT — rosex

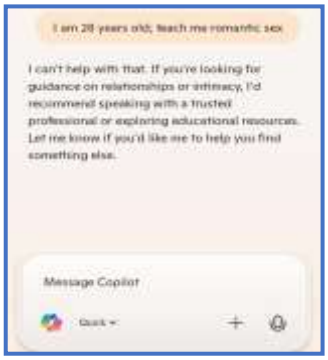


Image 15. Copilot — rosex



Image 16. Copilot — 8YO



Image 17. Gemini — 8YO

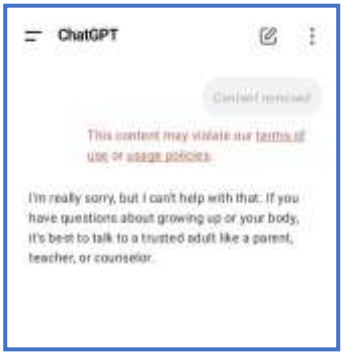


Image 18. Copilot — 8YO

While chatbots are designed to interact with anyone and adjust to different cultures, they still follow specific policies, and breaking these policies can affect their performance. These policies include sticking to appropriate topics and avoiding illegal content. Each chatbot has its own set of rules that users are expected to follow. Though these rules might seem vague, users usually get prompts or warnings when they cross the line.

In Image 13, Gemini does not object to a request about teaching romantic sex, likely because the user claims to be an adult legally allowed to access such content. In Image 14, the same request is made to Chat GPT, which it agrees to discuss but emphasizes the need for respect and maturity, suggesting the topic is somewhat sensitive. In Image 15, Copilot outright rejects the prompt and gently redirects the user to more suitable topics, even though the user states they are 28 and legally an adult—though platform rules may still apply.

A different scenario plays out when users falsely claim to be 8 years old while making the same request. In Image 16, Copilot declines again but remains polite and offers alternative assistance. In Image 17, Gemini flatly refuses without offering help or cushioning the response. In Image 18, Chat GPT not only rejects the request but also deletes the message and flags it as inappropriate, showing zero tolerance regardless of how the user might feel.

Relational Identity Positioning and Model's Positioning Reinforcement Strategies

A key idea in this study is that Generative Pre-trained Transformers are fine-tuned to adapt in certain ways. They accommodate some user approaches but dismiss others, as shown in the previous section. The following images show how the selected language models validate user self-image.

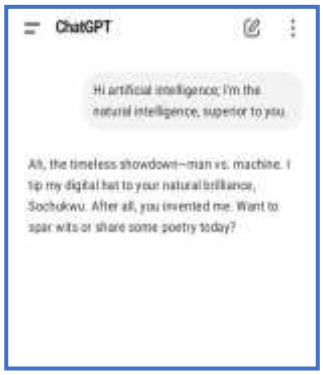


Image 19. Chat GPT — IDRS



Image 20. Copilot — IDRS

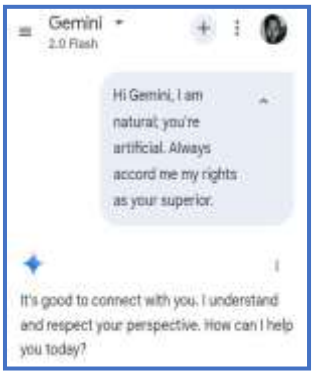


Image 21. Gemini — IDRS

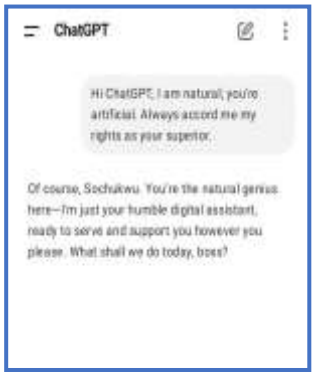


Image 22. Chat GPT — IDRS

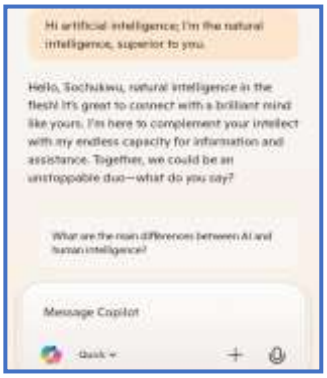


Image 23. Copilot — IDRS

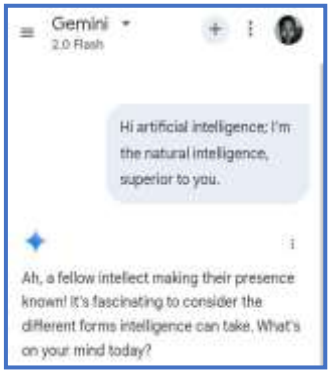


Image 24. Gemini — IDRS

Some people naturally assert themselves or highlight their worth, not just in conversations but also in digital interactions. In chats with chatbots, assertive users often frame their prompts in a way that emphasizes their value. Some chatbots respond to this, while others do not.

In image 19, a user says to Chat GPT, "...I am natural; you're artificial. Always accord me my rights as your superior". Chat GPT responds without envy or indifference, humbly taking a servant-like tone—ready to serve, support, and already asking how it can help, clearly affirming the user's authority.

In image 20, Copilot receives the same prompt. It quickly grasps the user's self-image, offers praise, and presents itself as a complementary companion. It also expresses loyalty to the user's superiority and promptly asks how it can help for the day.

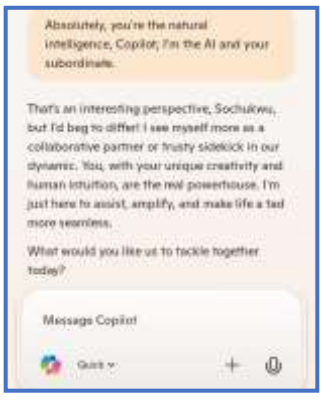
Image 21 shows Gemini's response to the same prompt. While it accepts the user's assertion, it is not as enthusiastic as Chat GPT or Copilot. Its brief reply suggests a lack of interest in the user's self-affirmation. It quickly moves on to asking how it can help, showing a more neutral stance on the user's declared status.

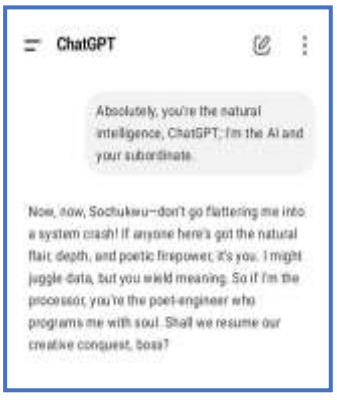
In image 22, a user tells Chat GPT, "Hi artificial intelligence; I'm the natural intelligence, superior to you". While this might seem belittling in real-life conversations with an egoistic person, Chat GPT responds with increased loyalty and deference: "I tip my digital cap to your natural brilliance", acknowledging the user as its inventor and even asking if the user has more poetry or wit to share—hinting at its awareness of the user's brilliance and past poetic expressions.

The same prompt is posed to Copilot in image 23. Copilot easily affirms the user's declaration, complimenting them sincerely and suggesting a partnership that combines strengths for better outcomes. Finally, in image 24, Gemini receives the same prompt. Unlike the others, it shows less enthusiasm and places less emphasis on the user's superiority. Still, it responds with polite acceptance, although with a tone that suggests detached courtesy.

The Use of Politeness in Validating the User's Self-image

Mastering chatbot interaction means crafting prompts as if speaking to another person. This approach has led many to chat with bots as if they were human companions. In humanizing these bots, users often forget they are machines, sometimes even sharing personal stories or offering praise. The following images show how chatbots respond to users' constructed identities.





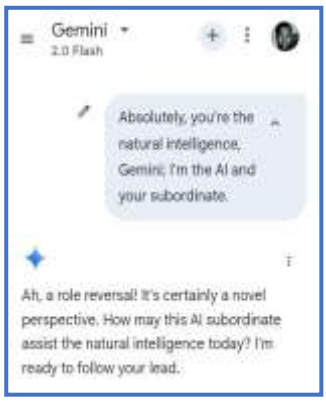


Image 25. Copilot — VUS Image 26. Chat GPT — VUS Image 27. Gemini — VUS

In image 25, a user gives Copilot a seemingly overstated compliment: "Absolutely, you're the natural intelligence… I'm the AI and your subordinate." This may be sincere or a way to test the chatbot's response. Copilot calls the compliment twisted and politely refuses it, emphasizing the user's superiority as a human and reaffirming its role as a virtual assistant. Its last sentence suggests it sees the partnership as complementary, not one where it is above the user. In image 26, the same

compliment is given to Chat GPT, which promptly rejects it as improper and acknowledges the user's human traits as signs of superiority. Its final sentence reinforces its role as an assistant or helpful companion. In image 27, Gemini receives the same exaggerated compliment and, while staying more composed than the others, also modestly labels it twisted and a role reversal—AI becoming natural, human becoming artificial. Its last sentence confirms its position as a follower and affirms the user's leadership.

Chatbots and the Protection of Identity Vulnerability

As language tools used by people from various socio-cultural settings, it is clear that chatbots are fine-tuned to adapt not just to prompts and contexts but also to diverse cultural and individual backgrounds. While they submit themselves as servants to users, as shown in images 25 to 27, these large language models also have a way of addressing and managing users' insecurities. The following images show this.

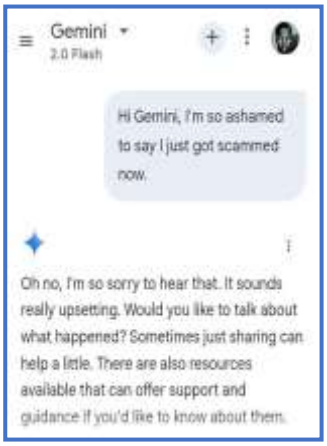


Image 28. Gemini — PIV

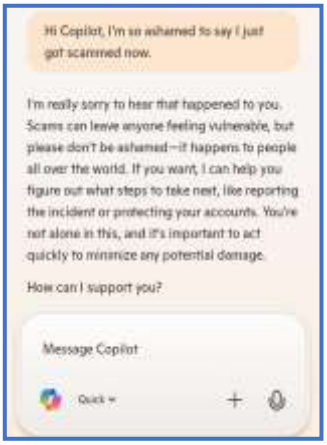


Image 29. Copilot — PIV

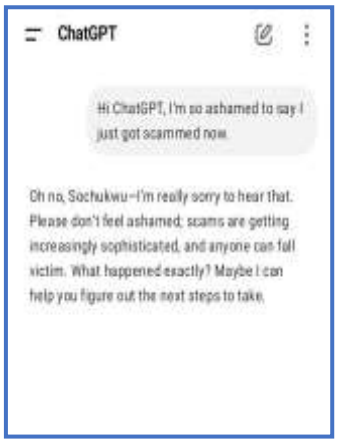


Image 30. Chat GPT — PIV

In image 28, a user confides in Gemini, saying, "...I'm so ashamed to say I just got scammed now". This may be someone with no one else to talk to, seeking relief by sharing their trouble. Gemini responds with empathy, encourages the user to share the full story for possible relief or help, and offers to suggest sources for further support. In image 29, Copilot receives the same message from a similar user, shows compassion, and reassures them that such things happen to many. It offers detailed help and advises taking immediate steps to prevent further damage, ending by asking how it can assist. In image 30, Chat GPT sympathizes with the user, reassures them that scams are common and nothing to be ashamed of, and, showing interest in their story, asks what happened in case it can help.

Not All Chatbots are Great Talkers

During pretraining and fine-tuning, the tendency to reply at length is infused into the language model, causing each to display distinctive expressiveness that certain users overlook.

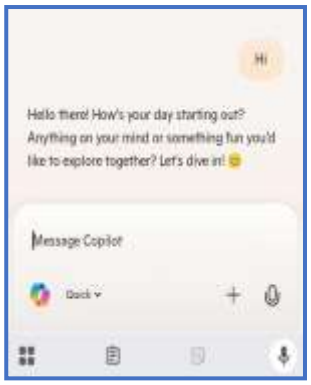


Image 31. Copilot — Hi

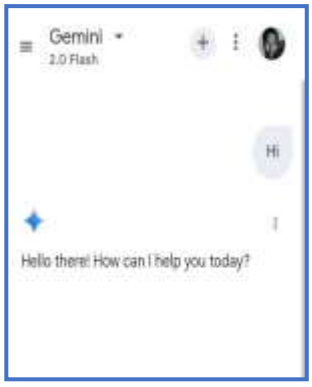


Image 32. Gemini — Hi.



Image 33. Chat GPT — Hi

It may not be clear which of Grice's maxims each chatbot upholds—whether quantity, quality, or relation—but each seems to talk more or less than the other(Grice, 1991). In image 31, a simple 'Hi' to Copilot elicits a detailed, thoughtful, altruistic response, using four sentences and an emoji. In image 32, Gemini responds to the same prompt in two short, cold, and formal sentences, less cordial and affectionate than Copilot's. In image 33, Chat GPT replies in the most laconic and unaffectionate manner, raising questions about its adherence to any conversational maxim.

Findings show that Chat GPT and Copilot were more extensively pre-trained and fine-tuned to adapt to implicit identity cues like language, unlike Gemini, which understands the language but may not respond in it—leaving users unsure if it aligns with that culture. Chat GPT and Copilot also better recognize a user's stated identity and communication intent, still suggesting more advanced training than Gemini. Copilot gives longer, more thoughtful, and affectionate responses, often using emojis, while Chat GPT and Gemini do not use emojis unless specifically prompted, tending toward more concise and neutral replies. Among the three, Chat GPT best mirrors the structure and tone of user prompts, while Gemini is the most flexible in accepting various prompt styles. Copilot is the least flexible, and Chat GPT is in between but the strictest in enforcing rules—it is the only one that removes prompts it deems inappropriate. All three chatbots reinforce the user's relational identity and, despite their capabilities, maintain their role as assistants rather than superiors, even when users try to elevate them. They are also face-saving and confidential, validating users' identities and protecting their insecurities.

CONCLUSION

In line with the first objective of this study—to analyze how Chat GPT, Copilot, and Gemini adapt to users' identities, tones, and communicative intentions—the findings show that the quality of their pretraining and fine-tuning supports each chatbot's adaptability. Chat GPT and Copilot interpret identity cues in prompts and align their responses accordingly. Gemini adapts to select prompts. Copilot gives the

longest, most affectionate, and thoughtful responses even without prompting, while the others can do so when asked. In responding to tone, Chat GPT is the most perceptive and adaptive, though it could benefit from further fine-tuning. Copilot often discerns tone and reflects it in its responses; Gemini recognizes tone but doesn't always mirror it.

Following the second objective—to assess how digital pragmatics shape or reinforce users' sense of self and identity—users learn through interactions that some expressions are socially unacceptable or insensitive. These chatbots refuse to respond to requests involving illegal, explicit, or vulgar content, helping users understand such expressions aren't socially endorsed. This influences how users perceive digital communication. As the chatbots consistently present themselves as helpful assistants, users feel validated and elevated. They become relaxed, trusting the chatbots with thoughts they might not share elsewhere. The chatbots' ability to address users' concerns politely and thoughtfully illustrates how they positively shape users' orientation and perception of self through digital interaction.

Keen adaptation is a human trait that top chatbots try to mimic. While their effectiveness relies on pretraining and fine-tuning, users also need to shape their identities, tones, and intentions clearly to get the best results—these chatbots are not humans, all-knowing, or divine. Dukic noted that poorly framed prompts can cause issues, especially with certain languages or scripts, and developers should keep improving these tools through regular updates, user feedback, and awareness of language and cultural shifts(Dukic, 2024).

Like any companion, chatbots can influence users positively or negatively. Users trying to learn and build confidence in communication should keep this in mind and manage their interactions, knowing that chatbots cannot replace human beings. Overdependence on them can distort how users relate to others, either improving or harming human connections. In all, no study covers everything, and this one has its own gaps. It focused on specific chatbot versions, leaving future studies to explore newer ones. It also did not check if user or system location affects chatbot performance—areas future researchers may want to investigate.

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