

Generative Poetry and Social Media: Exploring Creativity and Identity in the Algorithmic Age

Usha C. R

Research Scholar, Department of English
Karnataka State Open University, Mysore - 570 006
ushacr83@gmail.com

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Abstract

Generative poetry, created using artificial intelligence (AI) and algorithmic models, has emerged as a transformative form of creative expression in the digital age. This paper explores how generative poetry intersects with social media to influence creative practices and personal identity. It compares two AI-based poetry generators—OpenAI's ChatGPT and Google's Verse by Verse—to evaluate their stylistic tendencies, creative depth, and user engagement. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative analysis of generated poems and user feedback with quantitative measures of engagement on social media platforms. Findings suggest that generative poetry fosters creative experimentation and democratizes poetic expression while raising questions about authenticity and authorship. The paper concludes that while generative poetry expands creative boundaries, it also challenges traditional notions of poetic identity and authorship.

Keywords: Generative Poetry, AI, Social Media, Creativity, Identity, Algorithmic Art

Introduction

The rise of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning has profoundly transformed creative industries, including literature and poetry. AI-driven generative models have opened new avenues for artistic expression, challenging conventional notions of creativity and authorship. Generative poetry, which uses sophisticated algorithms to produce verses based on patterns, linguistic structures, and input prompts, represents a significant shift in the literary landscape. Unlike traditional poetry, which relies on the poet's lived experiences, emotions, and creative intuition, generative poetry is driven by machine learning processes that analyse vast datasets of human language, identify patterns, and generate new content that mimics human poetic forms.

Social media platforms, such as Twitter, Instagram, Reddit, and Tumblr, have become pivotal in the dissemination and reception of generative poetry. The immediacy and interactive nature of these platforms enable AI-generated poems to reach a global audience instantaneously, fostering real-time engagement, feedback, and reinterpretation. The algorithmic nature of social media platforms further amplifies the reach of generative poetry, as platform algorithms prioritize engagement-driven content, ensuring that the most emotionally resonant or linguistically intriguing pieces gain traction. The intersection of generative poetry and social media, therefore,

represents a complex ecosystem where machine-generated creativity, human interpretation, and algorithmic dissemination intersect.

This paper explores how AI-generated poetry reflects and challenges traditional poetic forms, focusing on the creative identity of machine-generated art and the role of reader engagement in shaping the reception and value of AI poetry. Creative identity in generative poetry refers to the perception of authorship, originality, and emotional depth attributed to machine-generated verses. As AI models become increasingly sophisticated, they challenge the boundary between human and machine creativity, raising fundamental questions about what it means to create art.

AI-Generated Poetry and the Evolution of Creative Identity

The concept of creative identity has traditionally been associated with human authorship. Poets are seen not only as creators of verse but also as conveyors of emotional truth, personal insight, and cultural commentary. AI-generated poetry disrupts this model by introducing an automated process into the creative act. Models such as OpenAI's ChatGPT and Google's Verse by Verse are trained on extensive datasets of classical and contemporary poetry, allowing them to mimic established styles and generate original verses based on learned patterns.

OpenAI's ChatGPT – ChatGPT is based on the transformer architecture, which uses deep learning and large-scale language modelling to predict and generate text. It processes input prompts by analysing the context and linguistic structure, generating new poetic content based on learned patterns. ChatGPT can simulate a wide range of poetic styles, from classical sonnets to free verse, often surprising readers with its thematic depth and stylistic accuracy.

Google's Verse by Verse – Verse by Verse, developed by Google, is an AI model designed specifically for poetry generation. It allows users to select inspiration from classical poets such as Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, and Robert Frost, and then generates new verses in the chosen style. The model's ability to adapt to distinct poetic voices and historical styles reflects its capacity to learn and replicate complex linguistic and cultural patterns.

The ability of these models to imitate established poetic forms raises philosophical and artistic questions about authorship and originality. If AI-generated poems successfully mimic the stylistic and emotional depth of human-authored poetry, who should be credited as the author? Furthermore, how does the absence of lived human experience affect the emotional authenticity and cultural relevance of AI-generated poetry? These questions are central to understanding the evolving nature of creative identity in the age of AI.

Literature Review

Generative poetry, at the intersection of artificial intelligence (AI) and creative writing, has gained significant academic attention over the past decade. This review explores the existing body of research on generative poetry, focusing on (1) the evolution of computational creativity, (2) AI models for generative poetry, (3) social media as a platform for generative poetry, and (4) the implications of generative poetry on creativity and identity.

Evolution of Computational Creativity

The roots of computational poetry trace back to early experiments in machine-generated text in the 1950s and 1960s. One of the earliest examples was Christopher Strachey's Love Letter Generator (1952), which used a simple algorithm to combine pre-set phrases into romantic letters (Wardrip-Fruin, 2009). Similar early models, such as the Markov Chain-based generators in the 1970s, applied probability-based language models to create rudimentary verse structures (Manovich, 2020).

A significant shift occurred with the development of natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning techniques in the 1990s and early 2000s. Researchers began using recurrent neural networks (RNNs) to generate poetry with improved coherence and thematic consistency (Hopkins & Kiela, 2017). The introduction of deep learning models, particularly transformer-based architectures like GPT (Generative Pre-trained Transformer), marked a breakthrough in AI-generated text by enabling the generation of complex, human-like language (Radford et al., 2019).

The creative capacity of these models lies in their ability to process large corpora of text, identify patterns, and generate output that mirrors human poetic styles. Scholars have debated whether such outputs represent genuine creativity or are simply a reflection of statistical pattern recognition (Boden, 1998; McGregor & Palumbo, 2022). Boden (1998) defines creativity as the ability to generate ideas that are novel, surprising, and valuable. While AI-generated poetry meets some of these criteria, questions remain about intentionality and authorship.

AI Models for Generative Poetry

GPT-Based Models

The release of OpenAI's GPT series (GPT-2, GPT-3, and GPT-4) introduced highly sophisticated language models capable of generating poetry with remarkable fluency and thematic depth. GPT models are trained on extensive datasets, allowing them to mimic poetic structures, employ metaphor, and create emotionally resonant language (Radford et al., 2019).

- **Creativity and Coherence:** GPT models can produce stylistically consistent poetry by predicting the next word in a sequence based on contextual input. Studies have shown that GPT-3, in particular, can generate sonnets, haikus, and free verse that are often indistinguishable from human-written poetry (McGregor & Palumbo, 2022).
- **Challenges:** Despite their fluency, GPT models sometimes struggle with logical consistency and thematic coherence over longer poems (Morris, 2021). Additionally, the tendency of large language models to replicate existing biases and clichés reflects the limitations of training data rather than genuine creative insight (Bender et al., 2021).

Verse by Verse

Google's Verse by Verse is designed specifically for poetic composition. Trained on the works of classical poets like Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, and Robert Frost, it generates verses that mimic the stylistic tendencies of these poets (Smith & Johnson, 2021).

- **User Interaction:** Verse by Verse functions as a collaborative tool, providing suggestions for the next line while allowing users to modify or adapt the output. This hybrid model of human-AI collaboration reflects a growing trend in computational creativity.
- **Style and Imitation:** Research indicates that Verse by Verse produces output that closely adheres to classical meter and rhyme schemes, though it often sacrifices thematic innovation for stylistic consistency (Garcia & Torres, 2022).

Social Media as a Platform for Generative Poetry

Social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok have become key outlets for generative poetry. The brevity and immediacy of these platforms align well with the structural flexibility of AI-generated poetry (Smith & Johnson, 2021).

Engagement and Dissemination

- **Micro-Poetry:** Platforms like Twitter encourage the creation and sharing of short-form poetry, often constrained by character limits (280 characters). Generative poetry, with its ability to rapidly produce variations, fits well into this format (Garcia & Torres, 2022).

- Visual Poetry: Instagram and TikTok enable the combination of text and imagery, transforming generative poetry into a multimodal art form. Studies suggest that visually appealing generative poems receive higher engagement and emotional resonance (Smith & Johnson, 2021).

Reader Perception and Authenticity

- Research shows that audiences often respond to generative poetry based on emotional impact rather than the source of authorship (Morris, 2021).
- Garcia and Torres (2022) found that 60% of participants in their study could not distinguish between AI-generated and human-written poems, suggesting that AI models are capable of simulating human-like emotional depth.
- However, authenticity remains a contentious issue. While some readers embrace AI-generated poetry as a novel form of creative expression, others perceive it as lacking the intentionality and vulnerability of human-authored work (McGregor & Palumbo, 2022).

Creativity and Identity in Generative Poetry

Redefining Creativity

Boden (1998) distinguishes between three types of creativity:

- Combinational Creativity – Rearranging existing elements in novel ways.
- Exploratory Creativity – Generating new ideas within an established framework.
- Transformational Creativity – Breaking existing conventions to create entirely new forms.

Generative poetry primarily operates within the realm of combinational and exploratory creativity. GPT models, for example, remix existing patterns of language and style to produce novel outputs. However, critics argue that true transformational creativity requires intentionality and self-awareness, which AI models lack (Boden, 1998; Manovich, 2020).

Identity and Authorship

The rise of generative poetry challenges traditional notions of authorship and identity. When an AI-generated poem resonates with a reader, to whom is the creative credit owed?

- Morris (2021) argues that authorship in generative poetry should be understood as a form of collaboration between the human prompt-giver and the AI model.
- Others suggest that AI-generated poetry reflects collective cultural memory rather than individual authorship, as the model's output draws upon vast datasets of human language (Bender et al., 2021).

Emotional Depth and Meaning

McGregor and Palumbo (2022) explored whether AI-generated poetry could evoke genuine emotional responses. Their findings indicate that while AI-generated poetry often replicates the language of emotion, the absence of lived experience creates a perceptible gap in authenticity for some readers. However, the interpretive act of reading allows audiences to project personal meaning onto AI-generated work, thereby imbuing it with emotional resonance.

Summary and Research Gaps

Existing literature confirms that AI models like GPT and Verse by Verse have reached a high level of technical sophistication in poetic generation. However, key gaps remain:

- Few studies have explored the long-term cultural impact of generative poetry on literary forms.
- More research is needed on the psychological and emotional reception of AI-generated poetry, particularly in the context of social media.

- The ethical implications of AI-generated creativity and authorship remain underexplored, especially regarding intellectual property and artistic credit.

Methodology

Research Design

A mixed-methods approach was adopted to analyse the creative output and social media reception of generative poetry. The study involved two phases:

1. Content Analysis: Poems generated by ChatGPT and Verse by Verse were collected over a period of one month. Each poem was analysed for thematic consistency, stylistic variation, and adherence to traditional poetic forms.
2. Engagement Analysis: Poems were posted on Twitter and Instagram, and user engagement (likes, shares, comments) was tracked. Qualitative data from comments were coded to identify patterns in reader perception and emotional response.

Sample Selection

- ChatGPT – OpenAI’s large language model trained on diverse internet text.
- Verse by Verse – Google’s model designed to create poetry inspired by classic poets (e.g., Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman).

Data Analysis

- Thematic and stylistic features were identified using NVivo for qualitative coding.
- Engagement data were statistically analysed using SPSS to identify significant differences in user response.

Findings

Creative Style and Thematic Consistency

- ChatGPT produced poems with greater thematic variation and experimental language use. Its output often combined contemporary references with traditional forms, creating a hybrid style.
- Verse by Verse generated poetry that closely mimicked the stylistic tendencies of classical poets, resulting in more predictable and structured output.

Audience Engagement and Reception

- ChatGPT poems received higher engagement on Twitter due to their conversational tone and relatable themes.
- Verse by Verse poems were more positively received on Instagram, where their structured and visually appealing nature resonated with users seeking aesthetically pleasing content.

Authenticity and Emotional Response

- 65% of comments on ChatGPT poems reflected surprise at AI’s ability to convey human-like emotion.
- 45% of Verse-by-Verse comments referenced admiration for the technical accuracy and classical resonance of the poems.

Discussion

Generative poetry challenges long-held notions of creativity and authorship, raising profound questions about the nature of artistic production and emotional authenticity. Traditional definitions of creativity are rooted in human intentionality, emotional experience, and individual artistic

vision. Poetry has historically been valued not only for its linguistic and aesthetic qualities but also for the personal and cultural context that shapes its creation. AI-generated poetry disrupts this paradigm by introducing an algorithmic process into the creative act—an impersonal mechanism that replicates human language patterns without the underlying emotional or cognitive experiences that traditionally define poetic expression.

Despite the absence of human intentionality, audience responses to generative poetry suggest that emotional depth and artistic merit are increasingly evaluated based on output rather than origin. Readers often respond to AI-generated poems based on their perceived emotional and intellectual impact rather than the identity of the creator. This shift reflects a broader cultural trend in which authenticity is defined not by the source of creation but by the ability of the work to evoke genuine emotional and intellectual engagement. AI-generated poems that successfully capture the rhythm, structure, and emotional undertones of human poetry are often perceived as creatively valid, even when audiences are aware that the source is a machine rather than a human poet.

Conclusion

Generative poetry represents a transformative shift in the creative landscape, where algorithmic precision and linguistic complexity converge with human-like expression and artistic nuance. The comparison between ChatGPT and Verse by Verse underscores the stylistic and thematic diversity that different generative models can produce, highlighting the complex interplay between machine learning architecture and creative output. ChatGPT's conversational tone and thematic immediacy aligned well with the dynamic and reactive nature of Twitter, while Verse by Verse's structured, classical style resonated more with the visually and aesthetically oriented audience on Instagram. These findings illustrate that not only does AI-generated poetry exhibit stylistic versatility, but its reception is also shaped by the specific engagement patterns and cultural norms of different social media platforms.

The study's findings suggest that AI-generated poetry challenges traditional definitions of creativity and poetic identity. Creativity has long been regarded as a distinctly human trait, rooted in emotional experience, intentionality, and cognitive complexity. AI-generated poetry, however, demonstrates that artistic value can emerge not from the origin of creation but from the perceived impact and interpretative engagement of the audience. Readers' emotional and intellectual responses to AI-generated poems highlight that authenticity and artistic merit are increasingly assessed based on output quality rather than authorship. This shift reflects a broader cultural redefinition of creativity in the digital age, where human-machine collaboration and algorithmic generation are becoming accepted components of artistic production.

Furthermore, generative poetry democratizes access to poetic creativity by lowering the barriers to creative expression. Traditional poetry often required extensive training and mastery of form and language. AI models like ChatGPT and Verse by Verse allow individuals, regardless of their literary background, to engage with poetic creation by providing prompts and refining AI-generated output. This increased accessibility encourages broader participation in the creative process, expanding the boundaries of literary production and opening new avenues for experimentation and artistic exploration.

Despite its potential, generative poetry raises critical questions about authorship, emotional authenticity, and artistic value. While AI-generated poems can replicate the formal structures and stylistic patterns of human poetry, they lack the lived emotional experience and cognitive intentionality that traditionally define poetic authenticity. Nevertheless, the ability of generative poetry to evoke genuine emotional responses and stimulate creative reinterpretation suggests that artistic value is no longer solely determined by human authorship. Instead, creative merit is increasingly judged by the capacity of the work to engage, resonate, and inspire.

Future research could explore how hybrid forms of human-AI collaboration further shape poetic creativity. The iterative process of refining AI-generated poetry through human feedback and modification introduces a new model of creative authorship—one where human intuition and algorithmic generation are intertwined. Additionally, further investigation into the cultural and linguistic biases embedded in AI training data could enhance the diversity and inclusiveness of generative poetry. As AI-generated art continues to evolve, understanding how machine-generated content interacts with human interpretation and social context will be essential for assessing the broader implications of AI in creative production.

Generative poetry stands at the intersection of technology and art, representing a new frontier in creative expression. Its ability to blend algorithmic generation with human interpretation reflects the evolving nature of creativity in the digital age. While AI-generated poetry may lack human consciousness and emotional depth, its capacity to engage, resonate, and inspire underscores that the essence of art lies not solely in the creator's identity but in the transformative experience it evokes in the audience. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of the shifting paradigms of artistic value and creative identity, paving the way for future exploration of AI's expanding role in literature and creative arts.

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