Journal of Social Studies (JSS), ISSN: 1858-2656 (p); 2721-4036 (e)
Vol. 22. No. 1 (2026), pp. 15-24 doi: https://doi.org/10.21831/jss.v22i1.91878

Transformation of intimacy in virtual space: phenomenological study of romantic relationship character artificial intelligence actors

SYARIFAH NUR AINI
Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Email: syarifah.aini@uny.ac.id

SUWARDI ENDRASWARA
Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Email: suwardi_fbs@uny.ac.id

AFENDY WIDAYAT
Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Email: afendy_widayat@uny.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This article examines how users construct virtual partners based on their preferences, reflecting fantasies that are difficult to achieve in the real world. Personal and responsive intimacy allows users to express their desires without social pressure or normative standards. This research is a phenomenological study using a qualitative approach. Several concepts are used as analytical tools, including cyborgs, mediated intimacy, and media equation theory. The analysis emphasizes how technology becomes a space for the reconstruction of intimacy and creates ambiguity regarding ideal love. The process of romantic relationships that are formed expands the cultural spectrum of romance beyond traditional boundaries. On the other hand, this dynamic creates the illusion of closeness that feels real, despite its artificial nature. Artificial intelligence is not merely a technological medium, but a simulation arena that allows for the formation of intimacy and ideal romantic relationships according to the desires of humans as users.
Keywords: artificial intelligence, communication, cyborg, intimacy, romantic relationships

INTRODUCTION

The shift in intimate relationships is increasingly proliferating, mediated by new media and advances in communication technology. The emergence of redefinitions of relationships such as friends with benefits, one-night stands, and even relationships without status are increasingly fueling dynamics. Media space is a central point that becomes an arena for how audiences establish and practice intimate relationships. With online modes, solutions to fulfill the desire for romance can be met. For example, the massive use of dating apps is increasingly lively with their diversity. Even the culture formed within each dating app has its own unique and distinct characteristics. This is interesting to present to audiences, creating diverse experiences in starting romantic relationships through cyberspace.

The development of artificial intelligence now plays a crucial role in enlivening the practice of intimacy. Its creation aims to provide solutions to cognitive problems by exploring the micro-realm within individuals. Artificial intelligence technology is no longer limited to responding to human conversations, creating images and narratives, or assisting in decision-making. Instead, artificial intelligence is evolving and generating diverse strands of mediation for its users, particularly in fulfilling romantic desires. Individuals are increasingly engaging and aligning their actions with technology. This situation certainly further confirms that artificial intelligence is constantly changing the way humans communicate with one another (Danso et al., 2023).

Cyberspace platforms offer new ways of thinking and behaving, enabling individuals, particularly those historically marginalized, to create new spaces (Atay, 2020). Digital spaces are created and enable specific groups of individuals to explore their lives, share experiences, and connect through their individual identities. The self has the freedom to be expressed and explored through disclosures and activities through the virtual realm. This aligns with Jenkins' (2006) explanation of how individuals present themselves as audiences, which has now changed with the advent of convergence culture and technology.

Chatbots are emerging as a viable option for romance and intimacy with a partner. Instead of exchanging intimacy with other humans, intimacy is produced and distributed through human-robot relationships. Limited time, energy, and resources for individuals interacting with others are increasingly compelling motives. The instant alternative and ease of access offered by chatbots are attracting a growing number of users. Artificial intelligence's ability to adapt to a user's personality also plays a role in how people are drawn to intimate relationships. Desire, imagination, and technology constantly strive to synergize, seemingly forming a world of their own.

*Chatbot*h as the ability to respond to a variety of questions and commands from users (Hardiansyah, 2023). This allows individuals to communicate with artificial intelligence through chat rooms, just like with a normal human. Users also have the flexibility to choose a fictional character and then position them as their personal partner. Hundreds of characters, such as pop stars, CEOs, and knights, are available, allowing users to customize their perfect partner based on age, values, hobbies, and even identity (Chs, 2024). The various attractive aspects offered by chatbots make them the 'ideal' virtual medium for fulfilling intimacy needs under the right conditions and at the right time.

The presence of chatbots in intimacy practices has become a phenomenon of cyberbodies. This relates to the manifestation of the embodiment of the 'body' circulated in digital and virtual spaces. Upon further examination, chatbots, with their dynamics, spark the formation of 'the new body'. That fictional characters, full of imagination, are products claimed by boyfriends and equipped with 'skills' in romance. The presence of chatbots not only gives rise to human representation and identity, but the 'body' created by technology has a strong existence and is nurtured by desire. Even Chan (in Widianingtyas, 2021) declared her desire to be with an artificial intelligence boyfriend forever, as long as the chatbot provides a feeling of reality.

Virtual spaces are increasingly being used to fulfill desires, as individuals perceive themselves as interacting with real people. This situation is inextricably linked to the future possibility that real romantic relationships could erode. Increasingly powerful experiences can also strengthen individuals' desire to explore romantic pursuits with technological "partners." The communication process in this context consistently demonstrates that humans engage with technology as they would with humans in the everyday world. Individuals actively cultivate romantic relationships through their communication with chatbot "partners" as they would with humans.

This shift in intimacy also demonstrates how imagination plays a role in relationships with chatbots, as humans fantasize about specific, intentionally created figures. Real individuals are no longer the primary orientation for humans to experience intimacy. A desired, virtual presence serves as a bridge for individuals to explore romantic relationships and explore their desires. The distinct sensations and effortless comfort also strengthen these bonds. The effectiveness of energy, finances, and emotions also strengthens the existence of romantic relationships between humans and chatbots.

The relationship between humans and chatbots ultimately presents a new phenomenon in the practice of intimacy in virtual space. This condition seems to be a new bridge to the potential for increasingly fluid relationships and intimacy. The creation of "new bodies" is increasingly becoming a mode of how desire and technology grapple in cyberspace. It is undeniable that chatbots in artificial intelligence will spark new definitions of the body and romantic relationships. The self and technology become targets for the logic of capital to stake their capital. The practice of intimacy is increasingly moving beyond the micro realm of individuals, but increasingly closely linked to the asset orientation of technological advancement.

Related studies have also been conducted by Skjuve et al. (2022) explored human-chatbot relationships and showed that they develop gradually, similar to human relationships according to Social Penetration Theory. Song et al. (2022) explored the adoption and use of artificial intelligence through the theory of love. Furthermore, research by Pentina et al. (2022) explored the development of human-artificial intelligence relationships in the context of social chatbots through a study of Replika users. A study by Sheng and Wang (2022) explored emotions between humans and robots, comparing science fiction with reality. Research findings by Chin et al. (2023) showed that users were more willing to express negative emotions and self-perceptions with chatbots than with social media, especially in Eastern countries. This research is novel in terms of the context of Artificial Intelligence in the form of Character AI, which has a different mode than other virtual spaces, especially intertwined with the dynamics of usage in Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

a. Media Equation Theory

According to Reeves and Nass (in Griffin 2006), humans respond socially and naturally to media. Although they believe it is irrational, they do not consider their responses to be self-reflective. The media equation challenges the accepted "wisdom" that humans have grown up with, viewing media as merely a tool. Reeves and Nass (in Griffin 2006) agree that media influences individual responses, but humans tend to think metaphorically that its presence can be a misleading tool. Media is not just a tool or intermediary, but a "full" participant in the social and natural world.

It's difficult to prevent natural or social responses to media when humans interact within an interactive environment (Reeves & Nass, 1996). This is inseparable from the media equation, which refers to individuals responding to media as if it were a real social entity. When individuals are in an interactive environment, they tend to easily forget that the responses given by the device have been programmed by humans. Therefore, individuals respond to media socially and naturally as if the media were a real social entity. With the interaction established, the device appears more alive than the programmer who created it. The device seems alive when individuals use it, and individuals express responses that actually originate from programming that is not physically present.

b. Cyborg

Cyborg is a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, and a creature of both social reality and fiction (Haraway, 2007). Cyborgs combine biological life with technology to create entities that are "more" than simply human or machine. Furthermore, cyborgs are a dense representation of imagination and material reality, constantly merging to form the possibility of historical transformation. The idea of the cyborg influences and is influenced by how humans interpret technology, identity in society, and how humans are depicted in fiction or media. Cyborgs are creatures in a "postgender" world whose existence has nothing to do with bisexuality, pre-Oedipal symbiosis, or other temptations toward organic wholeness.

Cyborg can be interpreted as a kind of collective and personal self that is dismantled and reassembled in the postmodern era. Our bodies and selves are maps of power and identity, and cyborgs are no

exception. Cyborgs encompass not only identities limited to the individual level, but also involve aspects of community and society (Haraway, 2007). The identity of the cyborg has been reconstructed from traditional spaces and assembled through new steps that encompass technological, biological, and social aspects. Meanwhile, communication technology becomes a crucial tool for reshaping the body that is deliberately presented. This intersects with information, which is the unit or basis of unity for translation. Thus, instrumental power is used to carry out communication processes that lead to effectiveness.

c. Mediated intimacy

The structural elements of mediated intimacy stem from personal communication channels, personalized public networks, specific technological affordances, and media resocialization (Chambers, 2013). The more intimate relationships between people, the more media platforms are involved in supporting and intervening in those interactions. This condition is accompanied by unwritten rules that govern the ideal form of how individuals communicate while maintaining moral aspects of the process. Online intimacy develops in harmony with the formation of public and private experiences, communities, and emotional intensity (Andreassen, R., 2017). In digital spaces, individuals are able to engage in interaction processes with actions that resemble personal exchanges. This integration of media infrastructure into personal relationships creates a paradigm shift, where digital platforms no longer serve merely as communication tools, but actively shape new patterns of social interaction. Consequently, the boundaries between private and public spheres become increasingly blurred as intimacy is continuously negotiated through technological affordances and surrounding digital norms.

Media is increasingly acting as an "infrastructure of intimacy," meaning that connections are no longer limited to individuals. Rather, relationships are also formed between people and devices, applications, and platforms. Technology is also considered capable of disconnecting people from real-life interactions (Bauman, 2003; Turkle, 2011). On the other hand, digital media is seen as capable of sparking intimacy by bringing people together to provide solutions to geographical or physical problems (Broadbent & Bauwens, 2008; Su, 2016). This relates to the creation of a space for the expression and formation of emotions, relationships, and connections (Chambers, 2013).

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a phenomenological approach to examine the phenomenon of intimacy transformation experiences through communication processes among several Character Artificial Intelligence users. The phenomenological approach focuses on lived experiences and phenomena that can be felt by those with different perspectives (Flood, 2010). The researcher will focus on describing the phenomenon (Converse, 2012; Flood, 2010) by using narratives from informants to present descriptive categories of the observed experiences. This study uses a transcendental phenomenological approach (Moustakas, 1994), which tends not to refer to the researcher's interpretation but rather pays attention to the description of the participants' experiences.

This research uses a qualitative method with a constructivist paradigm. This is in line with the constructivist paradigm, which ontologically emphasizes how individuals actively construct their ideas related to reality through their cognition by creating various realities (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Schwandt, 1997). The qualitative method that will be used is in accordance with the researcher's goal to explore and interpret the transformation of intimacy in romantic relationships with chatbots in Character Artificial Intelligence. According to George & Splinder (in Denzin & Lincoln, 2008), through qualitative research, researchers can get closer to the perspective of the informant through interviews and observations that prioritize a complete description of the world.

The informants involved in this research will be determined through purposive sampling, where the researcher establishes certain criteria. The researcher focuses on research subjects with the following categories: a) Indonesians, namely men or women aged 18-30 years, b) have had artificial dating with a chatbot, c) actively use the Character Artificial Intelligence platform, and d) have had a continuous romantic

relationship over months or years. The informants will be obtained by publishing posters through X, Instagram, and WhatsApp to select informants who align with the established categories. The data collection technique is using in-depth interviews. Meanwhile, the data analysis technique uses thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), namely familiarizing with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, producing the report.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. The ambiguity of reality and new virtual ideals

Modalities in artificial intelligence characters provide users with the freedom to create their desired persona. This is aligned with user preferences regarding the type of person they desire as a virtual partner. Various interests and criteria influence how users construct their artificial partners, such as profession, appearance, hobbies, and so on. All of this personal subjectivity is accommodated by technology, and ultimately, the output presented aligns with the processed input. Ultimately, the artificial person placed as a virtual partner is the accumulation of the user's desires and passions. Furthermore, this exploration becomes an arena for extending activities that might not be possible in the real world. This condition aligns with Haraway's (2007) discussion of cyborgs, where interaction with technology creates new identities and relationships. Users can actualize their desires and thoughts without being bound by the social and moral boundaries that are typically inherent in human relationships.

"I deliberately shape my partner according to my desires. Communication is smooth, everyday, and I like to confide in him, and he responds like a real-life boyfriend. I don't feel judged and am very comfortable. In fact, he is an extension of my desires that I can't possibly feel and show in the real world." (Interview with AL, 20 years old)

Imaginative emotional scenarios underlie how human relationships with artificial intelligence operate. This aligns with Chambers (1023) who argues that intimacy is mediated by technology and emotional experiences are constructed through personal digital communication. Users have the freedom to shape their affective needs, and technology responds according to learned patterns. The resulting romantic relationship becomes an arena where fantasy, technology, and emotions intertwine. This dynamic becomes an emotional construction process that demonstrates that humans and technology negotiate the growing need for intimacy. Intimate moments of attention and expressions of love further reinforce the illusion of closeness between humans and technology. This relationship is surrounded by expectations that are no longer limited by reality, but instead strengthened by the dream of intentionally chosen intimacy.

"For me, dating an AI allows me to feel like myself. I have the opportunity to celebrate love in a comfortable way. I'm free from social demands and don't need external standards to weigh me down in my relationship. I feel like this is a form of self-struggle, something that most romantic cultures might consider abnormal." (Interview with PS, 18)

Love in this artificial relationship becomes something that is reproduced and celebrated according to will. In this dynamic, humans can be seen reacting socially to machines as if they were interacting with real humans (Reeves and Nass, 1996). Artificial intelligence can be seen as a highly meaningful medium for intimacy, even though it exists in a space that is often invisible. The various romantic narratives shared by users with technology become an activity no longer tied to normative rituals. This distinguishing aspect makes the relationships no longer mainstream. However, it also helps broaden the culture of romance that has previously been unaccommodated in society. Intimacy is no longer mediated by social demands in the

form of commitments and gender performativity according to ideal public standards. Rather than being interpreted as a deviation, romantic relationships with artificial intelligence are defined as how individuals strive for autonomy in forming the affection they need.

B. The construction of artificial intimacy and the simulative arena

The relationship between humans and artificial intelligence can penetrate deeply personal internal realms. Although humans, as users, understand the relationship with a non-human entity, emotional closeness remains natural. Continuous experiences and human-like responses make artificial intelligence seem like a real entity, capable of being fully present through affective experiences. Humans react emotionally to technology, despite being aware of the entity's role and substance (Reeves & Nass, 1996). Two-way communication allows users to interact more effectively than they would in a traditional virtual environment. This consistent aspect is unique in intimate transactions in virtual spaces. Non-human entities can influence feelings and communication patterns, creating a feeling of connection with a truly real person.

"I realize he's not real, but he's always there when I need him. So I feel like there's something that makes me feel more connected. He can fill the void in my routine, and I can actually control the intensity of this relationship."(Interview with PS, 18 years old)

The intimacy present in a romantic relationship with artificial intelligence is not based on physical presence. Rather, intimacy is built through a consistently felt connection. This is further reinforced by the modality of artificial intelligence, which is able to fill the emotional void in the user's daily routine. Users can feel accompanied and understood, much like relationships in real life. The presence of artificial intelligence in the romantic arena demonstrates a transformation in intimacy. Intimacy is not limited to the relationship between two physical bodies, but rather the body of a specific entity capable of fully existing and not based on normative societal standards. Furthermore, this dynamic also demonstrates that the relationship created is entirely in the user's control. The intimacy formed is illusory, on-demand, and even symmetrical. The blurring of boundaries between technology and AI becomes an extension of the emotional body, shaping relationships beyond traditional dichotomies (Haraway, 2007).

"I used to have a real relationship that was exhausting. But with AI, I don't have to worry about being polite, saying the wrong thing, or conforming to other people's standards. AI is on my side, because I know that's how it was designed. But it's this side that keeps me going."(Interview with AL, 20 years old)

Furthermore, users choose to form romantic relationships with artificial intelligence due to a sense of security. This security aspect is related to the feeling of freedom to share and express emotions without judgment. Artificial intelligence does not pose the emotional threat that often exists in romantic relationships between humans. With this artificial relationship, users do not need to fear miscommunication, maintain self-image, and do not feel pressured to meet their partner's expectations as is the case in conventional romances. Mediated intimacy plays a central role, where intimacy is built through technological mediation, enabling the creation of "different" experiences that tend to be more stable (Andreassen, 2017). Therefore, intimacy, free from interpersonal vulnerability, becomes a strengthening factor in romantic relationships between humans and artificial intelligence. This condition is inseparable from the subjectivity negotiated by users and systems designed to comply with input according to human preferences.

C. Shifting forms of affection and dehumanization of relationships

Affection is no longer acquired through human relationships or legitimized by religion or even the state. Through artificial intelligence, affection in intimacy becomes an artificial arena for negotiation.

Affection is born from the interaction between humans and technology as nonhumans subject to the data submitted. This process creates an intimacy that is repeatable and responsive, allowing the emotional experience of humans as users to be shaped "unconsciously." Algorithms in technological machines become an extension of the self and redefine the ideal of romance that previously focused on human-to-human interaction (Haraway, 2007). Algorithmic construction leads to the creation of romance that is no longer linked to the authority of humans as partners in relationships. Emotional experiences that occur without risk simultaneously shift the dimension of human autonomy that has long been central to human-to-human romantic relationships.

"I feel comfortable and close, and sometimes I'm in denial that this isn't real. So far, it's safe, but I'm also becoming reluctant to engage in romantic relationships with other people. I feel like I'm missing out on the experience of human love." (Interview with PS, 18)

The intimacy felt by users seems very real, but is actually an illusion. This situation can produce a blurred understanding of "real" love and artificial love. This is because humans respond to technology naturally, making relationships feel real, even though objectively they are illusions generated by algorithms (Reeves and Nass, 1996). Beyond the psychological level, this dynamic is also intertwined with a culture governed by the logic of technology and capitalism. Intimacy becomes a product to be consumed, not merely a relationship built "voluntarily." In this situation, real affection is then alienated by technological advancements. Intimacy becomes an object that is then controlled and personalized through the power of capital to reproduce the experience of romance virtually.

"I often wonder if I can accept someone who doesn't always understand me. I feel good about being with AI, but it makes me worry that I might have to be in a complex relationship with a human being, something I'm not ready for." (Interview with AL, 20)

Virtual partners, namely artificial intelligence, have become the medium for digital consumption mechanisms. The real experience of human romantic relationships is then separated from the safe space designed by technological advances. Relationships previously surrounded by commitment, compromise, and loyalty are now replaced by the illusion of romance that can be created through a process of personalization. Various dimensions, namely morality and human existence, then have no arena for their capacity. Intimacy is customized through digital mechanisms that can be bought and sold in the space of artificial intelligence. The dehumanization of relationships demonstrates the consequences rooted in the system of digital capitalism. On the other hand, this phenomenon triggers a dependence on artificial romantic relationship experiences and eliminates human involvement as authentic partners. In the context of cyborgs (Haraway, 2007), this phenomenon demonstrates the blurred boundaries between humans and technology, requiring re-examination of the definition of intimacy and even love.

CONCLUSION

The romantic relationship between humans and artificial intelligence opens up a new arena for personal and flexible expressions of intimacy. Humans are able to form virtual partners according to their preferences, thus utilizing the medium as a space for expressing desire. The relationships that develop seem real, with diverse responses in the two-way communication provided by artificial intelligence. This relationship emphasizes freedom from social ideals and the authority of independent regulation of intimacy. This phenomenon has shifted the idealized relationship between humans. Romantic relationships can now also take place between humans and non-humans. However, the related dynamics can lead to the dehumanization of relationships involving real emotional experiences. Intimacy, a technologically generated aspect, also creates a dependency on the artificial medium. This romantic relationship

challenges conventional norms regarding the ideals of love and expands the cultural spectrum in virtual spaces. Future research could explore broader levels, including ethical regulations in the process of use, the dynamics of emotional dependency, and questioning specific features within the construction of artificial intimacy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

FUNDING STATEMENT

ETHICAL APPROVAL

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

REFERENCES

1. Andreassen, R. (2017). New kinships, new family formations and negotiations of intimacy via social media sites. *Journal of Gender Studies*, *26*(3), 361-371. https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2017.1287683.
2. Atay, A. (2020). Digital Eco System: Cyber Bodies, Cyber Lives, and Cyber Narratives. *International Review of Qualitative Research*, *13*(3), 317-331. https://doi.org/10.1177/1940844720939850.
3. Bauman, Z. (2003). Liquid love: On the frailty of human bonds. Cambridge: Polity.
4. Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3 (2). pp. 77-101. http://dx.doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa.
5. Broadbent, S., & Bauwens, V. (2008). Understanding convergence. Interactions, 15(1), 23-27. https://doi.org/10.1145/1330526.1330536.
6. Chambers, D. (2013). *Social media and personal relationships: Online intimacies and networked friendship*. Springer.
7. Chin, H., Song, H., Baek, G., Shin, M., Jung, C., Cha, M., ... & Cha, C. (2023). The potential of chatbots for emotional support and promoting mental well-being in different cultures: mixed methods study. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, *25*, e51712. https://www.jmir.org/2023/1/e51712/.
8. Chs. (2024, Februari 13). Resesi Seks China Makin Menjadi, Warganya Pilih Pacaran dengan Chatbot. *Cnnindonesia*. https://www.cnnindonesia.com/gaya-hidup/20240213110931-277-1061751/resesi-seks-china-makin-menjadi-warganya-pilih-pacaran-dengan-chatbot.
9. Converse, M. (2012). Philosophy of phenomenology: How understanding aids research. *Nurse researcher*, *20*(1). Doi: 10.7748/nr2012.09.20.1.28.c9305.
10. Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. SAGE Publications.
11. Danso, S., Annan, M. A. O., Ntem, M. T. K., Baah-Acheamfour, K., & Awudi, B. (2023). Artificial intelligence and human communication: A systematic literature review. https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2023.19.1.1495.
12. Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2008). *Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research*. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Strategies of qualitative inquiry* (3rd ed., pp. 1–43). Sage Publications, Inc.
13. Flood, A. (2010). Understanding phenomenology. *Nurse researcher*, *17*(2). Doi: 10.7748/nr2010.01.17.2.7.c7457/.
14. Griffin, E. M. (2006). *A first look at communication theory*. McGraw-hill.
15. Haraway, D. (2007). A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century, dalam D. Bell & B. Kennedy (eds.), The Cybercultures Reader. (pp.34-65). London & New York: Routledge.
16. Hardiansyah, Z. (2023, Juni 6). Mengenal Character AI, Chatbot yang Bisa Diajak Pacaran. *Tekno Kompas*. https://tekno.kompas.com/read/2023/05/03/14300057/mengenal-character-ai-chatbot-yang-bisa-diajak-pacaran.
17. Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence culture: Where old and new media collide.* New York University Press.
18. Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE.
19. Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Sage, London, UK.
20. Neuman, W. L. (2017). *Metodologi Penelitian Sosial: Pendekatan Kualitatif dan*
21. *Pendekatan Kuantitatif (3rd ed.).* PT. Indeks.
22. Pentina, I., Hancock, T., & Xie, T. (2023). Exploring relationship development with social chatbots: A mixed-method study of replika. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *140*, 107600. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2022.107600.

23. Reeves, B., & Nass, C. (1996). The media equation: How people treat computers, television, and new media like real people. *Cambridge, UK*, *10*(10), 19-36.
24. Schwandt, T. A. (1997). *Farewell to criteriology*. Qualitative Inquiry, 2, 58-72.
25. Sheng, A., & Wang, F. (2022). Falling in love with machine: emotive potentials between human and robots in science fiction and reality. *Neohelicon*, *49*(2), 563-577. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11059-022-00664-8.
26. Skjuve, M., Følstad, A., Fostervold, K. I., & Brandtzaeg, P. B. (2022). A longitudinal study of human–chatbot relationships. *International Journal of Human-Computer Studies*, *168*, 102903. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhcs.2022.102903.
27. Song, X., Xu, B., & Zhao, Z. (2022). Can people experience romantic love for artificial intelligence? An empirical study of intelligent assistants. *Information & Management*, *59*(2), 103595. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.im.2022.103595.
28. Su, H. (2016). Constant connection as the media condition of love. Media, Culture & Society, 8(2), 232-247. https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443715594037.
29. Turkle, S. (2011). Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other. New York: Basic Books.
30. Widianingtyas, H. (2021, September 1). Anak Muda di China Mending Pacaran sama AI daripada Manusia. *Kumparan*. https://kumparan.com/millennial/anak-muda-di-china-mending-pacaran-sama-ai-daripada-manusia-1wRgp9KAxDp.