

Artificial Intelligence, Language Change, and National Identity among Saudi Youth: A Sociolinguistic Study

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Abstract

Objectives: The rapid adoption of generative artificial intelligence (AI) has transformed everyday communication by influencing how people write, interact, and express themselves. While previous research has primarily examined the technological and educational applications of AI, little is known about its impact on language use and its implications for identity construction in non-Western societies, like Saudi Society. This study aims to investigate how AI-assisted communication is influencing the linguistic practices of Saudi youth and to explore how these emerging linguistic practices shape the expression and negotiation of Saudi national identity. Specifically, the study addresses the following questions: (1) How do Saudi youth use generative AI tools in everyday communication? (2) How does AI influence vocabulary choice, writing style, and patterns of linguistic expression? (3) How do these linguistic changes affect the ways young people express and negotiate their national identity?

Methodology: The study adopts a qualitative sociolinguistic approach. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with Saudi youth aged 18–30 who regularly use generative AI applications such as ChatGPT. Participants will be purposively selected to capture a range of educational backgrounds and digital experiences. The interview data will be analysed using thematic analysis to identify recurring linguistic patterns, perceptions of language change, and the role of AI-mediated communication in shaping identity-related discourse.

Results: The study is expected to show that generative AI functions as a new linguistic resource that influences vocabulary selection, writing style, and modes of self-expression. Rather than transforming national identity itself, AI is expected to reshape the linguistic resources through which Saudi youth communicate, construct, and negotiate their sense of belonging and national identity in digital environments.

Discussion: This study contributes to the emerging field of digital sociolinguistics by providing evidence from Saudi Arabia, a context that remains underrepresented in current linguistic and identity research. It argues that AI should be understood not only as a technological innovation but also as a sociolinguistic agent influencing language practices and identity expression. The findings are expected to enrich discussions on language change, digital communication, and identity in societies experiencing rapid technological transformation, while offering new insights into the relationship between artificial intelligence and linguistic change in the Arabic-speaking world.