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Critical Discourse Analysis of Media Discourse Related to the Impact of AI on Jobs: Corpus-Assisted

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Abstract

This study employs Fairclough's three-dimensional model through corpus methods to analyze media discourse on the impact of AI on jobs, by uncovering themes and modality that affect the audience's perception. A corpus of BBC YouTube channel interviews discussing AI and jobs was compiled, with a size of 16486 words. Quantitative-based thematic analysis is conducted to determine the most common themes introduced using n-grams, concordance, and frequency analyses, using AntConc. The findings reveal the common modal verbs used, analyzing the epistemic and deontic, to represent the impact of AI technology through a balanced narrative of optimism and caution, emphasizing ethical responsibilities for governments and individuals. The analysis also highlights both the potential of AI in the workplace and the need for regulations, with a focus on the impact of technological advancements on public understanding, using modality to engage audiences with AI's implications. CDA of media discourse also highlights how discourse reinforces power dynamics and ideologies, promoting equality in skill development while addressing risks of AI and opportunities. It is recommended to conduct further analysis of other linguistic items and other frameworks that discover ideologies behind discourse in different news and social media platforms related to AI in different fields.

Keywords: AI, CDA, media, corpus, jobs, modality, thematic analysis

1. Introduction

1.1 AI, Power & Discourse

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly accelerated the use of digital technology, reshaping the labor marketplace and increasing the demand for graduates with strong employability skills. In such a scenario, virtual communities and professional networks, such as LinkedIn, have become important spaces for information dissemination and discussion about workplace competencies (Yusuf, 2024; Gagne et al., 2022). Simultaneously, the widespread use of artificial intelligence (AI) changed communicative structures, impacting both language production and processing and intertwining language practice with relations of power (Roozafzai, 2024). Together, these trends have fueled increased concern with social and cultural implications of AI-facilitated discourse, specifically with regard to its role in both supporting and challenging dominant structures and discourses of power and ideology. The present analysis examines how AI is portrayed in media discourse, specifically in relation to employment and workplace narratives, through Critical Discourse Analysis to investigate how language utilization reflects power and ideology.

Over the past few years, AI has intersected with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and witnessed a growing interest in different fields like linguistics, communication, and technology. AI is integrated into our lives in different fields, such as virtual assistance and decision-making algorithms. However, CDA explores the interdisciplinary of language, power, and ideologies and how discursive practices contribute to the production and reproduction of social inequalities. Despite the growing body of research, little has been conducted to critically examine how media discourse shapes public perception related to the impact of AI on jobs, reinforcing or resisting ideologies in the workplace context.

CDA is a powerful tool for studying such concerns, in that it considers language and social practice in relation, with a focus on how discourse reflects and reproduces relations and structures of power and society (Fairclough, 1995; Wodak,

2001). Within the social practice domain, CDA uncovers ideologies through language used; therefore, using CDA to examine discourse related to AI might help demonstrate the impact of language on the communication used in the digital environment and how the audience might perceive such interaction.

1.2 Modality & CDA

From a linguistic point of view, modality refers to the speaker's stance, point of view, and the degree of commitment to a specific utterance. Within Critical Discourse Analysis, modality is employed to deliver ideologies, reflects on power, and social relationships. Even though the concept modality appears in various fields such as philosophy, logic, semantics, and morphology, its linguistic function in discourse analysis is more intricate and extensive, shaping meaning, commitment, power, and authority (Hassan, 2022; Makhloufi, 2025).

Modality is divided into epistemic and deontic. Epistemic modality reflects the speaker's judgement of the truth or probability of a proposition. For example, "he might be at work now", the modal verb *might* conveys a degree of uncertainty. A stronger epistemic modality is expressed in "they must be tired after their long trip", which illustrates a high level of certainty based on reasoning and or evidence. On the other hand, deontic modality reflects obligation, permission, and necessity, therefore, this type is related to authority, power, and ideology. For example, "you must fasten your seatbelt" indicates obligation, while "you may leave the classroom now" grants permission (Oni, 2017)

Modality can be expressed through modal verbs (will, would, can, could, may, might, shall, should, must, ought to, and others),2. adverbs (such as possibly, definitely),3. adjectives (such as possible, probable),4. and verbs (such as think, allow). The present paper highlights the use of modal verbs in media discourse, as they are more easily identifiable and analytically manageable (Abdul Rani et al., 2022; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Palmer, 2007; Simpson, 1993). Therefore, understanding these senses of modal verbs helps to explain the power relations and ideologies behind the language used in a specific discourse (Bartlett, 2014; Rantsudu & Bartlett, 2024). Epistemic modality enables the speaker to express uncertainty (Hood, 2019), whereas deontic modality expresses subjectivity, thus used as a tool for objective reporting. The significance of this analysis aims to uncover the ideologies behind media discourse related to the role played by AI technology in the workplace and its impact on jobs.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis and AI Representation

The incredible growth of AI in all different fields requires intensive analysis of discourse used from different parties: creators, users, employers, employees, and governments, to uncover power relations and ideologies being promoted in order to study the impact of such orientations on the masses, especially through news and social media platforms. This is important, especially to understand the impact of these discourses on public opinion, particularly through media and social platforms.

Roozafzai's (2024) conducted a critical discourse analysis of AI-generated texts, shaping public opinion. The study highlighted the importance of the integration between language and technology, especially when contributing to shaping our perception of the surrounding world. The study recommended that more collaboration between humanities scholars and computer scientists is needed to develop bias detection and to promote transparency of AI technologies.

Abdulhameed & Al-Sieedy (2024) deployed CDA to investigate the hidden agenda and ideology, representing AI in Bill Gates' social media content. Such an approach helps examine the relationship of language on the one hand and power interactions and ideologies in various social and cultural contexts on the other hand through the employment of CDA using Fairclough's (2001) model and Van Dijk's (1995) ideological square model. The analysis found that such representation reveals the way the *self* represents its AI technology and its benefits to the world. However, the representation of *other* is illustrated in the environment that surrounds AI technology.

2.2 Role of AI in Shaping Public Opinion

Prasad & Makesh (2024) explored the influence of AI on media and how it contributes to changing its delivery and audience perception. They proposed that AI technologies, such as machine learning, natural language processing, computer vision, and predictive analytics, shape the media and entertainment industry in general. They concluded that AI also helps create content tailored to specific audiences, making the content more dynamic.

Khan (2023) examined the influence of AI on the media industry in various sectors of the media landscape, providing a methodological review of the foundation of AI in the media sector and ethical concerns. The study concluded that AI has changed the media industry by making automated data analysis possible. The findings showed the need for ethical AI practices, moral guidelines, and skill-updating techniques.

In addition, Yu (2023) investigated the influence of AI on social inequality, particularly focusing on employment and income inequality. The study showed how AI affects the labor market through job substitution, "emotional exploitation",

and the digital divide. However, it was concluded that AI is a double-edged sword—it can drive progress or cause harm. Addressing issues like digital inequality and employment displacement is crucial to ensuring AI's positive impact on society.

2.3 Research Questions:

1. What are the common themes in media discourse related to the impact of AI on jobs?
2. How does media discourse use modality to frame AI's impact on jobs to affect the audience's perception?

3. Methods

3.1 Corpus Compiling, Corpus Analysis, and Software

The corpus was compiled from the YouTube BBC channel (during November & December 2024) due to its global influence and credibility, thus providing a suitable source for analyzing the impact of AI on jobs in media discourse. The corpus includes nine videos with a total of 16486 words, offering a timely and focused collection for examining modality through a CDA lens in media discourse. The corpus data were annotated using TagAnt software and uploaded to AntConc concordance software. *Word list, word clouds* (Voyant tools), *N-grams,* and *concordance analyses* were conducted to determine the themes in media discourse related to the impact of AI on the workforce, using quantitative methods. Analyzing modal verbs is conducted through frequency analysis and concordance analysis to determine their contextual usage. Concentrating on these elements is important since they are crucial for influencing meaning and perception in communication. Epistemic and deontic classification is used to examine the meanings of these verbs, incorporated within Fairclough's three-dimensional model of CDA.

3.2 Theoretical Framework: Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model

The current study utilizes Fairclough's three-dimensional model of CDA, with a focus on the language used to affect the public perception in relation to the role played by AI technologies in the workplace and how language reflects the ideologies behind media discourse, with a focus on the BBC YouTube Channel. Fairclough's model comprises three levels (see figure 1): the text (description)that concentrates on the linguistic components (modal verbs) of the discourse, discourse level (interpretation) that studies how discourse is produced (spoken or written), distributed and consumed by the audience, and the sociocultural level (explanation) that shows how language is related to the larger societal context (in this case the focus is on jobs and workforce worldwide) (Ahmed et al., 2017;Roozafzai, 2024; Zhang, 2013).

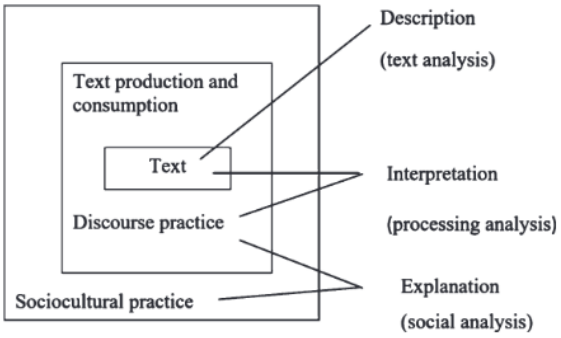

Figure 1. Fairclough's three-dimensional model of CDA (Ahmed et al., 2017)

4. Results

4.1 Thematic Analysis of Media Discourse Related to the Impact of AI on Jobs

To answer the first question, "*What are the common themes in media discourse related to the impact of AI on jobs?",* a word cloud is generated using Voyant tools to represent the most common words related to the topic. Then, a frequency analysis of the most used words in the corpus related to AI and Jobs is conducted, then n-gram and concordance analyses are conducted too using AntConc, in order to present a thematic analysis of media discourse.

Frequency Analysis

Figure 2. Word cloud of the most frequent words used by the media on the impact of AI on jobs (BBC YouTube Channel)

The modal verbs *cloud* highlights key thematic strategies used by the media. Prominent words like *jobs* and *work* indicate a strong focus on the direct effects of AI on employment, exploring how AI is creating, displacing, or transforming roles. The frequent appearance of the *future* suggests that the media frames AI's impact as a forward-looking issue, emphasizing long-term consequences such as job market trends and the need for reskilling. Words like *change* and *different* underline the media's portrayal of AI as a disruptive force that will change the very nature of work. The inclusion of *human* reflects discussions on how humans will adapt to or cohabit with AI, while *help* indicates positive framing, presenting AI as something that helps or enhances.

The terms *workers* and *employers* demonstrate the concern by the media of stakeholders affected by AI; *systems* and *process* bring forth technical and organizational changes needed for its integration. The words *think* and *looking* make the text slightly reflective and call for examination and proactive measures. The media discourse is thus variegated, balancing concerns about job displacement and uncertainty with a certain optimism about the possible benefits of AI. This framing probably influences public opinion by making people aware of the challenges and opportunities that AI brings to the workforce.

Table 1. Frequencies of the top 5 words related to AI and the workplace in BBC discourse

Word	Frequency
AI	196
Work*	81
Technology(s)	65
Job (s)	61
Intelligence	40

To provide a sufficient thematic analysis of media discourse related to the impact of AI on the workplace and jobs, n-gram and concordance analyses are conducted on the top 5 words in the corpus, which are *AI, work*, technology(s), job(s), and intelligence*. Lemmatization is conducted to find out the total frequency of the top 5 words (see Table 1). Then, n-gram analysis is conducted to examine the context of the use of each word, focusing on examining concordance lines generated through AntConc.

Thematic Analysis

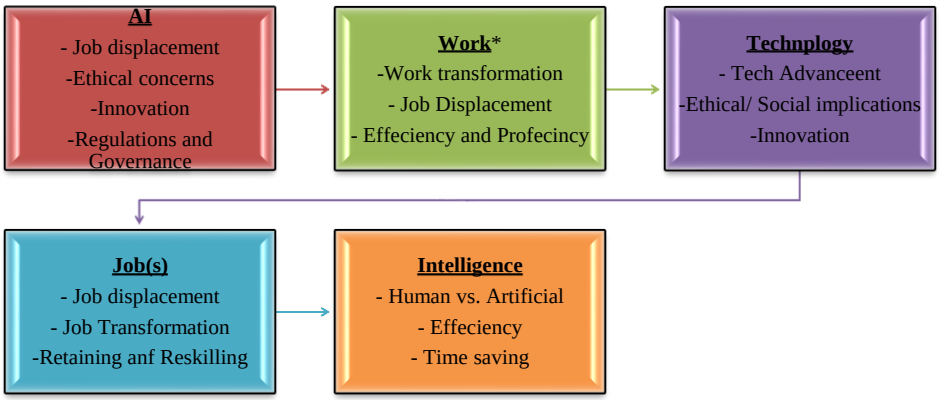

Figure 3. Thematic Categorization of BBC Discourse on the Impact of AI on Jobs

Figure 3 highlights the main themes in the media discourse on the consequences of artificial intelligence on jobs, based on an n-gram analysis of the five most frequent terms in a corpus of BBC videos. The fear of job displacement appears

to be dominant in the data set for both AI and Job(s), reflecting fear regarding AI's ability to substitute for human workers.

Some of the dominant themes mentioned in the corpus are the concern of ethics related to the use of AI, the challenge of misinformation, and the urgent need for setting proper regulations by governments regarding AI development and use. On the other hand, themes such as innovation and saving time in the workplace, retaining and reskilling reflect a positive perception of the role of AI in accomplishing tasks, highlighting the need for enabling employees to master such skills and to prepare the workplace for AI-driven environment. Moreover, media discourse focuses on the contrast between human and artificial intelligence in order to highlight the pros and cons of AI. In sum, Figure 3 summarizes the central themes in BBC discourse on the impact of AI on jobs and the workplace, demonstrating the positive and negative aspects of AI technology and the need for laws that govern the use of AI technologies.

Concordance Analysis

Concordance analysis of the main themes occurring in the corpus provides deep insights into how AI is represented. For **Job Displacement and Redundancy**, the analysis depicts AI as a threat to employment, as in "people *are just training the AI and effectively feeding it in a way that makes them redundant", and "AI is going to pinch all of our jobs*". These examples focus on the rising fears of job loss due to automation, which leads to a sense of urgency and anxiety about the way AI will affect our jobs in the near future. The second theme, **Innovation and Job Transformation,** highlights the appearance of new and transformative roles, as in *"23% of all jobs will evolve" and "workers might very easily be able to shift into more interesting or better jobs*". Such lines suggest that even though some jobs will be lost, new roles will appear based on the skills needed. Therefore, a positive point of view is expressed regarding the impact of AI on the creation of new opportunities.

Other themes such as **Retaining/ Reskilling and Efficiency and Productivity** show that AI is an Opportunity, reinforcing this optimism by framing AI as a positive force that drives innovation and enhances human capabilities, as in "*We should be excited about AI and see it as a great opportunity"* and *"AI is not about replacement; it's about enhancement*". Media discourse also positions artificial intelligence as an assisting tool for creators, as in "*AI is not replacing creators, but it's really about helping or serving creators" and "AI is doing and what we want to do is to help save the creators' time*". The analysis illustrates the potential of AI to improve productivity and efficiency, presenting it as a tool for progress and underlining the role of AI in optimizing creative workflows rather than replacing human creativity. The other major aspect that this discourse relates to is **Ethical and AI Development,** as in "*We need to balance how we roll out AI and technology and make sure we don't lose the human aspect" and "Misinformation and disinformation created by AI is the most significant risk to global stability*". At this point, the media has brought to light issues of safety, fairness, and human values in the development of AI, and reflects concerns about its societal and ethical implications.

The theme of **Social Implications** sheds light on more concerns about the societal consequences of artificial intelligence, depicted by questions such as "*What is the potential human cost to all of this?" and "Employers are turning to AI in their employment decisions*". This clearly proves the ethical and pragmatic challenges that arise with integrating AI into decision-making frameworks. On the other hand, **AI and Productivity** theme emphasizes the ability of AI to drive economic growth and democratize access to technology, for example, "*AI is allowing every human being to be that much more productive" and "Democratizing access to AI technologies*". Thus, AI is able to enhance human capabilities and make technology more accessible.

Regulations and Governance theme highlights the need for conscious regulation and strong leadership in the development of AI, as in "*Policymakers are not thinking two steps forward on the chessboard"* and *"Ian Hogarth is appointed to lead the charge on AI in the UK to ensure that it's developed safely*". Such discourse critically evaluates the current pace of AI regulation and strongly emphasizes the importance of responsible governance. The concordance analysis shows that there is a balanced discourse that recognizes challenges (such as job displacement and ethical risks) and opportunities (productivity, creativity) associated with AI. Thus, the framing of the impact of AI is positive and negative, indicating complex perspectives. Its impact is seen as a threat to certain jobs, but it is also seen as an opportunity for advancements and having new skills related to productivity in the workforce.

4.2 Modality Analysis in Media Discourse

To answer the second question, "*How does media discourse use modality to frame AI impact on jobs to affect the audience's perception?",* a tagged version of the corpus is used to determine the linguistic elements used. The following figure represents a snapshot of the tagged corpus uploaded to AntConc (Figure 4). The researchers looked for modal verbs as a linguistic tool used to affect the audience's perception. A frequency analysis is conducted first, then a concordance analysis is done to highlight the meanings of modal verbs used in BBC media.

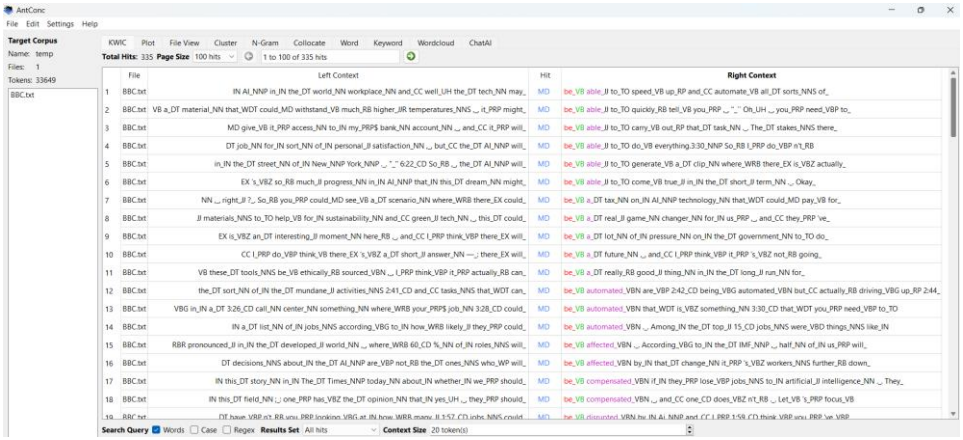

Figure 4. Snapshot of the tagged corpus uploaded to AntConc

Frequency Analysis

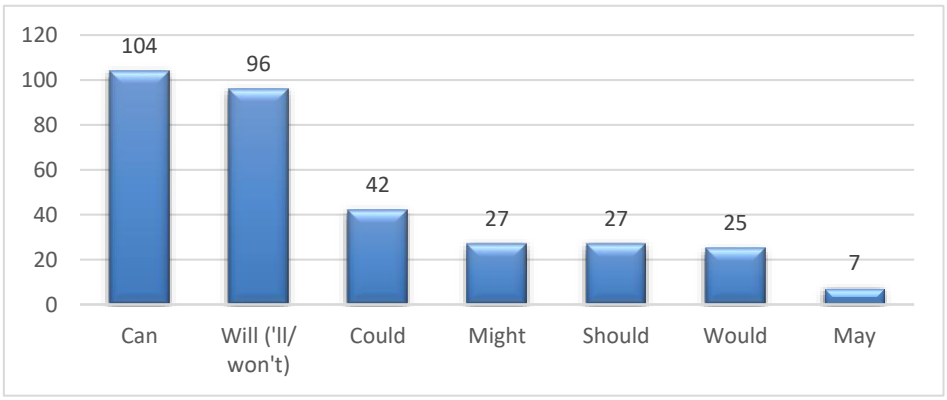

Figure 5. Frequency of Modal Verbs used in BBC Corpus

Figure 5 shows the frequency occurrences of the modal verbs used in media in BBC YouTube channel about the impact of AI on jobs, showing how language shapes public perception. The modal verb *can* is the most frequent, with 104 occurrences, emphasizing the capabilities of AI and its potential to transform the workplace, often portraying it as a tool for greater productivity and innovation. The high frequency here suggests a conversation leaning towards optimism, one that focuses on the potential of artificial intelligence (AI). Secondly, occurs *will* which occurs 73 times and expresses certainty and inevitability; it often portrays the impact of AI as unavoidable, whether the consequences are good (e.g., "*AI will create jobs*") or bad (e.g., "*AI will replace jobs*"). The infrequent use of *won't* (with only 3 instances) further emphasizes the narrative of inevitability, as the dialogue seldom addresses what AI is not capable of accomplishing.

On the other hand, modals such as *could* (occurring 42 times) and *would* (25 instances) introduce hypothetical scenarios and conditional results, illustrating a more speculative viewpoint. They present potentialities, such as "*AI could improve efficiency*", and hypothetical situations, such as "*AI would change the workforce*", thus giving a balanced discourse with an element of uncertainty. Less frequent modal verbs include *might* (27 occurrences), *should* (27 occurrences), and *may* (7 occurrences), which express caution, obligation, or permission; however, their lower frequency suggests that ethical issues and uncertain implications of the consequences of AI attract relatively less attention. The use of modal verbs indicates a narrative that emphasizes the abilities and inevitability of artificial intelligence, while irregularly touching on uncertainties and ethical problems, thus promoting public perception through a mix of optimism and inevitability of AI.

Concordance Analysis of Modal Verbs in Media Discourse

Can

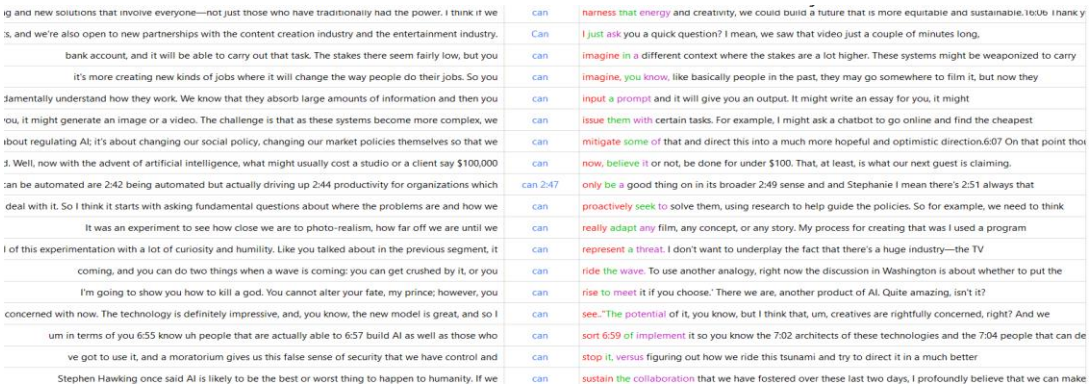

Figure 6. Snapshot of concordance lines of *can*

The modal verb *can* is commonly used in the media corpus to shape the public perception of the impact of AI on jobs, with a focus on its abilities, risks, and ethical issues. According to the analysis, *can* was used to reflect both the epistemic and deontic senses, expressing possibilities and obligations.

Within its epistemic meaning, *can* is used to indicate possibility, ability and potential outcomes of using and applying AI, highlighting the transformative changes and expected risks and challenges, as in "*AI can help almost everybody to do their jobs better, faster, quicker*" in which the speaker expresses the capability of AI to enhance the productivity and efficiency of workers. In "*AI can create images too,*" the speaker addresses the revolutionary potential to support employees in finding new opportunities. On the other hand, speakers' use of *can* reflects the possibility of misusing AI to cause harm, as in "*Misinformation that can be generated*" and in "*AI can represent a threat,*" acknowledging the potential risks related to the use of AI. Thus, *can* is used to frame AI as a new and innovative technology with promising abilities and potential risks, balancing optimism with caution.

In its deontic sense, *can* is utilized to highlight ethical and social implications, focusing on the need for fairness, inclusivity, and responsibility when developing and using AI. For instance, the modal verb *can* is utilized to express moral obligations ensuring that everyone is included in this change "*we can't leave our people behind in this change and transformation*", highlighting that all people around the world should take part in using AI and the necessity of providing the access for them to use and learn such tools. *Can* is also used to shed light on the ethical responsibility, giving human values the priority, to fight illegal usage of AI that might cause a lot of harm to individuals and communities as in "*we can't lose sight of human dignity*" and in "*AI can enable all possibilities, but it requires the human to tell the AI what to do*". Such use of *can* promotes a thoughtful and engaged public discussion about the role of AI in society and encourages the audience to envision both the benefits and challenges to encounter.

Will

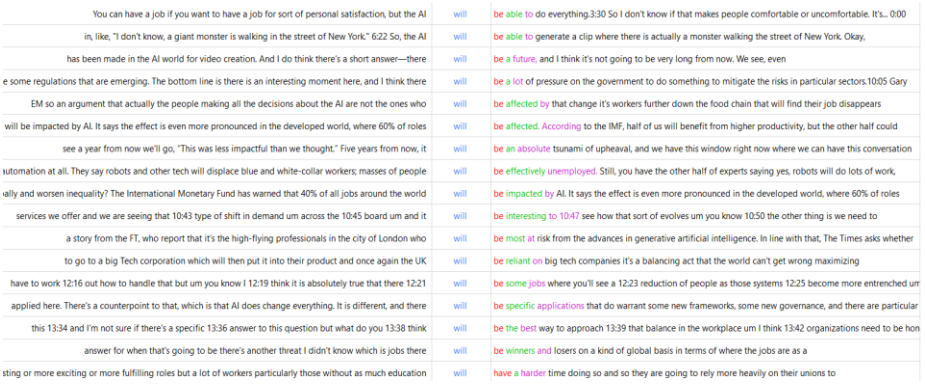

Figure 7. Snapshot of concordance lines of *will*

The modal verb *will* is used frequently in the corpus to convey a sense of necessity, certainty, and inevitability of the impact of AI on jobs and the workforce. Its usage also reflects both epistemic and deontic senses.

In the epistemic sense, *will* is utilized to express certainty, inevitability, and prediction of future outcomes related to AI, which is perceived as unavoidable innovation, showing mixed emotions of optimism and caution. For instance, *will* is

used to show the certainty of job displacement, creating a sense of concern as in "*AI will replace many jobs*" and "workers further down the food chain will find their jobs disappear". In other examples, *will* is used to highlight the certainty of the huge advancements of AI posing feelings of unease to be updated as in "*AI will be able to do everything" and "it will be able to carry that task*", predicting the great abilities of AI to finish everything in the near future. Moreover, will is used to show some positive predictions based on the current developments of AI, as in "*technology access will become cheaper*". However, will is used in a negative way, raising concerns about certain outcomes of using AI, as in "*AI will flood the internet with misinformation*", highlighting the enormous abilities of this technology to cause massive changes, which can negatively impact many aspects of our lives.

Will is used to express a deontic meaning, expressing necessity and obligation, especially in relation to the responsibilities of policymakers and communities to manage the impact of AI. The use of *will* shifts the focus from prediction to the actions required to handle and address the role of AI. For instance, "*governments will need to assume responsibility" and "AI will require new governance frameworks,"* highlighting the necessity of taking action by governments to develop regulations to manage the use and development of AI.

In sum, the meanings of will used in this discourse provide a complicated narrative related to the impact of AI on jobs and society. It provides epistemic sense, focusing on the certainty of the AI potentials and its inevitable outcomes as job displacement and advancements. However, within the deontic sense, it reflects the need for responsible actions by governments, especially to control the challenges of this technology.

Should

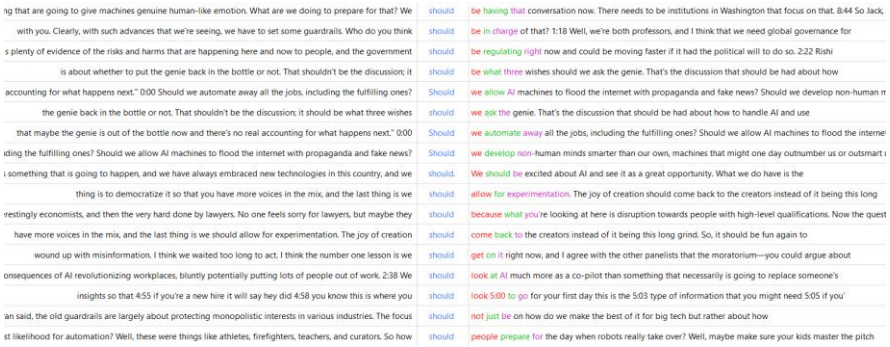

Figure 8. Snapshot of concordance lines of *should*

The modal verb *should* is used to frame the public debate on the consequences of AI on job opportunities. Its utilization reflects deontic modality, indicating obligation, responsibility, and moral suggestion regarding AI development and the usage of this technology. It is used in media discourse to express obligation for international collaboration in addressing the challenges posed by AI as in "*it should be global*" and expresses necessity of equitable solutions addressing the economic impact of AI on people as in "*there should be fair compensation*" and "*workers who are replaced by AI should be receive compensation*" highlighting the responsibility to provide fair compensation to those who loses their jobs as a result of deploying AI at workplace. Should is also used to stress the urgency of action and productive dialogue about this technology across all sectors, as in "*we should be having that conversation now*". It is also used to emphasize the priority of human values over economic and technological interests, as in "*the focus should not just be on how we make the best of it for big tech*". however, should is utilized to suggest a moral responsibility to consider AI as an assistant tool rather than a threat that will replace human jobs, as in "*we should look at AI much more as a co-pilot*".

Might

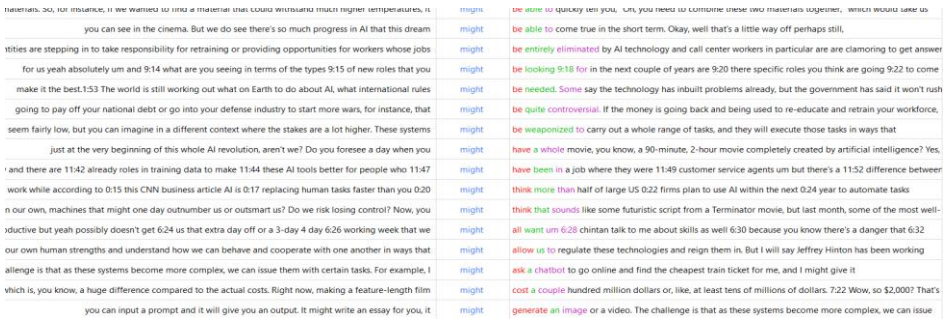

Figure 9. Snapshot of concordance lines of *might*

The modal verb *might* is used in its epistemic sense, expressing possibility, uncertainty, and speculation. In other words, the speakers are using might to express that they are not certain about the truth of what they are saying and perceiving that as a potential outcome. Thus, inviting the audience to expect possible and hypothetical situations or results without certainties. For example, "*it might be able to quickly tell you*", suggesting that AI is capable of solving problems quickly without asserting that it is certain. It also expresses the possibility of job replacement, which might happen or might not, as in "*workers whose jobs be entirely eliminated by AI technology*". This modal verb is also used to suggest the possibility of misusing AI, which is also not certain, as in "*these systems might be weaponized*", but requires caution too. Such use of might encourages the audience to approach AI as a new technology, but with caution, critical thinking, and analytical thinking about the benefits and risks of AI.

Would

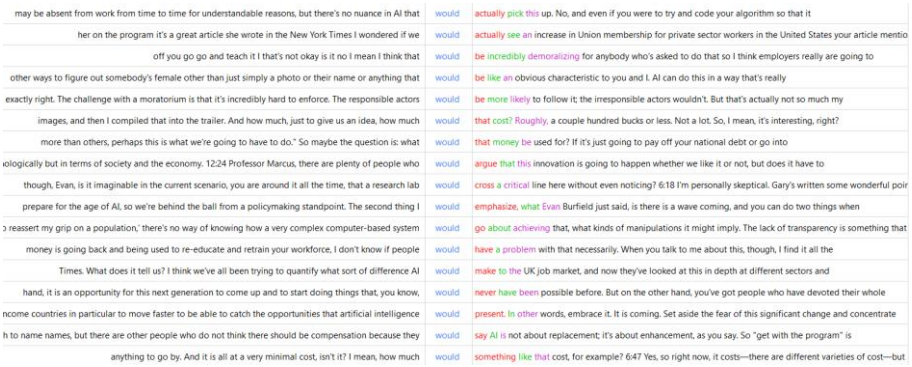

Figure 10. Snapshot of concordance lines of *would*

The modal verb *would* is employed in the epistemic sense, indicating hypothetical situations, potentialities, and contingent results, thereby influencing public perception by instilling a sense of conjecture and examination of prospective futures. In contrast to *will,* which denotes certainty, *would* frequently mitigates the tone, implying results that depend on specific conditions or actions. For example, the sentence *"that would actually hopefully give them superpowers to be able to gain access to skills*" shows artificial intelligence as a potential facilitator of empowerment, particularly for those living in economically deprived areas. The epistemic meaning of *would* demonstrates the potential of AI in enhancing skills and creating new opportunities. However, some benefits are not guaranteed if accessibility is not available. The analysis also shows that would is used to focus on the limitations of AI systems, especially to understand the human text when reasonable circumstances are absent, as in "*there's no nuance in AI that would actually pick this up*". The use of would implies a skeptical tone of the ability of AI to replicate human judgment, therefore, the public should be aware of the careful use and expectations of what AI is capable of. Offering results as provisional and speculative *would* encourages deeper and more critical engagement with the conversation about the impact of AI on jobs and society as a whole.

May

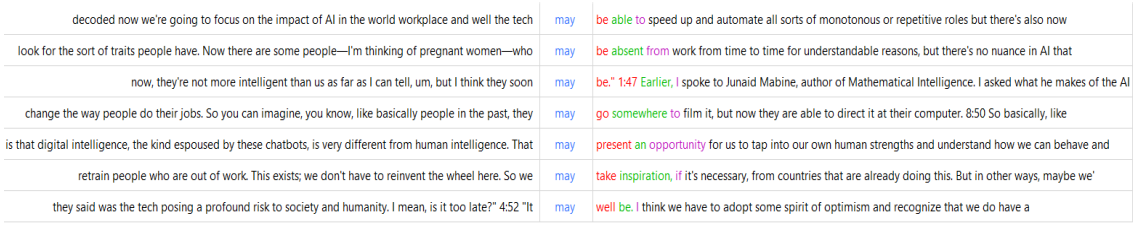

Figure 11. Snapshot of concordance lines of *may*

The modal verb *may* is used in the epistemic meaning, expressing possibility, uncertainty, and permission, affecting the public perception of AI's impact on job opportunities by introducing a tone of caution and exploration. *May* suggests that the outcomes being discussed are not certain, allowing for a more open-ended discussion about the potential effects of AI. For example, "*the tech may be able to speed up and automate all sorts of monotonous or repetitive roles" and "they soon may be [more intelligent than us]"* suggest that AI could revolutionize work and even outperform humans. However, they frame these outcomes as conditional or speculative. Such use of the modal verb *may* encourages the audience to take into consideration what AI is able to achieve, regardless of the assumptions being imposed, strengthening a sense of curious and cautious optimism.

In addition, this modal verb is utilized to highlight some future conditions, as in "*digital intelligence may present an*

opportunity for us to tap into our own human strengths" and "we may take inspiration from countries which are already doing that". This encourages the audience to consider what to do regarding adapting AI into our daily life activities. Thus, it is a shared responsibility to include AI as an active part of our activities, inside and outside the workplace, whether for reskilling or to discover new opportunities.

5. Discussion & Conclusion

This study uses Fairclough's CDA model to discover the ideologies behind media discourse related to the impact of AI on jobs. Corpus analyses are used to conduct the thematic analysis: word cloud, frequency, n-gram, and concordance analyses. For modality analysis, frequency and concordance analyses are used to shed light on the language used by the participants in the BBC YouTube News to impact the perception of the audience. The findings demonstrate that modal verbs play an important role in representing and framing the impact of such technology, from a balanced, optimistic to a cautious point of view, while focusing on the ethics of using and developing AI tools.

Following Fairclough's model, the analysis at the textual level shows that the modal verbs are utilized in a balanced way, showing a balanced media narrative. The epistemic and deontic senses of these modal verbs are reflected from the context used by speakers, where *can* is used in both senses, showing possibilities and obligations required from individuals and governments towards employing this technology, while *will* conveys inevitability and certainty, showing that AI usage in the workplace is unavoidable. Modal verbs such as *would, might,* and *may* introduce uncertainty, speculation, and hypothetical outcomes, encouraging analytical thinking of the potentials of AI, whereas *should* highlights moral obligations, especially required from the governments to set suitable regulations and laws to control the usage of AI. Such choices are not neutral; they are used strategically to construct power relations and ideological positioning. For instance, epistemic usage of the modal verbs such as *will* and *can* depicts the role of AI as something inevitable, suggesting that its adoption and learning as a must and need, whereas deontic meaning of some modal verbs such as *should* and *must* signifies the need for moral and legal obligations posed on some actors as the government and employers, thus enforcing the hierarchal structure in the community.

In addition, such linguistic items reflect the media discourse related to the impact of AI on jobs, affecting how the audience perceives the opportunities and challenges posed by artificial intelligence. Such findings align with Bonyadi (2011), who states that using these modal verbs carries epistemic and deontic senses that express how people view the world and show their beliefs, attitudes, and feelings about specific situations or things. Within the epistemic meaning of *can* and *will,* the speakers in YouTube media discourse express their judgments related to the real impact of AI on jobs and required skills in the near future, focusing on what is possible to happen and what is necessary. For the deontic sense of these modal verbs, Bonyadi (2011) demonstrates that it involves the authority responsible for deciding whether an action is required or allowed, in this case, the responsibility of governments and employers to gain access to AI tools that enhance the employees' skills and productivity at the workplace as well as needed regulations that limit the risks and dangers of misusing and misinformation related to AI technology.

Furthermore, modality plays a significant role in framing inclusion and exclusion in discourse, where the use of some modal verbs specifies who is perceived a capable of acting, in power, and who bears the responsibility. For instance, the frequent attribution highlighting the obligations required from the governments and employers reflects their power and ability to impose changes over others, excluding individuals, employees, and marginalized communities and countries from the responsibility of AI literacy and decision-making. That reinforces the institutional power of large and international companies and developed countries.

At the discourse practice level, the analysis shows how media discourse mediates between technological developments and public understanding. By using modal verbs that express possibility, obligation, and speculation, this discourse invites the audience to engage with the implications of AI positively and cautiously simultaneously. That aligns with Carvalho's (2000) and Prasad and Makesh (2024) analyses, that at the discourse level, speakers and writers shape or influence how reality is presented. Using modality is one of the ways to do that by focusing on certain aspects to create a specific effect. In this context, modality provides a source of information and interpretation for the audience about the benefits and threats of AI. This strategy is ideologically motivated to direct the public opinion and attitude, reducing the public resistance to the adoption of AI in the workplace. This creates a controlled space of acceptable discourse that represents AI as a manageable and beneficial technology within certain regulations provided by certain actors.

At the sociocultural level, the analysis shows how media discourse reflects and reinforces social values and power dynamics reflected in spreading equality among all countries related to skill development and using AI to improve jobs and skills. The interplay between the three levels of analysis reveals how media discourse not only reflects but also supports existing power structures and ideologies about AI.

In conclusion, the current study demonstrates that media discourse about the impact of AI on jobs is a complex representation. Thematic analysis, n-gram, concordance, and modal analysis show the complex narrative that balances optimistic and cautious points of view, certainty and speculation, and opportunities and risks. Such discourse shapes the

public perception and reinforces the social and power dynamic. The analysis of BBC media discourse on the consequences of AI on jobs reveals a dual perspective, emphasizing both challenges and opportunities. Focusing on several themes such as job replacement, innovation and job transformation, retraining and reskilling, efficiency and productivity, ethical and social implications and regulations, and governance. This narrative highlights the necessity of considering AI as an inevitable choice for everyone to achieve success in their careers, as well as it represents a huge challenge for governments, particularly, thus an urgent need for suitable regulations is required. It is recommended to conduct more CDA related to the audience perception of the impact of AI on jobs and other social, educational, political, and economic fields through social media to uncover ideologies related to this technology.

This analysis ensures the significance of examining media discourse critically to understand how language choices, particularly modality, strategically frame technological innovations and developments on society, as the rise of AI. The study highlights that modality is not only a grammatical feature but also a significant discursive tool, enabling speakers to shape perceptions to reinforce certain ideologies about progress, control, and power.

Since this analysis focused only on the common themes and modality analysis of media discourse, it is recommended to conduct an in-depth analysis of different linguistic elements used to represent the impact of AI on different sectors and fields such as education, manufacturing, and others. Other theoretical frameworks, such as Van Dijak can be used to investigate how discourse is used to promote *us* vs. *them* speech related to the AI revolution, especially in relation to the American and Chinese developers, companies, and governments.

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Authors contributions

Wajed AL Ahmad: Contributed to conceptualizing the study, designing the methodology, and supervising the research process. Drafted the initial manuscript and coordinated revisions based on feedback from co-authors. Ensured the final submission adhered to ethical and academic standards, including proper referencing and authorship representation. *Raeda Ammari*: Managed data collection, including corpus compilation and preprocessing. Performed data analysis using tools like AntConc and contributed to interpreting the findings. *Murad Al Kayed*: Developed the theoretical framework for the study. Provided critical insights to align the study within the broader research context. *Juhaina Al-Issawi*: Provided technical assistance with software and tools used for data analysis. Developed visual representations (e.g., graphs, tables) to support data interpretation in the manuscript.

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