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Creativity: The Soul Of Literature In Ai Era

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Abstract

In the age of artificial intelligence, the role of human creativity in literature is more vital than ever. While AI can generate text, mimic styles, and analyse language, it lacks the emotional depth, cultural context, and imaginative power that define human expression. Through qualitative analysis of selected English novels, the study highlights the emotional nuance, imaginative vision, and cultural resonance unique to human authorship. While AI can generate text, imitate literary styles, and analyse language, it lacks the emotional depth, cultural context, and imaginative power that define human creativity. AI can create artworks and fictions based on the keywords we provide, but they often lack the imaginative soul that humans inherently possess. This article explores the unique and irreplaceable role of human creativity in literature, emphasizing its importance in preserving the soul of literary expression amid technological advancement. The study examines how literature remains a profoundly human endeavour despite the growing influence of artificial intelligence.

Key Words

Creativity, Soul, Literature, AI Era, Human Imagination, Emotional Depth

I. Introduction

In today's world where AI, automation, and tech breakthroughs rule, people often ask if studying English literature still matters. As we lean more on machines to do our work make art, and even write stories, some might think the humanities are becoming outdated. But this view misses the unique way English literature helps us understand the world and ourselves. AI's quick progress has changed how we write, read, and understand literature. As AI models that can create stories and poems have shown up, people worry this might hurt human creativity in writing. But the heart of literature isn't just about well-structured words. It's about real-life experiences emotional connections, and cultural meaning woven into creative work. AI can copy the form of writing, but it can't match the deep questions about life, the raw honesty, or the tough moral choices that shape human storytelling. Historically, literature has served as a mirror to society's evolution—capturing shifts in identity, ethics, and technology. Mary Shelley's book *Frankenstein* (1818) one of the first science fiction stories, looks at making life through unnatural ways to criticize science that doesn't think about consequences. Shelley's story, while an early look at AI-like ideas, shows how creative writing goes beyond just inventing things to think about being responsible and having deep feelings—things AI still can't do. The book highlights how using your imagination to think about right and wrong makes literature more than just

facts and information. Consider, for instance, the timeless novel '1984' by George Orwell. Written over seven decades ago, this dystopian masterpiece depicts a society where totalitarianism and surveillance have become the norm. In today's world, where concerns about government control, social media manipulation, and data privacy are increasingly prevalent, '1984' offers a prophetic warning about the dangers of unchecked power and the erosion of individual freedom.

The study of English literature, as exemplified by works like '1984', provides us with a rich understanding of human nature, society, and culture. Through the pages of great novels, we gain insight into the complexities of human experience, the consequences of our actions, and the importance of empathy, compassion, and critical thinking. Human creativity sparks imagination leading to literary masterpieces that strike a chord with readers. Writers express intricate feelings, ideas, and life events that humans can understand. Take Toni Morrison's 'Beloved' as an example. This chilling story about Sethe, who used to be a slave, takes a deep look at what it means to be human. It digs into topics like trauma, memories, and the quest to find oneself.

The range of professional AI content creation has a clear shortcoming in lacking the subtleties associated with human writing. AI can attempt to replicate a particular style or structure in accordance to one's command, but lacks the originality and imagination makings of great literatures crafted. As we know, García Márquez wrote 'One Hundred Years of Solitude' which is a magical realist literary masterpiece encapsulating intricate human experiences. Imagination is the backbone of literature, allowing writers to create entire worlds in the form of places, characters, and plots for their readers' adventure. It is through imagination that authors effectively tackle complex themes, ideas, and emotions that are appealing to readers. J.R.R. Tolkien ascertained the power of imagination in 'The Lord of the Rings' which created entire captivating worlds, mythologies, cultures, and with the perfect story. Although AI programs can be useful in analysing language and even composing stories, they do not possess the spirit of creativity which characterizes literature. Creativity goes beyond storytelling as it necessitates weaving in emotions, deeper questions, and cultural significance into the narrative. This paper defends the idea that, even in the presence of advanced technologies, the essence of literature creativity and its soul will always prevail.

II. Objectives

1. To explore the unique value of human creativity in sustaining the essence of literature in the AI era.
2. To examine how English literary texts engage with themes of artificial intelligence and creativity.
3. To assess the limitations of AI-generated literature in expressing human consciousness, emotional depth, and literary nuance.
4. To highlight the irreplaceable human role in shaping literary imagination, cultural memory, and authentic emotional expression.

III. The Human Touch in Literary Imagination

In an era marked by rapid technological advancement, particularly in the domain of Artificial Intelligence (AI), the role of creativity in literature emerges more vital than ever. The combination of algorithms and data result in features being generated and styles being emulated, however, literature will always remain a pure form of art capturing emotions, meanings, and essences due to the human creativity that sparks life in it.

Creativity encompasses an abundance of actions; storytelling is just but one of them. Storytelling can be laced with a tale that is philosophically sophisticated fused with moral and emotional complexity. Example of this can be found in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818). She was able to capture the ethical void when it comes to the biological world and that gives a glimpse into the ambitions man seeks to achieve within boundaries bioethics. This resonates with the modern-day discourse revolving AI ethics, so her imagination showed the parallels between creator and creation long before AI existed. Similarly, another example of literary foresight is George Orwell's *1984*. Orwell's imaginative vision of a dystopian society in which data manipulation and surveillance govern reality is strangely similar to contemporary worries about algorithmic bias and digital privacy. His use of literary imagination foreshadows our AI-driven era, in which machines increasingly mediate narrative and truth.

Recent advancements in AI have introduced new dimensions to the creative process, offering fresh perspectives on narrative development and innovation. The growing intersection between technology and creativity, particularly the integration of Artificial Intelligence in the domain of creative writing. As AI tools become more sophisticated, understanding their impact on the creative process becomes crucial.

3.1 AI as a Tool, not a Creator

AI-generated literature, such as poems written by GPT-based systems, showcases impressive mimicry of form and style. But AI is devoid of lived experience, emotional resonance, and intention. For instance, consider Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*. Woolf's invention of the stream-of-consciousness technique reflects a profound psychological truth about time, memory, and identity in addition to an avant-garde aesthetic. Although AI could mimic the style, it is unable to understand the emotional turmoil that Woolf incorporates into her writing. This once again underlines the so truth that AI imitate or create fictions but in accordance to the command given by the user.

According to this perspective, the soul essence of literature is creativity, which AI can mimic but cannot create. Algorithms are not sentient; they are unable to experience joy, loss, or beauty the way humans do. Our inner struggles, aspirations, and desires—realities that machines cannot replicate—are the source of literary creativity. Creativity in literature stems from our inner conflicts, dreams, and desires—realities that machines do not possess.

3.2 Creativity as Resistance and Reflection

Creativity is frequently used in contemporary literature as a tool for self-examination and resistance. Paolo Bacigalupi uses corporate bio-politics and genetically modified creatures to illustrate the posthuman future in *The Windup Girl*. The story criticizes capitalist overreach and environmental exploitation. Although AI could depict such a world, Bacigalupi's imaginative style gives the story a sense of urgency and moral significance. His vision is a philosophical investigation into what it means to be human in a future where humanity has been dehumanized, not merely a setting.

Similarly, colonial history and cultural displacement are examined through the lens of creativity in Abdulrazak Gurnah's *Paradise*. Because it comes from a lived hybridity and historical consciousness that machines cannot experience, Gurnah's ability to incorporate Swahili culture, myth, and oral tradition into English prose cannot be replicated by AI. AI might reproduce the words, but not the layered act of linguistic resistance.

The colonial view of Africa as a blank slate is also contested in *Things Fall Apart* (1958) by Chinua Achebe. Achebe's artistic decision to use proverbs, Igbo idioms, and local cosmology to organize the book is a form of resistance; his work honours and preserves indigenous knowledge systems that colonization attempted to eradicate. This type of creativity has deep historical and political roots and is based on lived experience, which AI cannot fully understand or replicate.

Books can challenge dictatorships and unfair systems through stories that have hidden meanings, made fun of things, or imagined different worlds. A great example is *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood from 1985. She comes up with a scary future where a religious government treats women as baby-makers - this shows how women are treated in our world. Atwood's story, while not real, brings out real fears and makes readers think about what's happening now. The way she writes about those in charge is like standing up for women's rights.

In contrast, AI-generated dystopias may reproduce tropes but lack the ethical urgency and human stakes embedded in Atwood's prose. Resistance in literature is not just thematic—it emerges from the writer's emotional, historical, and intellectual context. English literature has proven to be a powerful storytelling tool enabling writers to delve into the complexities of human nature. Books such as Harper Lee's *'To Kill a Mockingbird'*, F. Scott Fitzgerald's *'The Great Gatsby,'* and Jane Austen's *'Pride and Prejudice'* give readers a glimpse into different time periods. These works help people gain a better grasp of the world and its many subtleties. Take *'To Kill a Mockingbird'* as an example. In this novel, Harper Lee tackles racial unfairness, acceptance, and the end of childhood innocence in a small Alabama community during the 1930s. Readers see the intricacies of human bonds and learn how empathy can break down social walls through the eyes of Scout Finch, the book's young main character.

3.3 The Role of Imagination in Literature

Imagination fuels creative writing allowing authors to dream up whole universes, people, and stories that take readers to fresh unknown places. With imagination, writers can dig into tricky topics, thoughts, and feelings in ways that strike a chord with their audience. Authors can process trauma, identity, and displacement through creativity, which also acts as introspection. On *Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* (2019) by Ocean Vuong captures the migrant experience in America through its poetic structure, disjointed narrative,

and unvarnished emotional detail. Instead of adhering to a rigid plot, Vuong's creativity flows like memory—chaotic, painful, and beautiful. His aesthetic turns into a mirror of queer and postcolonial identity.

AI might mimic Vuong's style or analyse his syntax, but it is unable to experience his lived queerness or intergenerational grief. Beyond calculation, the experimental form of literary reflection of identity is an innovation grounded in personal truth. Creativity allows writers to resist current injustices and consider potential futures in speculative and posthuman literature. Octavia Butler explores racial injustice, ecological collapse, and capitalist decay through science fiction in her 1993 work *Parable of the Sower*. She does, however, represent a radical hope and spiritual reimagining through her heroine Lauren Olamina. Butler's vision envisions new kinds of belief and community in order to fend off hopelessness. It is this dual function of resistance and reflection that elevates literary creativity above narratives based on data.

As the AI era progresses, the relationship between literature and AI should be viewed as cooperative rather than competitive. The core of literature is still human, even though writers may use AI to translate languages, generate ideas, or experiment with stylistic variations. The survival of literature is guaranteed by creativity, not as a result of data manipulation but rather as a celebration of identity, emotion, and consciousness. In works like *Oryx and Crake*, authors like Margaret Atwood have already examined futures impacted by AI, posing ethical, memory, and genetic engineering-related queries. No AI can truly replicate the creative insight that drives Atwood's speculative fiction, which is based on human fears and hope.

3.4 The Importance of Emotional Connection

“Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity.” — William Wordsworth, *Lyrical Ballads*. (Wordsworth 1798, p. 295).

One of literature's greatest strengths is its capacity to arouse feelings, empathy, and comprehension. To develop characters, narratives, and worlds that readers can identify with and care about, human authors draw on their own feelings and experiences. The literary experience cannot exist without this emotional bond. The relationship between technology, control, and emotion is explored in contemporary novels such as Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* and Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*. Ishiguro's eerie depiction of human clones' challenges readers to consider what makes life worthwhile, while Atwood's story demonstrates how dehumanization under a technocratic government shapes female identity. These stories employ speculative elements to help us better understand moral and emotional landscapes, which are often difficult for AI-generated texts to do.

Literature's profound impact on readers stems from its unique ability to evoke emotions, empathy, and understanding. Human writers, drawing from their own experiences and emotions, craft authentic characters, stories, and worlds that resonate deeply with readers. The core of the literary experience is this emotional bond, which enables readers to get engrossed in the story and its characters. Readers develop empathy, tolerance, and compassion as they become more connected to the story and acquire a deeper comprehension of intricate themes and human experiences. In addition to encouraging readers to consider their own feelings, experiences, and values, the emotional connection promotes self-awareness and personal development. In the end, the ability of literature to inspire readers long after they have finished reading is a lasting effect. Literature serves as a mirror to our own lives by examining the human condition through stories, guiding us through the intricacies of interpersonal relationships and human emotions.

“Creativity is generally regarded to involve breaking the kind of rigid rules standing at the heart of logic; creativity, at least of the artistic variety, is commonly identified with the emotions and the irrational.” (Bringsjord, David, p.15). Due to this deviation from rigorous logic, literature is able to examine the intricacies of the human condition in ways that are not possible in strictly rational discourse. For example, traditional narrative structure is purposefully broken down in James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Joyce uses a stream-of-consciousness technique in place of linear storytelling, which reflects the erratic, emotional, and frequently illogical nature of human thought. Such a narrative style embraces the erratic nature of the mind rather than the strict guidelines of traditional storytelling. Here, a daring surrender to emotional and psychological authenticity rather than adherence to logic fosters creativity. The outcome is a literary creation that defies conventional language and structure, exposing the deep inner lives of its characters as well as the nuanced, frequently nonsensical realities of human existence.

Lamb et al. in Bridges Finland Conference Proceedings “Can human assistance improve a computational poet?” conclude that poetry generation is still at an infancy stage and that there is a lot to be expected. Indeed, this is why ambitious new writers start off with poetry because they consider it more convenient and easier, and as a consequence, they usually begin by writing mediocre poems. From Hajji perspective about Klara and the sun “Those who read the novel feel that Ishiguro did not choose to tell the story through the robot Klara for no reason. There are many implications of this choice, including the fact that, thanks to the ability to learn, the machine is able to write the human narrative from a new point of view. Although Klara is naïve in her understanding of reality and its complexities, her point of view enables us to find strange meanings that go beyond or differ from the meanings that humans give to events”. (Imelouane, Azzimani, Sabrine, Hajji. p. 2)

The universality of emotions in literature is among its most captivating features. Since emotions are an essential component of the human experience, readers can relate to them regardless of their cultural background or historical setting. Because they appeal to emotions that are universally recognized, readers everywhere can identify with scenes like Elizabeth Bennet's blushing in ‘Pride and Prejudice’ or Harry Potter's sudden outburst of courage in the face of peril. The reader and the story are connected by emotions. They give words on paper a life of their own. Authors are able to evoke strong emotions in their readers, allowing them to laugh, cry, be angry, and feel hope alongside their characters. Reading becomes more immersive and memorable as a result of this emotional engagement, which also strengthens the reader's bond with the story and its characters.

For instance, readers of Khaled Hosseini's ‘The Kite Runner’ are moved to consider their own experiences with forgiveness and regret by the protagonist Amir's journey of guilt and redemption. Readers are guaranteed to remember the story long after they have turned the last page because of its profound emotional resonance. While AI can generate narratives and characters that evoke emotions, the soul of creation lies with human writers. Human experience is rooted in the complexities of real-life emotions, struggles, and relationships, which AI systems, despite being coded with emotional intelligence, cannot truly replicate. AI's understanding of emotions is limited to its programming and data, lacking the depth and nuance that comes from lived experiences. Human writers, on the other hand, draw from their own experiences, emotions, and observations, infusing their work with authenticity and depth. This unique perspective allows them to capture the intricacies of human emotions, creating works that resonate with readers on a profound level. The soul of creativity, therefore, lies in the human experience, with all its complexities, contradictions, and emotions.

3.5 The Soul of Creativity

There is more to literary creativity than just coming up with creative plots. It includes linguistic subtlety, cultural critique, intertextual references, and narrative empathy. For example, Emiko, the genetically altered protagonist of Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl*, serves as a metaphor for posthuman agency, exploitation, and resiliency. These layers of meaning, which are entwined with social commentary and emotion, serve as a reminder that literature is essentially an act of human reflection. This essay makes the case that, despite its benefits, AI cannot take the place of the soul that underpins human creativity.

Emiko, a genetically altered "New Person", is introduced in Bacigalupi's book and emerges as a representation of both evolution and oppression. Her narrative touches on issues of autonomy, corporate tyranny, and ecological collapse. Racial politics, posthuman identity, and environmental degradation are interwoven themes that contribute to the story's richness. Stories produced by AI are devoid of this sociopolitical awareness and intertextual complexity.

Human creativity is the spark that ignites the flame of imagination, fuelling the creation of literary masterpieces that resonate deeply with readers. Through their writing, authors convey complex emotions, thoughts, and experiences that are uniquely human. For instance, in Toni Morrison's ‘*Beloved*’, the haunting narrative of Sethe's experiences as a former slave is a powerful exploration of the human condition, delving into themes of trauma, memory, and the search for identity.

The depth of human experience, emotion, and imagination—an organic process influenced by consciousness, cultural memory, and individual struggle—is the source of creativity in English literature. AI-generated creativity, on the other hand, is derived and based on data and patterns rather than personal experience. AI is capable of imitating style, but it lacks the soul, context, and intent that literature possesses.

The author's struggle with human existence is the source of great literature. Consider Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), where the stream-of-consciousness technique effectively conveys the post-World War I trauma and memory fragility. Woolf's depiction of Clarissa's inner life is personal and disjointed, reflecting actual human thought. "She felt very young; at the same time unspeakably aged." (Woolf, p.3). This complex feeling is a result of lived experience rather than just style. Woolf herself experienced mental illness, which adds emotional truth that AI cannot replicate because it lacks consciousness. Although AI may imitate Woolf's writing, it is unable to experience the effects of depression or war. Instead of being introspective, its "creativity" is predictive. It can only determine the likelihood of the words—it cannot bleed through them.

Victor Frankenstein creates life in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), but the novel's greatest strength is its profound moral analysis: "I had desired it with an ardour that far exceeded moderation; but now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart." (Shelley, p.58). This was written by 19-year-old Shelley as a critique of the conceit of the Enlightenment and the unbridled quest for knowledge. Despite being artificial, the creature is humanized by considering its own life and pain. Ironically, AI's moral quandary is foreshadowed by Frankenstein's monster. However, AI is the object of this type of philosophical investigation, not its creator.

The human condition—pain, joy, rebellion, memory, and imagination—is the source of creativity in English literature. AI is unable to create soul, but it can mimic writing styles, including tone and voice. Literature is about more than just what is said; it's also about why it's said, and only humans, with their imperfect yet exquisite consciousness, can really answer that "why."

3.6 Conclusion

As artificial intelligence becomes increasingly integrated into our lives, it challenges us to reconsider the essence of human expression. In this evolving context, literature is not a relic of the past but a vital force that interrogates power, preserves memory, and gives voice to the silent. While AI can mimic language, construct narratives, and even generate stylistically elegant texts, what it produces remains fundamentally distinct from human-authored literature. The soul of literary creativity lies not in syntax or structure, but in emotion, memory, cultural context, and moral imagination—qualities born of human vulnerability and existential questioning.

From Mary Shelley's cautionary tales to the imaginative resistance found in works by Margaret Atwood, Kazuo Ishiguro, and Paolo Bacigalupi, books offer ways to examine moral quandaries, political strains, and the worries of our time. These stories ask us to empathize and think—things AI can't feel or program. Given this, studying English literature now matters more than ever. It helps us make sense of unclear meanings, grapple with open-ended ethical issues, and put a human face on the tech changes that mould our world.

What's more, literature gives us the tools to grapple with the moral questions AI raises. It makes us more aware of how language shapes who we are, how stories fight against unfairness, and how being creative is something humans can do. As students, experts, and readers, humans don't just keep old books safe but take part in a living practice that allows them to ask questions, dream up new ideas, and make things with care and understanding.

AI may process and reproduce linguistic structures, but it cannot feel, reflect, or rebel. This boundary underscores the irreplaceable role of human creativity in crafting narratives that question, heal, and inspire. As AI continues to reshape how we communicate and experience culture, literature gives us the tools to make sense of these changes. It helps us question what's happening, understand the human side of it, and stay connected to our values. In that sense, literature works as both a mirror—showing us where we are—and a map, pointing us toward where we might go next. Creativity in literature is not only about invention, but about insight—into the mind, society, and the soul. In cultivating imagination, empathy, and critical inquiry, English literature equips us to navigate a world increasingly influenced by algorithms, while holding fast to the very human essence of creativity.

The soul of literature cannot be replaced by a mere algorithm because in human artistic creation there would be a soul that lacks in AI. Human creations produce soul because it gains experiences and emotions of truth and reality of life. AI collect information from overall the world and produce a creation that a person who read cannot feel the soul. As we embark on this literary journey in the AI era, the soul of literature remains firmly rooted in human experience. While AI can generate narratives and characters, it is the human touch that imbues literature with depth, emotion, and authenticity. Ultimately, the soul of literature lies not in the tools we use, but in the hearts and minds of the writers who create them. In the AI era, literature is not left

behind—it leads us forward. It reminds us that creativity is not just the soul of literature, but the soul of civilization itself.

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