THE AUTHOR VS AI: THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH OF POE'S POETICS

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The study offers an innovative approach to examining the perception of literary texts, employing empirical research methods that utilise large language models (LLMs). In this research, we hold that Poe's idiolect, idiostyle, and idionarration beat the literary form. We also believe that readers can recognise Poe by the elements of his poetics present in his texts (both poetry and prose).

We report the findings of two experiments, in which the respondents read either Poe's "Annabel Lee" and "Morella" or their AI-generated prose and poetry versions, respectively. We hypothesise that Poe's original texts trigger more acute emotions than the AI-generated versions. Likert scales and semantic differential scales were applied to evaluate the reactions, allowing for the revelation of statistically significant differences between the experimental groups.

The results indicate that Poe's idiolect, idiostyle, and idionarration were recognised by readers regardless of the genre. Remarkably, the respondents often confused Poe's original texts with those generated by AI. They attributed artificial intelligence stylistic features that are characteristic of Poe, which highlights concerns about the discrepancy between human authorship and AI-generated texts.

Accordingly, this study lends support to the claim that readers can distinguish Poe's individual language and style. It also highlights the challenges associated with imitating an author's style using AI. The findings provide evidence that Poe's poetics is deeply embedded in his texts, and it remains visible even if AI manipulates the genre.