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Rhetorical Analysis

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This paper consists of a rhetorical analysis of two distinct sources on artificial intelligence (AI). The first article which is a peer reviewed article that can be found on *Science Magazine*. Although the name of the journal has the word magazine in the name, they are an academic journal that publishes peer reviewed articles and more. The second article can be found on *Quartz* which is a news publication and the article is not peer reviewed. Major concepts when distinguishing articles include the intended audience of the author, structure, and the genre which we will be looking at thoroughly.

The peer reviewed article is titled “Economic Reasoning and Artificial Intelligence” and is written by David Parkes and Michael Wellman. Firstly, the intended audience of this work is scholars or higher educated peoples specifically in the computer science field. We can deduct this from the diction and tone that Parkes and Wellman use throughout the article. Parkes and Wellman (2015) state “Just as single-agent rationality does not require literal expected-utility calculations, applicability of an equilibrium model does not require that agents themselves be explicitly engaged in equilibrium reasoning.” (n.p.). From this quote we can understand that the average reader wouldn’t understand what a “single-agent” or “equilibrium reasoning” are and therefore the audience is more focused on the scholarly readers in the computer science field. The article has a distinctive structure of a research or experimental article. The article starts with an abstract and every section has a heading. There are also pictures provided but they are used to help understand the concepts Parkes and Wellman are talking about and as well as support their experimental findings. The genre of the article would not be original research because they do not state carrying out an experiment, but from their tone we can assume that they have experience in the field of AI. Therefore, the genre can be stated as two different genres, theoretical analyses and a research article. They indicated in their abstract “Theories of normative design from economics may prove more relevant for artificial agents than human agents…” which explicitly states that they analyze certain theories throughout the article (Parkes & Wellman, 2015, n.p.). Lastly, other than assuming that the article is peer reviewed, it is stated at the very bottom in their acknowledgements that earlier drafts were refereed.

“Have we given artificial intelligence too much power too soon?”, written by Kate Crawford and Meredith Whittaker, is the second article and is not peer reviewed. Unlike the first, the audience in this article is focused on the general public. Crawford and Whittaker (2016) state “AI and decision-support systems are embedded in a wide array of social institutions, from influencing who is released from jail to shaping the news we see.” (n.p.). Compared to the first article, the diction is easier to understand making this a general public audience. There is also a persuasive tone throughout the article, making it intriguing to keep reading, whereas in the other article the tone is dull and is more factual. The structure of Crawford and Whittaker’s article is very different from the peer reviewed research paper. This article flows from paragraph to paragraph and uses daily events to support the persuasive aspect. For example, “…and now that 600,000 people have sent in their selfies, they certainly have better means to do so.” (Crawford & Whittaker, 2016, n.p.). With the compelling nature of this article and the interest to keep reading if AI really holds too much power it is fair to state the genre of this article as a news article. Although the news article does make references to outside sources and events, there are no in text citations or end of text citations included in the article. Also due to the diction used throughout the news article we can assume that the piece is not peer reviewed and written for the sole factor of interest.

The two articles are different in almost every way possible except topic. If a student were to be writing a research paper on the how multi-agent systems have the ability to adapt and bring equilibrium to an environment, then the peer reviewed article would definitely be their go to (Parkes & Wellman, 2015). The article contains information on how agents work in the environment and attempts at making an agent that is “human”, which would support many aspects in the student paper (Parkes & Wellman, 2015). The structure of the piece, abstract, headings, images, and citations, gives the feeling that the article consists of scholarly material. Now if a student was writing a topic paper on how AI is taking over the world then the non-peer reviewed article would be the better of the two. Both articles rhetorical strategies are very effective towards their respective audiences. If the audiences were flipped then the strategies would definitely be out of place.

References

Crawford, K. & Whittaker, M. (2016). Have we given artificial intelligence too much power too soon? Retrieved from http://qz.com/787302/artificial-intelligence-holds-growing-power-over-our-everyday-lives-but-we-have-no-idea-how-well-it-works/

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