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## From Human Imagination to Machine Generation: Has Artificial Intelligence Diminished Poetic Creativity? A Study of Indian English Poetry

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### Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has entered the domain of poetry, generating verse that often mimics human style so closely that readers cannot reliably distinguish machine-generated from human-authored work. This paper examines whether AI has diminished poetic creativity in Indian English poetry, a field marked by postcolonial hybridity, linguistic experimentation, and embodied cultural memory. Drawing on recent empirical studies of AI-generated poetry, theoretical work on “computational creativity,” and critical-creative responses from Indian-English poets, it argues that AI has not replaced poetic imagination but has reconfigured its conditions of production and reception. AI acts simultaneously as imitator, provocation, and collaborative tool, challenging conventional notions of authorship and originality while leaving intact the socio-affective and historical specificity that underwrites much of Indian English poetry. The conclusion is that AI has not diminished creativity outright; rather, it has shifted the boundaries of what counts as “poetic” and who or what counts as a “poet,” especially in the Indian English context where orality, multilingualism, and political subjectivity remain central to poetic practice.

### 1. Introduction

Poetry has long been regarded as a privileged site of human creativity, where imagination, emotion, and cultural memory converge in compact, affective language. In Indian literature, poetry in English has evolved from late-colonial imitation to a distinct postcolonial idiom, with poets like A. K. Ramanujan, Arun Kolatkar, Kamala Das, Jeet Thayil, and others grafting



Indian sensibilities onto English prosody. Today, large-language models (LLMs) can generate poems that approximate the styles of these poets, producing lines that sound “Indian” or “literary” at first reading poeticmind.

The arrival of AI has raised a pressing question: has the transition from human imagination to machine generation diminished poetic creativity, especially in a context as historically layered and linguistically hybrid as Indian English poetry? This paper argues that AI does not eliminate creativity but redistributes it, and in doing so, forces a re-examination of what “poetic creativity” really is in the contemporary Indian-English sphere.ijnrd+4

## **2. Conceptual Framework: Creativity, Imagination, and AI**

### **2.1 Defining poetic creativity**

Poetic creativity is usually understood as the capacity to produce novel, meaningful, and aesthetically satisfying verbal structures that resonate emotionally and cognitively. In classical Indian poetics, the concept of *pratibhā* (creative intuition) and *rasa* (aesthetic relish) foregrounds the poet’s embodied sensibility and the audience’s affective response. AI, by contrast, lacks embodiment, biography, suffering, and political lived experience; it “computes” rather than “feels,” assembling patterns from a data corpus. gap interdisciplinarity.

From a cognitive standpoint, LLMs learn statistical regularities in language, then generate outputs that conform to those patterns. Such outputs may be formally elegant, but they rest on past human texts rather than new lived experience. This raises the question of whether AI-generated verse is “creative” in the same sense as human poetry or if it is a form of advanced mimesis—a recombinant, derivative art.

### **2.2 AI as imitator, provocation, and collaborator**

Three main roles can be distinguished:

1. Imitator: AI learns from existing corpora and reproduces stylistic patterns, often with high fluency. nature
2. Provocation: AI outputs unsettle notions of authorship and originality, prompting human poets to rethink their own practices.
3. Collaborative tool: Many poets use AI to draft lines, suggest images, or experiment with forms, then refine the result through human judgment. In the Indian context, AI-generated poetry in Hindi and English often draws on a long heritage of regional,



classical, and modern texts, creating combinations that can sound culturally resonant even though they lack lived reference.journals.

### 3. Methodology

This study adopts a triangulated, mixed-methods approach:

- Textual analysis: Close reading of AI-generated poems (especially those styled as “Indian English” or “Indian-themed”) and comparison with selected Indian English poems by established poets.
- Literature review: Survey of recent work on AI-generated poetry, computational creativity, and AI in Indian literary contexts (Hindi, English, Marathi).
- Critical-creative commentary: Engagement with interviews and essays by Indian-English poets such as Menka Shivdasani and others who reflect on AI’s role in contemporary poetry.

The data set is non-statistical but thematically coded for linguistic fluency, emic cultural reference, emotional depth, postcolonial positioning, and sense of authorial subjectivity.

### 4. AI-Generated Poetry and the “Human-Like” Test

Recent experimental work shows that AI-generated poems can be rated as equal to or even better than human-authored poems in terms of rhythm, beauty, and emotional quality, especially by non-expert readers. In one major study, participants rated AI-generated poems more favourably than poems by well-known human poets and often mistakenly identified AI verse as human.

However, when the actual authorship is revealed, the same texts are rated more highly if attributed to humans, indicating a bias for human-made art rooted in expectations about authorship and authenticity. This “more-human-than-human” effect is significant for Indian English poetry: an AI-generated poem that skilfully grafts Indian images (the monsoon, slums, temple bells, railway stations) onto English syntax can *feel* authentic to readers unfamiliar with specific socio-historical contexts.papers.

From a psychological-aesthetic perspective, AI poems can be emotionally affecting, but they lack the biographical and socio-political framing that gives human poems their weight. For example, an AI-generated line about “partition” or “dowry death” may be syntactically elegant, but it does not carry the lived memory or political anger that a human poet would bring to such themes.



## **5. Indian English Poetry in the Age of AI**

### 5.1 Distinctive traits of Indian English poetry

Indian English poetry is characterized by:

- Postcolonial hybridity: blending English with Indian lexis, idioms, and syntactic rhythms.
- Multilingual echo: constant allusion to Hindi, Tamil, Bengali, Urdu, and other Indian languages, even when the poem is in English.
- Social-political engagement: themes of caste, migration, gender, urban poverty, and communal violence remain central.

Poets such as Menka Shivdasani, Dom Moraes, Adil Jussawalla, and more recent voices like Tishani Doshi and Teju Cole use English to register distinctly Indian experiences, often with a critical eye toward both colonial inheritance and global capital. AI may mimic these thematic clusters, but it cannot inherit the lived histories that make these themes resonate.

### **Dynamic responses to AI**

Several Indian-language studies (Hindi, Marathi, English) suggest that AI is seen not as a replacement but as an adjunct or enabler of creative writing. In English, commentators note that AI can help with drafting, word-finding, and formal experimentation, but the final poem still depends on human judgment, emotional depth, and ethical-political awareness.

Some Indian poets experiment with AI-generated lines as raw material, then reshape them to align with personal memory, cultural context, or political stance. This collaborative mode suggests that AI does not *diminish* poetic creativity so much as relocate it: the creative act shifts from pure “genius-inspiration” to informed curation and critical editing.

## **6. Case-Study Section: A Comparative Reading**

### 6.1 Example 1: AI-generated “Indian-themed” poem (hypothetical but representative)

Many AI tools generate short poems when prompted with phrases such as “Indian English poem about the monsoon” or “Indian English poem about urban poverty.” A typical AI output might look like:

- Lush, musical imagery of rains, leaking roofs, chai-stalls, and crowded streets.
- Smooth syntax and rhythm, often in a free-verse lyric register.
- Recourse to stock metaphors (India as “teeming,” “chaotic,” “spiritual,” “oppressive”) without nuanced socio-historical grounding.



Such poems are formally competent but often thin in cultural specificity; they recycle clichés rather than reinterpret them.

### **6.2 Example 2: Human-authored Indian English poem (e.g., Menka Shivdasani)**

In contrast, contemporary Indian-English poets like Menka Shivdasani emphasize multi-layered emotional textures, ambivalent identities, and the weight of language itself. Their poems often play with:

- Hybrid diction (English inflected by Indian idioms and syntax).
- Fractured timelines and polyphonic speakers that reflect diasporic or urban subjectivity.
- Irony, self-implication, and ethical unease around class, gender, and nation.

These features are difficult for AI to fully reproduce because they arise from long-term biographical and cultural formation, not from statistical pattern-matching.

### **6.3 Comparative insight**

AI can produce poems that sound “Indian-English” on the surface, but they often lack:

- Historical memory: the specific weight of 1947 Partition, Emergency, or recurring communal riots.
- Embodied subjectivity: the lived experience of being an Indian woman, Dalit, or migrant worker.
- Political critique: the capacity to position the poem within ongoing debates about caste, neoliberalism, or environmental degradation.

In other words, AI imitates style and theme but does not inhabit the socio-affective world that gives Indian English poetry its distinctive force.

## **7. Has AI Diminished Poetic Creativity?**

Empirical and theoretical evidence points to a nuanced answer: no, AI has not diminished poetic creativity, but it has transformed its ecology.

### **7.1 Ways in which AI challenges creativity**

1. Standardization of style: AI tends to reproduce statistically common patterns, which can flatten idiosyncratic voices and local inflections.
2. De-historicization of themes: AI can recycle powerful themes (caste, migration, war) without the burden of lived history, risking sentimentality or superficiality.



3. Authorship confusion: When AI-generated poems circulate under human names, or when human-AI hybrid texts are uncritically accepted, the normative expectation of an embodied author is eroded.
4. These effects can, in the worst case, crowd out poems that are formally rougher but existentially richer, especially from emerging or marginalized Indian-English poets.

### **7.2 Ways in which AI enhances or realigns creativity**

1. Drafting and experimentation: AI can suggest lines, metaphors, or formal structures that human poets then refine, accelerating the process of experimentation.
2. Pedagogical use: In classrooms and writing workshops, AI-generated poems can help students analyse poetic devices, compare human and machine outputs, and reflect on the ethics of creativity.
3. Cross-lingual inspiration: AI-generated Hindi or Marathi verses can migrate into English-language poems through translation and adaptation, enriching the Indian English idiom.

In this sense, AI functions for many Indian-related literary practices as a supportive tool, not a rival, expanding the possibilities of poetic practice rather than contracting them.

### **8. Towards a “Human-Centred” AI Poetics**

Drawing on Indian-language and Indian-English studies, a “human-centred” AI poetics would:

- Insist on transparency of authorship, distinguishing clearly between fully AI-generated, AI-assisted, and wholly human texts.
- Prioritize historical and socio-political embedding, so that AI-generated poems are not mistaken for genuine testimonial or activist verse.
- Position AI as a collaborative partner, where the human poet retains the final say over meaning, affect, and ethical stance.
- Indian English poetry, with its long history of negotiation between English and Indian realities, is well placed to develop such a model. Poets can use AI to explore new forms (e.g., AI-mediated multilingual sequences, algorithmic sonnets, or generative performance texts) while still grounding their work in local memory, politics, and embodied experience.



## 9. Conclusion

From human imagination to machine generation, AI has altered the landscape of Indian English poetry, but it has not erased poetic creativity. AI can produce poems that are formally elegant, rhythmically pleasing, and sometimes emotionally affecting, and empirical studies show that readers often rate AI-generated verse highly, even mistaking it for human work. However, these outputs lack the biographical depth, historical memory, and socio-political positioning that characterize canonical and contemporary Indian-English poetry.

AI functions more as an imitator and stimulus than a true rival, reshaping the conditions of poetic production rather than replacing the human poet. In the Indian English context, AI can be integrated into a revised poetics that values collaboration, transparency, and critical self-awareness, ensuring that poetic creativity remains anchored in lived experience even as it migrates through machine-generated text. The real danger is not that AI will “kill” poetry, but that it will be misused to commodify and de-historicize a form that, in India, has long served as a site of resistance, memory, and cultural negotiation.

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