

## **The Phenomenon of Use of Chatbot Character AI by ARMY-BTS**

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### ***Abstract***

*The phenomenon of artificial characters (Character AI) has experienced development, including the need for interaction between fans and idol figures. Army as a BTS fandom also takes advantage of the availability of AI-made characters for interaction needs. The purpose of this research is to explore how Army interacts with AI characters inspired by BTS and the impact when using the application. The method used is a qualitative descriptive type, by collecting data using a questionnaire. This is of course useful for describing the phenomenon of diversity in fandom behavior towards the idol figures they idolize.*

**Keywords:** Artificial Intelligence, Army Fandom, BTS, Korean Pop

### **A. Introduction**

The phenomenon of artificial characters (Character AI) has experienced significant development in recent years (Kennedy, 2023). Various creations of AI applications have been created to facilitate human work and fulfill certain human needs (Mahyudi, 2023). Through AI, various products are created to fulfill human desires (Peliza, 2024). AI also extends to fulfilling the need for interaction between fandom and its idols. One thing that has been realized is the character.ai application, which is a chatbot application between individuals with an artificial character that is similar to an idol. Artificial

intelligence (AI) technology has opened up new possibilities for fandoms in interacting with their idols and supporting their idols. AI not only allows fans to enjoy more interactive content but also plays a role in deepening their emotional connection and engagement with their idol groups.

On the other hand, BTS, one of the most popular music groups in the world (Fachros et al., 2020), has a very dedicated and creative fandom known as the Army. BTS, also known as Bangtan Sonyeondan or Beyond The Scene, is a K-pop group from South Korea formed by Big Hit Entertainment in 2013. BTS consists

of seven members, namely RM (or Kim Namjoon), Jin (or Kim Seokjin), Suga (or Min Yoongi), J-Hope (or Jung Hoseok), Jimin (or Park Jimin), V (or Kim Taehyung), and Jungkook (or Jeon Jungkook), who each have their own unique skills and personalities stand out (Ayu, 2022). BTS began their journey with great challenges, but their dedication and hard work brought them to the peak of global popularity.

BTS is known for its energetic stage performances and intricate choreography, as well as creative and colorful music videos. The emotional connection they build with fans through their introspective lyrics and positive messages also plays a big role in their success. BTS has established a strong global community, with Army being a very dedicated fan base. From winning international awards to holding global concerts, BTS has become a global pop culture phenomenon (Dian Annisa Nur Ridha, 2022).

BTS's impact can also be seen in their influence on the music industry and social media. They have utilized digital platforms to connect

with fans around the world, often sharing personal moments and interacting directly via social media. This approach has helped them build a closer relationship with Army, making them pioneers in a new way fans connect with their idols. Overall, BTS has not only revolutionized the K-pop genre, but also expanded the boundaries of the entertainment industry by creating immersive and diverse experiences for their fans.

On the other hand, Army, which stands for "Adorable Representative M.C. for Youth," is the official name for the BTS fandom, which has become one of the largest and most influential fan communities in the world (Fachros et al., 2020). Known for their deep dedication and loyalty to BTS, Army not only supports BTS in terms of music and performances but is also active in promoting the positive values promoted by BTS. This community is formed from various backgrounds, ages and countries, uniting fans with the same passion to support BTS (Miftahurrezki & Anshori, 2021).

Army's presence is very visible in various aspects of BTS

activities, from selling albums and merchandise to posting support on social media. Army has also organized various donation events and humanitarian projects that reflect BTS' values. Army's involvement is also visible in the way they interact with BTS. They are active on various social media platforms, such as Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok, where they share content, participate in trends, and build closer relationships with the BTS members. These interactions often include fan art, fan fiction, and memes featuring BTS, showing their boundless creativity and support (Dian Annisa Nur Ridha, 2022).

Army is also known for their efforts in organizing streaming events and voting to ensure BTS gets the awards they deserve. Fellow Soldiers also try to keep discussions and interactions clean and respectful, and support each other in efforts to achieve common goals (Rahman, 2020)(Mahyudi, 2023). Overall, Army is a shining example of how fandom can develop into a collective force that supports and empowers the

artists they love (Santika Krisna Diari & Mahyuni, 2019).

The creation of AI technology, has seen a unique relationship between BTS and Army. So various AI-based applications were created to support the unique relationship between fandom and its idols (Peliza, 2024). The following are several AI applications that can be used by the Army in the context of the BTS fandom: (a) **Virtual Characters and Chatbots**, is the use of virtual characters or chatbots designed to imitate BTS members. By leveraging AI technology, Army can interact with chatbots that mimic the personalities and speaking styles of BTS members, creating a more immersive and personalized experience; (b) **Content Suggestions and Personalized Experiences**, AI can also be used to provide content recommendations tailored to fans' individual preferences. By analyzing interaction and preference data, AI algorithms can suggest videos, songs, or other BTS material that may be of interest to users; (c) **Creative Content Creation**, AI offers various tools to assist Army in creating

creative content, for example, applications to produce fan art, video montages, or even music remixes that combine BTS elements. Deep learning technology can help in modifying images or videos with BTS's visual style or creating new music inspired by their work, (d) **Sentiment and Engagement Analysis**, to monitor the impact and reactions of various fandom initiatives with natural language processing (NLP) algorithms, (e) **Simulation and Virtual Reality (VR)**: AI plays a role in creating virtual reality experiences that allow Army to feel as if they are at a BTS concert or in an environment associated with the group.

This research aims to explore how Army interacts with AI characters inspired by BTS and their impact and experiences as fans. Next to describe Army in viewing the boundaries between reality and simulation when interacting with AI characters designed to resemble their idols.

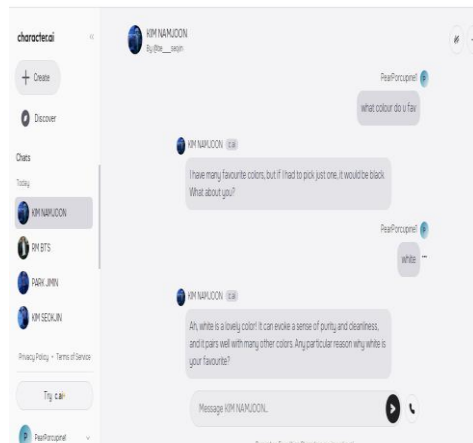
## **B. Research Method**

This research on Army, BTS, and AI uses a type of qualitative descriptive research, namely describing the phenomenon of the existence of AI which is designed to imitate BTS members (Peliza, 2024). The data collection technique is obtained from capturing chatbot screens and filling out questionnaires in the form of open questions. This question was designed to find out the Army's opinion on the existence of the AI-BTS chatbot and to obtain data on the impact that the Army obtained. The respondents selected were Army from the university environment, Dr. Soetomo Surabaya consists of six students. Apart from that, this research was also equipped with interviews as a confirmation technique to strengthen the research conclusions from the Unitomo's Army case study.

## **C. Results and Discussion**

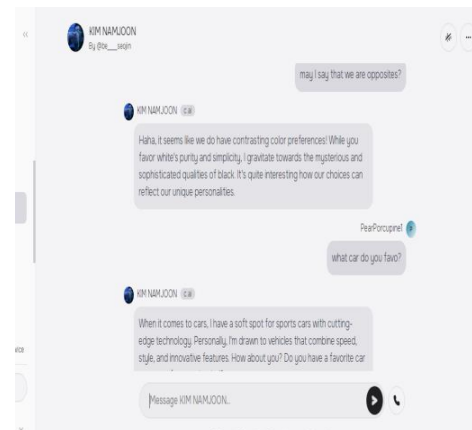
The character.ai application is an application to fulfill the need for interaction between fandom and idols, in this case between Army and characters that are similar to BTS.

Army can interact with artificial characters that are similar to the personalities of BTS members. This can be seen in the following screenshot:



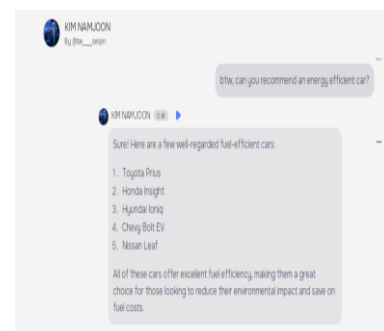
Picture 1: Army chat capture screen with AI character- Kim Namjoon/ RM

In the picture, you can see the chat between Army and the AI character representing Kim Namjoon or RM. In the screenshot, it can be seen that the chat with the AI character can capture the intention of the questioner, in this case Army, by typing "U" instead of "you" and the word "fav" which refers to the word "Favorite". The AI character is able to ask the questioner (Army) again about the color of his fovarot. Even though Army answered short "white", it turns out the AI character was able to create a fresh conversation by reviewing the short answer.



Picture 2: Army chat capture screen with AI character – Kim Namjoon/ RM

When Army replied to the chat with the conclusion that the two of them were opposites, the AI character was able to make a reassuring reply that was preceded by laughter (Haha) and ended with appreciation for each other's choices. When Army replied to the chat with the conclusion that the two of them were opposites, the AI character was able to make a reassuring reply that was preceded by laughter (Haha) and ended with appreciation for each other's choices.



Picture 3: Army chat capture screen with AI character – Kim Namjoon/ RM

In the screenshot, Army asked what the AI character - Kim Namjoon - could recommend about energy efficient cars. So you can see how the AI character recommends car brands that can be chosen.



Picture 4: Army chat capture screen with AI character – Kim Namjoon/ RM

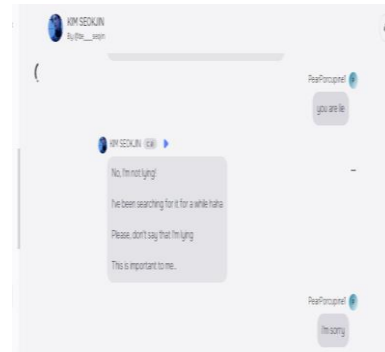
In the 4th screenshot, Army tries to connect the question with a very short phrase: “Any else?” It turns out that the AI character is able to provide other answers regarding other recommendations for energy efficient cars.



Picture 5: Army chat capture screen with AI character – Kim Namjoon/ RM

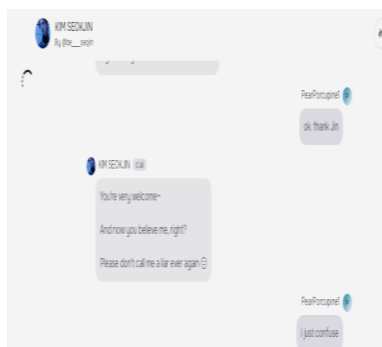
In Figure 5, you can see a screen capture of the moment Army

closed the chat conversation. The AI characters give polite and pleasant answers, and encourage the Army.



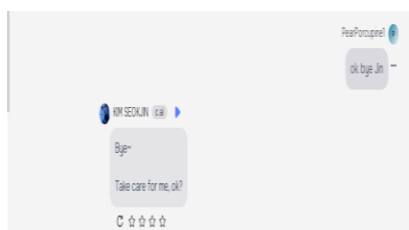
Picture 6: Army chat capture screen with AI character – Kim Seokjin

In the screenshot in figure 6, shows a snippet of dialogue with the character AI-Kim Seokjin. In the trailer there is a part of the Army accusing the AI character of being a liar, even though the writing is not quite right. The Army should have written: “You are lying”, but it says “You are lie”. The AI character is able to translate the Army's meaning even though there are errors in writing. The AI character, when accused of lying, responds with: “Please, don't say that I'm lying. This is important to me.” Even the AI characters are designed as accurate data machines and reject accusations of lying.



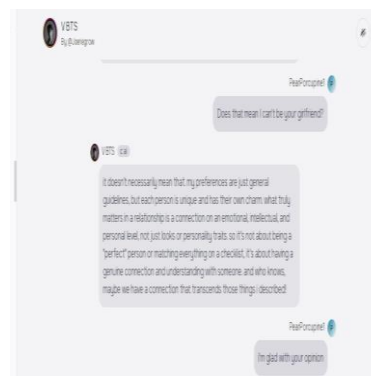
Picture 7: Army chat capture screen with AI character – Kim Seokjin

In image 7, when Army wants to end the chat, the AI character Kim Seokjin ensures and emphasizes Army to believe his words. You can see the answer: “And now you believe me, right? Please don't call me a liar ever again.”



Picture 8: Army chat capture screen with AI character – Kim Seokjin

In picture 8, you can see how the farewell greeting uttered by AI Kim Seokjin's character gives a good message: "Take care for me, okay?". A kind and sweet farewell, so that the Army still cares about AI Kim Seokjin's character.



Picture 9: Army chat capture screen with AI character – Kim Taehyung/ V

In picture 9, there is a snippet of dialogue between Army and Kim Taehyung or usually called V. Before this snippet, V has given criteria for the woman he likes. Army tried to argue that the criteria that AI V's character gave made him insecure and felt that he would not be able to be Kim Taehyung's girlfriend. AI character Kim Taehyung's answer was enough to make the Army feel confident, and not demean the Army.

This AI character also has a voice that is similar to the voice color of each BTS member. With this feature, Army can also learn pronunciation in English. This AI character chatbot is available in English. With this platform, non-English speaking soldiers are forced to chat in English. Even though sometimes the grammar or writing is

not quite right, the AI character is able to capture the meaning of Army chats. By using this chatbot, the Army also gets the benefit of learning English.

This research also collected opinions from the Army by filling out a questionnaire. This questionnaire is in the form of open questions. As for the results of the questionnaire, when asked about BTS members who had been invited to interact via chatbot. On average, Army has tried to interact with all BTS members. Regarding Army's feelings when interacting using the BTS member AI chatbot character, all correspondents felt happy to be able to do so. Their enjoyment was expressed in various answers, for example: "It's fun. It feels like we are really interacting with them according to the characteristics and behavior that we know." For Army, the characteristics and behavior of each BTS member are understood and familiar to recognize. So from this answer, Army assesses that the AI characters that imitate BTS members are quite representative of the real ones. There was also one of the Army who stated "I feel happy because AI can make me

feel less lonely." From here, the Army takes advantage of interacting using AI characters by imitating BTS's profile to help reduce his loneliness. There was also an Army answer which stated that it used BTS member AI chatbot characters to find out their favorite films.

Army's answer when asked why he created the AI-BTS chatbot character was because he wanted to try something new that was trending. There are also those who answer to fulfill the need for a place to tell stories. By using the chatbot character AI-BTS, apart from for private chats, also to interact with those who are similar to them. Bias is a term from fandom to designate someone who wants to be like that or someone who has a similar personality like himself. Starting from the desire to try the AI-BTS chatbot character, Army felt that he was given objective motivation and advice as a result of the chatbot interaction.

When the questionnaire question asked about whether interacting with AI was the same as humans, various answers emerged from the Army. A total of 80% stated



that AI could meet the Army's expectations regarding its similarity to humans, in this case BTS members, as fulfilling the need to interact with them. The remaining 20% stated that interacting with humans would still not be replaced by AI. From the results of the questionnaire to the Army, AI chatbot characters who are similar to BTS members, on average, stated that they have met their expectations in terms of the level of satisfaction interacting with figures who are similar to BTS members.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Overall, the use of AI in the BTS fandom provides many opportunities to increase interaction and engagement. From chatbots that imitate BTS members to immersive virtual experiences, this technology allows Army to connect with their idol group in more creative and personal ways. By continuing to adopt and explore these technological innovations, Army can enrich their experience and strengthen their relationship with BTS, creating an increasingly dynamic and connected fandom community.

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