



Narrative Standardization and Experiential Specificity in Xiaohongshu Lifestyle Posts: A Cross-Period Content Analysis in the Context of Generative AI

¹Pavoranun Thammanyutanun ²Phatsorn Khongaiad

^{1,2} School of Communication Arts, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, Nonthaburi, Thailand

Email: k.pavoranun1964@gmail.com, oporhatson77@gmail.com

Received October 09, 2023 Revise November 16, 2023 Accepted November 28, 2023

Abstract

This study examines narrative differences in Xiaohongshu lifestyle posts across two publication periods in the context of expanding generative artificial intelligence (AI). Its objectives are to compare formal and narrative characteristics, interpret patterns of standardization through an alienation-informed perspective, and identify implications for creators and platform governance. The reported corpus comprises 800 posts: 400 published in 2023 and 400 in 2025–2026, covering urban life, daily goods, life experience, and emotional sharing. Comparative content analysis organizes the material into five domains: external form, narrative structure, linguistic style, emotional expression, and experiential specificity. The reported qualitative patterns contrast flexible, situated accounts in the earlier group with more formulaic organization, generalized wording, conventional positivity, and fewer individualized details in the later group. These patterns are interpreted as textual standardization and reduced experiential specificity. Publication period does not establish AI authorship, and textual form does not establish factual falsity, creators' psychological alienation, or platform-wide displacement. Technological convenience, visibility incentives, and commercial pressures are discussed as possible contextual explanations rather than demonstrated mechanisms. The study contributes a bounded analytical framework linking observable narrative features to questions about mediated self-expression. It recommends preserving experiential detail, verifying substantive claims, and evaluating diversity without equating polished writing with AI generation. Incomplete sampling and coding documentation limits reproducibility and the strength of empirical inference.

Keywords: generative artificial intelligence; user-generated content; narrative standardization; experiential specificity; Xiaohongshu; content analysis



1 Introduction

Generative AI can participate in social communication by modifying, extending, or producing a person's message. Hancock, Naaman, and Levy (2020) conceptualize this participation as AI-mediated communication, directing attention to how computational assistance changes the relationship between a communicator and an expressed message. For lifestyle posts, the relevant question is how assistance may relate to the representation of everyday experience, rather than whether automated writing is inherently authentic or inauthentic.

Xiaohongshu lifestyle posts provide the setting for this study. The supplied manuscript describes posts concerned with urban life, everyday goods, personal experiences, and emotions. Such material allows comparison of the ways writers organize events, present themselves, and describe feelings. However, a post is a mediated account rather than direct access to its author's life. A first-person statement may be formulaic, and a polished text may still communicate a specific experience. The analysis therefore distinguishes observable narrative features from assumptions about authorship and truth.

Concerns about homogenization require a similarly bounded approach. Doshi and Hauser (2024) found a trade-off between individual creative benefits and collective similarity in an experimental short-story setting. That finding motivates questions about narrative diversity, but it cannot establish effects on Xiaohongshu. A comparison between posts from different years also captures other changes, including topic composition, platform conventions, and selection practices. Generative AI is consequently treated as part of the study's context, rather than a verified treatment applied to the sampled posts.

The revised argument centers on two observable issues: narrative standardization, referring to recurring arrangements and generic phrasing, and experiential specificity, referring to individualized details that situate an account. Narrative alienation is retained as an interpretive question about the relationship between expression and standardized forms. It is not treated as a measured psychological condition or a causal consequence established by publication year.



2 Research Objectives

The study has three objectives. First, to compare the reported formal and narrative characteristics of Xiaohongshu lifestyle posts published in 2023 and 2025–2026 across five common analytical domains. Second, to interpret the reported patterns of standardization and experiential specificity using a narrative and alienation-informed framework, while distinguishing textual observations from claims about people or platforms. Third, to develop implications for responsible AI-assisted expression and platform governance, with possible contextual explanations presented as propositions for future investigation.

3 Literature Review and Analytical Framework

3.1 AI mediated communication and narrative diversity

Hancock et al. (2020) provide a basis for examining AI involvement as a change in message production rather than simply a substitute for a human author. Their perspective makes the degree and purpose of assistance relevant: generating an entire account, reorganizing a draft, and correcting grammar are different practices. The current corpus does not document those practices for individual posts, so they cannot serve as established group assignments.

Research on creativity also suggests that benefits and convergence can coexist. In the study by Doshi and Hauser (2024), AI assistance could improve individual creative evaluations while making outputs more similar collectively. This supplies a reason to examine recurring structures without assuming that every standardized post is poor or AI-generated. The present analysis concerns reported stylistic contrasts and does not reproduce that experiment or measure creative quality.

3.2 Narrative organization and experiential specificity

Narrative analysis considers how an account organizes events and positions a teller in relation to experience. Riessman (2008) provides an interpretive foundation for attending to the construction of accounts rather than treating narrative as a transparent record. In this study, the distinction between an adaptable account and a repeatable template guides examination of



structure, while references to setting, sequence, and personal evaluation guide examination of experiential specificity. These features are analytical indicators rather than a validated scale.

Experiential specificity must also be separated from veracity. Jakesch, Hancock, and Naaman (2023) demonstrate that intuitive judgments about AI-generated language can rely on misleading cues. Accordingly, first-person language, emotional warmth, fluency, and formulaic wording are not used here to certify human or AI authorship. The analysis describes such features without assigning them an authorship-detection function.

3.3 Alienation and platform context

Seeman's (1959) conceptual discussion distinguishes different meanings of alienation, including dimensions concerning the relationship between individuals and meaningful activity. This conceptual plurality discourages reducing alienation to a single stylistic sign. The present article uses an alienation-informed reading to ask whether standardized forms may distance expression from situated experience; it does not operationalize Seeman's dimensions as measured variables.

Nieborg and Poell (2018) locate cultural production within platform infrastructures and economic arrangements. This perspective makes visibility and commercialization relevant contextual questions. It does not establish which ranking signals Xiaohongshu uses or whether a particular post gains reach because it follows a template. Claims about recommendation effects, creator dependence, and displacement therefore remain outside the directly observed textual evidence.

3.4 Analytical framework

The framework has three linked analytical levels. The descriptive level compares publication-period groups through the same five domains. The interpretive level considers textual standardization and experiential specificity, with narrative alienation as a sensitizing concept. The implication level discusses responsible expression and governance. Technology, platform visibility, user convenience, and commercialization provide possible explanations to examine later. They are not tested mediators or causal paths in this study. Table 1 connects each objective to its evidence and permissible inference.



Table 1
Alignment of objectives evidence and interpretation

Objective	Evidence and method	Results and inference
1 Compare narrative characteristics	Two reported period groups; five common domains	Descriptive cross-period contrasts
2 Interpret standardization and specificity	Narrative reading of the reported textual patterns	Bounded interpretive account; no measured psychological alienation
3 Develop implications	Synthesis of textual findings and relevant scholarship	Recommendations and research propositions; no proven mechanisms

4 Methodology

4.1 Research design and unit of analysis

The research is a retrospective, cross-period comparative content analysis. It compares different sets of posts from two publication periods, rather than repeatedly following the same authors or posts. The design is therefore not described as a longitudinal panel or an experiment. A post is the unit of analysis. The reported analysis concerns titles, main written content, and hashtags; it does not support independent conclusions about image realism, audiovisual representation, or audience reception.

Content analysis requires a clear relationship between questions, sampling, coding, and inference (Krippendorff, 2018; Neuendorf, 2017). In the available manuscript, sample totals and broad domains are reported, but a post-level dataset and a complete coding record are not supplied. The revision preserves the study’s reported scope while limiting results to the qualitative patterns described in that manuscript. It does not claim that the corpus was recollected or recoded during editing.



4.2 Reported corpus and selection boundaries

The reported corpus comprises 400 lifestyle posts from 2023 and 400 from 2025–2026. Four categories are included: urban life, daily goods, life experience, and emotional sharing. Official accounts, professional marketing accounts, reposts, and commercial promotional posts are reported as excluded. These are the selection criteria described in the source; category-specific totals, search strings, retrieval dates, exact publication cutoffs, screening counts, and the procedures used to identify account types are not documented.

The groups are labeled by publication period. The earlier group is not assumed to be entirely human-written, and the later group is not assumed to be AI-assisted. Creator disclosures, platform labels, production logs, and independently validated provenance are unavailable for classifying individual posts. The periods are also unequal in duration. Without topic-matched sampling and documented retrieval, differences may reflect period, genre, topic, or selection effects.

4.3 Analytical domains and coding scope

Five domains organize the comparison: external form, narrative structure, linguistic style, emotional expression, and experiential specificity. Table 2 defines what each domain addresses and what it cannot establish. The operational descriptions clarify the scope of the manuscript’s reported comparison; they are not presented as proof that a fully specified codebook was prospectively applied. No new coding frequencies or quotations are generated.

Table 2
Analytical domains and inference boundaries

Domain	Textual focus	Inference boundary
External form	Title formulation and hashtag use	No proof of AI generation or ranking advantage
Narrative structure	Flexible sequencing versus repeated introduction–list–closing patterns	No direct measure of creative ability



Domain	Textual focus	Inference boundary
Linguistic style	Situated wording versus reusable generalities	No authorship classification
Emotional expression	Variation in affect and conventional positive language	No inference about actual emotional state
Experiential specificity	Details locating an account in an individual event or setting	No factual-authenticity test

The source describes reading, classification, and comparison of posts within these domains. However, coder number, coder training, pilot coding, decision rules, disagreement resolution, and intercoder reliability are not reported. It would be inaccurate to supply such procedures as completed. Following the distinction between a transparent analytical framework and demonstrated reproducibility, the present account acknowledges these gaps rather than asserting objective or repeatable coding without supporting records (Krippendorff, 2018; Neuendorf, 2017).

4.4 Quantitative and ethical reporting

The source includes percentages for two differently defined title categories, but provides neither a complete contingency table nor recoverable coding counts for both groups. Those values are omitted from the revised findings because they do not form a like-for-like comparison. No inferential statistics, effect sizes, significance tests, or population estimates are reported. The analysis makes no claim about the frequency of AI use on the platform.

The source describes the material as public posts. No account identifiers, searchable quotations, or recognizable personal information are reproduced in this revision. Public availability does not establish consent for every research use. Ethical review status, data-retention arrangements, collection permissions, and any applicable institutional determination are not documented in the supplied manuscript; no approval or exemption is claimed. These details require author verification before submission.



5 Findings

5.1 External form and narrative organization

For Objective 1, the reported comparison describes the 2023 group as containing more individualized, everyday-oriented titles and flexible organization. The 2025–2026 group is described as showing more keyword-heavy titles, reusable hashtag choices, and recurring introductory-summary, itemized-body, and closing-summary structures. These are qualitative contrasts reported in the source, not newly calculated prevalence estimates.

The common element is repeatability of presentation. A structure that can be reused across topics may make a post easier to produce or read, but neither benefit was measured. The available evidence does not establish that all later posts followed a template, that earlier posts lacked conventions, or that a repeated structure originated in AI assistance. Without comparable category counts, the magnitude of the contrast remains undetermined.

5.2 Linguistic style and experiential specificity

The source characterizes earlier posts as containing individualized feelings, situation-specific details, and accounts of personal experience. Later posts are described as using more generalized statements and fewer distinctive experiential references. This supports an interpretive contrast between situated narration and broadly reusable description. It does not demonstrate whether the events occurred, whether details were deliberately withheld, or whether a tool generated the wording.

For Objective 2, reduced experiential specificity is consequently a more precise finding than a collapse of authenticity. The distinction preserves the observed object: what a text makes available to readers. A factually accurate post may be generic, while an invented account may contain vivid detail. No source-verification exercise or audience judgment study was conducted to distinguish those possibilities.

5.3 Emotional representation

The reported comparison contrasts more varied, ambivalent everyday feelings in the earlier material with conventional positive and relaxed language in the later material. The finding concerns



the range and presentation of emotion described in the texts. It does not establish a loss of creators' actual emotional experience or emotional engagement among audiences.

The original expression emotional flatness is therefore treated as an interpretive description of conventional affective presentation. Without a coded sentiment distribution or a comparison controlling for topic, it cannot be presented as a measured decline in emotional complexity. Positive language can reflect genre expectations, privacy choices, impression management, or assistance, and the present design does not distinguish these explanations.

5.4 Synthesis and evidential limits

Taken together, the reported patterns are consistent with textual standardization and reduced experiential specificity within the compared material. They do not directly measure narrative-subject alienation, creator dependence, platform-wide diversity loss, reduced reach of human-written posts, or displacement of original work. The study has no recommendation logs, exposure measures, creator interviews, or market data with which to establish those claims. These boundaries also govern the implications developed for Objective 3.

6 Discussion

6.1 From stylistic contrast to narrative interpretation

The findings address Objective 1 by distinguishing five textual domains and Objective 2 by interpreting their reported convergence. Riessman's (2008) narrative perspective helps connect organization and detail to how an experience is presented. The implication is interpretive: reusable forms can reduce what differentiates one account from another. The comparison does not establish that a template necessarily removes agency or that a more individualized account is truthful.

An alienation-informed interpretation raises questions about whether expressive activity becomes detached from personally meaningful experience. Seeman (1959) provides a reason to distinguish this question from a single stylistic measure. The article therefore retains narrative alienation as a theoretical concern while locating its empirical contribution at the level of textual



standardization. Psychological self-estrangement and loss of control would require evidence from creators, rather than inference from their prose alone.

6.2 Generative AI as context rather than demonstrated cause

The reported convergence is compatible with concerns about similarity in AI-assisted production, but compatibility is not causal confirmation. Doshi and Hauser’s (2024) experimental findings arise from a different task and research design. The current study lacks verified assistance status, a comparable untreated group, and controls for topic or platform change. Its contribution is to identify an analytical question about similarity in lifestyle narration, not to transfer an experimental effect to Xiaohongshu.

Jakesch et al. (2023) further caution against interpreting stylistic cues as reliable evidence of AI authorship. Consequently, the categories human-written and AI-intervened are replaced with publication-period labels throughout the revised argument. This correction brings the title, objectives, method, and findings into agreement and avoids treating the study period as an authorship-detection method.

6.3 Contextual propositions and governance implications

For Objective 3, four contextual propositions follow for future research: production convenience may encourage reusable formats; visibility incentives may reward recognizable conventions; presentation pressures may shape emotional tone; and commercialization may influence stylistic imitation. These are untested explanations. Nieborg and Poell (2018) inform the platform-economic perspective, while Hancock et al. (2020) make the purpose and degree of AI assistance relevant. Neither source verifies the mechanisms in this corpus.

Creators can preserve an explicit distinction between personal observation and generic advice, retain details necessary to understand a reported experience, and check substantive claims after using assistance. These are recommendations derived from the study’s concerns, not evaluated interventions. The aim is to support accountable expression without requiring unnecessary disclosure of private experiences or treating a particular writing style as inherently inferior.



Platforms should evaluate transparency and diversity through evidence appropriate to those goals, such as documented production disclosures, source checks for consequential claims, and directly measured distribution patterns. A repetitive title or polished paragraph should not alone trigger an AI-authorship judgment. Governance proposals need testing for usability, false identification, privacy, and effects on different creator groups before their effectiveness can be claimed.

7 Limitations and Future Research

The main limitation is incomplete empirical documentation. The reported sample totals cannot substitute for a recoverable sampling record, post-level coding, coder information, or illustrative evidence. The findings summarize the source’s qualitative descriptions and cannot establish effect magnitude, prevalence, or robust population differences. The unequal periods and absence of documented topic matching further limit comparison. These issues must be addressed with original records before stronger empirical claims are made.

The study is restricted to the reported lifestyle material and does not establish findings for other platforms or communication genres. Its text-oriented analysis cannot measure audience reception, factual accuracy, creator motivations, recommendation behavior, or economic outcomes. AI involvement remains unverified. Ethical review and data-handling documentation also require clarification from the authors.

Future work should preserve a dated sampling frame, record provenance separately from stylistic judgments, compare matched topic groups, and publish a usable codebook. Where frequencies are reported, each group needs the same definitions, denominators, counts, and appropriate reliability assessment. Creator interviews could examine agency and motives, audience studies could examine perceived authenticity, and distribution records could test claims about exposure. These designs would evaluate the contextual propositions rather than assume them.

8 New Knowledge and Conclusion

The contribution is a bounded framework separating three questions often merged in discussions of AI and UGC: whether texts become more standardized, whether accounts contain



less experiential detail, and whether creators or audiences experience alienation or diminished authenticity. Only the first two are addressed by the reported textual descriptions. The third remains an interpretive and empirical agenda. This distinction prevents narrative style from being used as a proxy for AI authorship, truth, or psychological state.

The comparison describes more reusable organization, generalized wording, conventional positivity, and fewer individualized details in the later publication group. These observations support discussion of narrative standardization in a generative-AI context, while leaving causal attribution unresolved. Responsible use and governance should preserve evidential and interpretive distinctions. The study’s proposed contribution is analytical rather than a verified causal mechanism, and its empirical strength depends on recovering the underlying sampling and coding records.

References

- Doshi, A. R., & Hauser, O. P. (2024). Generative AI enhances individual creativity but reduces the collective diversity of novel content. *Science Advances*, 10(28), eadn5290.
doi:10.1126/sciadv.adn5290
- Hancock, J. T., Naaman, M., & Levy, K. (2020). AI-mediated communication: Definition, research agenda, and ethical considerations. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 25(1), 89–100. doi:10.1093/jcmc/zmz022
- Jakesch, M., Hancock, J. T., & Naaman, M. (2023). Human heuristics for AI-generated language are flawed. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 120(11), e2208839120.
doi:10.1073/pnas.2208839120
- Krippendorff, K. (2018). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Neuendorf, K. A. (2017). *The content analysis guidebook* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Nieborg, D. B., & Poell, T. (2018). The platformization of cultural production: Theorizing the contingent cultural commodity. *New Media & Society*, 20(11), 4275–4292.
doi:10.1177/1461444818769694



Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Seeman, M. (1959). On the meaning of alienation. *American Sociological Review*, 24(6), 783–791.

doi:10.2307/2088565