AiModerator: A Co-Pilot for Hyper-Contextualization in Political Debate Video

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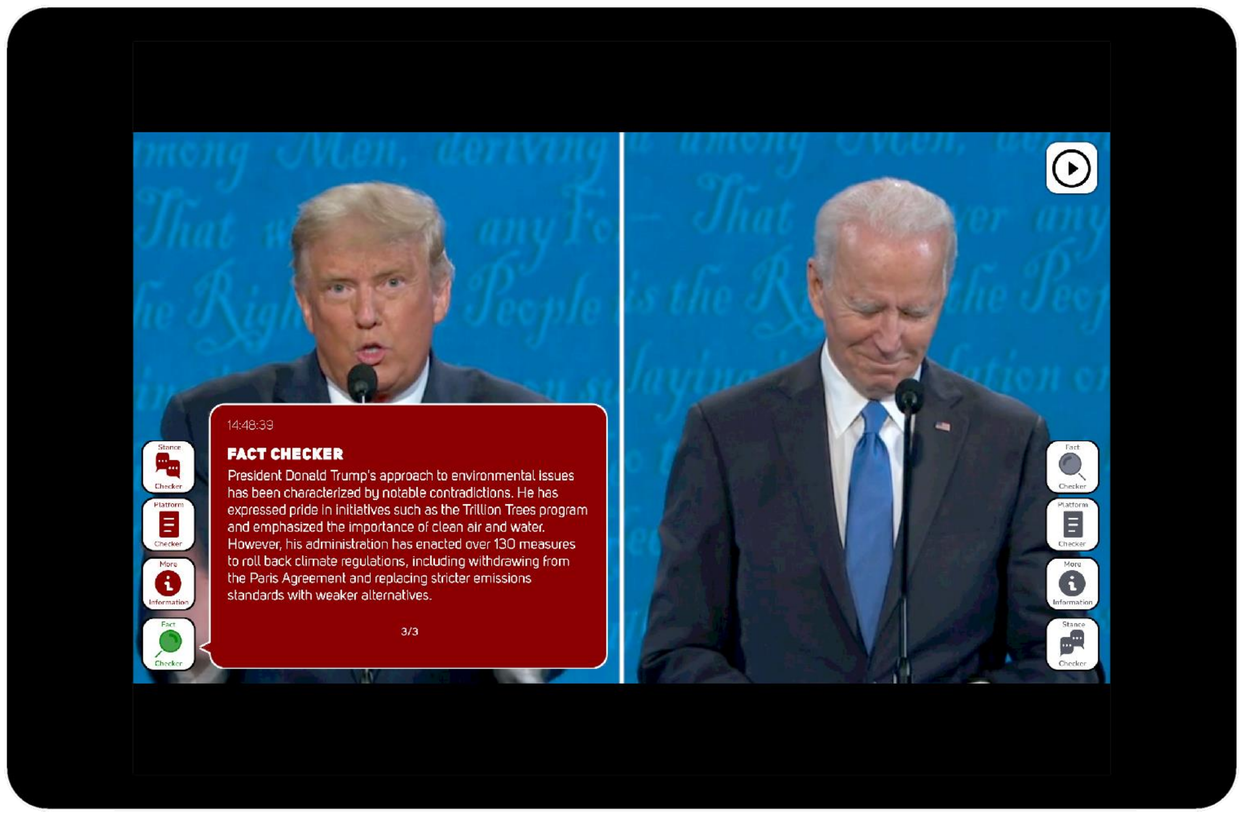
Media Futures



Abstract

Political debates are vital for democratic societies, but modern formats often prioritize theatrics over substance, risking disengagement among young adults. To address this, we developed AiModerator, a political debate co-pilot functioning as a Multimodal Conversational Agent. AiModerator enhances engagement and understanding by analyzing video content with computer vision and large language models to provide contextually relevant information synchronized with the debate. Users interact with extracted events through a touch interface on an iPad. In a mixed-method evaluation with 20 participants comparing AiModerator to traditional second screening, results showed that AiModerator significantly improved engagement, satisfaction, and understanding of debate topics. Our qualitative analysis highlights a trade-off between automation with information consolidation and user autonomy and control.

Research question

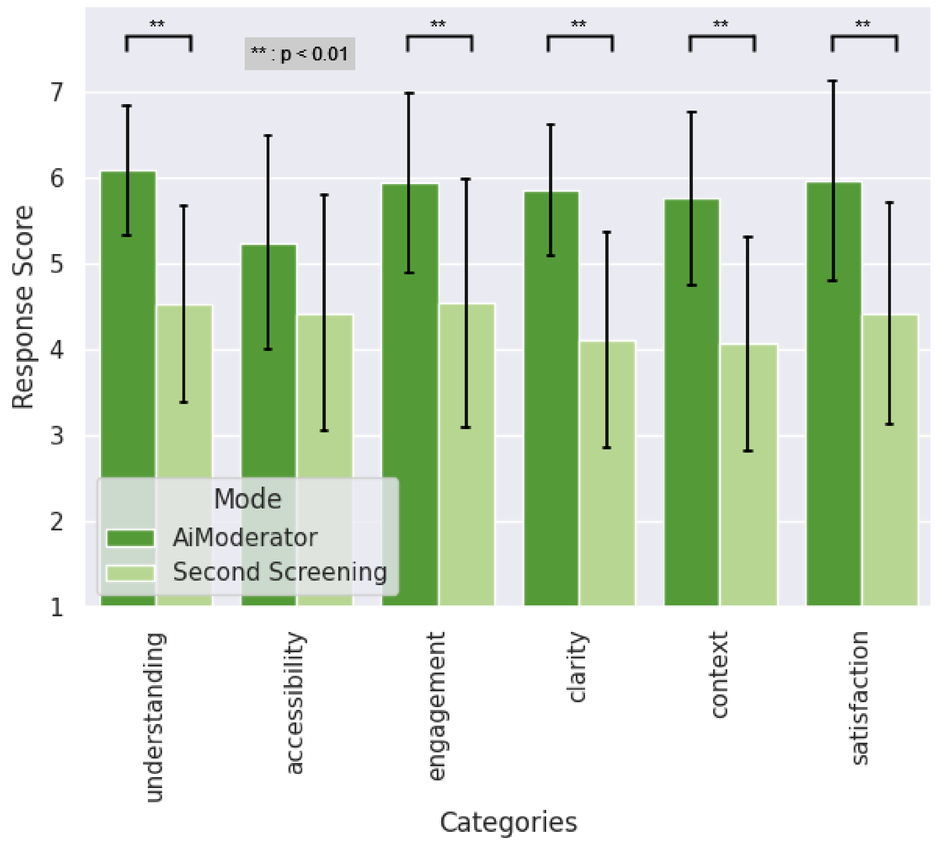
1. How do users perceive the usability of AiModerator for political debate viewing compared with second screening, particularly in terms of engagement and satisfaction?
2. How can AiModerator help users improve their understanding of specific topics being discussed in a political debate video?
3. Do users prefer AiModerator to the second screening mode, and if so,why?

Findings

Our study evaluated AiModerator, a co-pilot for political debate viewing designed to enhance understanding and engagement among young adults, compared to traditional second screening. AiModerator utilizes advanced computer vision and natural language processing technologies, allowing users to interact via a touch interface on an iPad, reimagining how users engage with political debate content.

In a mixed-methods, within-group (A-B) evaluation, participants showed a strong preference for AiModerator over second screening. The system significantly improved subjective understanding and provided a highly engaging experience, achieving a System Usability Scale (SUS) rating of 77.5 ("Good"). Its interactive features received high usability scores, confirming their effectiveness in real-time debates. Qualitative feedback highlighted user engagement and appreciation for accessible information.

However, results indicate a trade-off between automation with information consolidation and user autonomy and control. We suggest developers consider variable autonomy in co-pilot systems to adapt to users' needs. While AiModerator promotes objectivity, this may reduce emotional engagement crucial for active political discourse and could lead to political disillusionment. To address potential distractions from non-verbal cues that enhance emotional engagement, we recommend incorporating advanced video analysis to highlight these cues.



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