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Review Article

Fundamentals of Generative Artificial Intelligence

David Alex*

**Department of Computer Science, Global Institute of Advanced Technology, New York, USA*

***Correspondence:** David Alex, Department of Computer Science, Global Institute of Advanced Technology, New York, USA, E-mail: slrslexdav@gmail,com; DOI: 10.1042/JCTCS.2.1.0003

Abstract

Artificial Intelligence has evolved significantly over the past several decades. Early AI systems relied on manually constructed rules and expert knowledge. While these systems performed well in narrow domains, they lacked adaptability and scalability.

The emergence of machine learning enabled computers to learn patterns directly from data rather than relying exclusively on handcrafted rules. Subsequently, deep learning introduced artificial neural networks capable of learning complex hierarchical representations from massive datasets.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, Large Language Models, Programming code

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Introduction

A major breakthrough occurred with the introduction of the Transformer architecture, which enabled efficient processing of long sequences through self-attention mechanisms. Transformers became the foundation for modern Large Language Models (LLMs), which can understand context, generate coherent text, and produce high-quality programming code.

Today, foundation models trained on billions of parameters can perform a wide range of software engineering tasks, including:

- Code generation
- Bug fixing
- Code summarization
- Automated documentation
- Test case generation
- Software requirement analysis
- Architecture recommendations

These capabilities have transformed Generative AI into an intelligent development assistant rather than merely a predictive model.

Large language models

Large Language Models (LLMs) are neural networks trained on enormous collections of text and source code. Their objective is to predict the most probable sequence of tokens based on contextual information.

Modern LLMs exhibit several characteristics particularly valuable for software engineering:

- Context-aware reasoning

- Natural language understanding
- Multilingual programming support
- Code explanation
- Documentation generation
- Intelligent debugging assistance
- Interactive conversational programming

Rather than memorizing individual code fragments, these models learn statistical relationships among programming constructs, enabling them to generate syntactically correct and contextually relevant code for many common tasks.

Transformer architecture

The transformer architecture introduced a new mechanism known as self-attention, allowing models to capture relationships among distant elements within a sequence. Compared with earlier recurrent neural network (RNN) approaches, transformers support greater parallelization during training and more effectively model long-range dependencies.

In software engineering, transformer-based models enable:

- Code completion
- Source code translation between programming languages
- Automatic API recommendations
- Software documentation generation
- Defect localization
- Intelligent code search

Their ability to process both natural language and programming languages has made them central to AI-assisted software development.

Foundation models for software engineering

Foundation models are large pre-trained models that can be adapted to numerous downstream tasks with minimal additional training. In software engineering, these models can assist developers across multiple phases of the development lifecycle without requiring task-specific models for every activity.

Typical applications include:

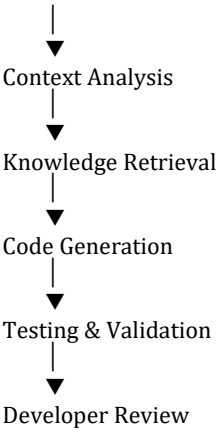
- Requirements analysis
- UML generation
- Architecture recommendations
- Source code generation
- Unit testing
- Integration testing
- Continuous integration support
- Technical documentation
- Maintenance and refactoring

Their adaptability has contributed significantly to increased developer productivity and accelerated software delivery.

Table 3: Evolution of AI technologies.

Technology	Primary Capability	Typical Software Engineering Applications
Expert Systems	Rule-based reasoning	Decision support
Machine Learning	Pattern recognition	Defect prediction
Deep Learning	Complex representation learning	Code classification
Transformer Models	Context understanding	Code generation
Large Language Models	Natural language and programming understanding	AI-assisted software development

Figure 3: Generative AI architecture for software engineering.


Context Analysis
Knowledge Retrieval
Code Generation
Testing & Validation
Developer Review