

2025 세계기자대회

WORLD JOURNALISTS CONFERENCE 2025

Conference I

Shaping the Future of Journalism in the AI Media Era:
Copyright and Ethical Challenges

- **Biography**
- **Presentation Material**



WJC World
Journalists
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2025



Shaping the Future of Journalism in the AI Media Era: Copyright and Ethical Challenges

Moderator	<p>LEE Joo Hee Managing Editor, The Korea Herald, Korea</p>	22
Speaker	<p>Yin CAO Journalist, China Daily, China</p>	23
	<p>HWANG Seok-ha Staff Writer, Busan Daily News, Korea</p>	28
	<p>Riazul HAQ Special Correspondent, 92 News, Pakistan</p>	34
	<p>Natalia SZEWCZAK Journalist Business Insider Poland, Poland</p>	38
	<p>Diana FUENTES Executive Director, Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE), USA</p>	45



Moderator

LEE Joo Hee

Managing Editor
The Korea Herald
Korea

Educational Background

- ◆ Korea University, bachelor's degree in mass communication

Professional Experience

- ◆ Korea Herald Managing Editor (2021~present)
- ◆ Korea Herald Business Desk Editor (2016~2020)
- ◆ Korea Herald National Desk Editor (2014~2016)
- ◆ Staff reporter at The Korea Herald (2000~2009)



Speaker

Yin CAO

Journalist
China Daily
China

Educational Background

- ◆ From September 2006 to June 2010, Beijing International Studies University

Professional Experience

- ◆ From July 2010 to now: China Daily

Award-winning Career

- ◆ The first prize of the 32nd China Journalism Award
- ◆ The first prize of the 31st China National People's Congress News Award

Writing Work

- ◆ A few of my AI-related reports as follow:
 - Rise of AI presents dual challenges on security front
<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202412/02/WS674d14caa310f1265a1d0774.html>
 - AI-generated voice mimicry infringes on rights
<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202404/24/WS66286719a31082fc043c3acf.html>
 - Ruling sparks debate on AI technology
<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202401/30/WS65b82bcca3104efcbdae88fc.html>

Yin CAO

The Role of AI in Journalism: Balancing Efficiency and Integrity in the AI Era

Transformation of Media by AI

Ladies and gentlemen,

Today, I want to talk about something that is changing our world—AI. Artificial Intelligence, such as ChatGPT and Deepseek, is everywhere now, and journalism is no exception.

Imagine having a super-smart helper that can gather information, write drafts, and even create videos for you. Sounds great, right? But just like any powerful tool, AI comes with its own set of challenges.

Let's start with the good stuff. AI can do amazing things. In Kunshan, East China's Jiangsu province, the police used AI to catch criminals. I reported that the police had a case where someone was cheated out of nearly \$145,000 (1 million yuan). The AI team traced the money in just 10 minutes and stopped half of it from being transferred. They even caught nine suspects. That is the power of AI. It can analyze data faster than any human and help solve complex cases that might otherwise go unsolved.

But here is the flip side. AI is also being used for bad things. In Kunming, Yunnan province, a scammer used AI face-swapping software to pretend to be someone's friend. The fraudster tried to trick the victim into sending gold bars worth over \$43,500 (300,000 yuan). Luckily, the police stopped it. But this shows that AI can be dangerous if it falls into the wrong hands. It can be used to create fake identities, manipulate images, and even spread false information.

And it is not just about crime. AI is also causing problems with people's rights. There was a case in Beijing where a voice actor's voice was copied without her permission. Her voice was used in audio books, and she didn't even know. The court ruled that this was a violation of her rights. Imagine someone using your voice or face without asking. That is a big deal. It is not just unethical; it is illegal.

AI is also being used in journalism to create multimedia content. Tools that generate images based on explanatory text are becoming popular. These tools can produce high-quality visuals to appeal to a broader audience.



However, this also raises concerns about the authenticity of the content. With AI, it is easier to create deepfakes and manipulate audio-visual content, which can spread misinformation.

****The Double-Edged Sword of AI in News Writing****

Now, let's focus on journalism. AI can be a huge help. It can write drafts, suggest headlines, and even find interesting angles for stories. For example, AI can help journalists transcribe interviews quickly, saving time and effort. It can also tailor content to individual readers' preferences, increasing online views.

I use AI in my work as well. Sometimes I ask it to provide more headlines for a story, as in this way I can choose a better one that not only summarizes the main idea of the report but is also more attractive to readers. While sometimes I also discuss hot issues with the tool, such as cyberbullying, juvenile crimes, and even AI itself, trying to discover more angles for my reports and learn more about opinions from others.

When I benefit more from it, I also realize that AI can mess things up.

First, it might use or spread outdated information, data, and pictures, as some AI systems are not good enough to learn new things or cannot be updated in a timely manner. If a journalist just relies on AI to collect information and report, they will easily face fake news.

Second, AI poses significant challenges to news copyright. AI systems often scrape large amounts of data from the internet for training, including copyrighted news content. This practice may infringe on the rights of copyright holders, as it involves the unauthorized use of their intellectual property. The legal battles over AI's use of copyrighted material highlight the tension between technological innovation and the protection of creators' rights. If AI-generated content is deemed to infringe on copyright, it could lead to stricter regulations that might stifle AI development, while also ensuring fair compensation for content creators.

Third, AI-generated news has the potential to create and disseminate misinformation. With the ability to produce deepfakes and other forms of synthetic content, AI can be used to manipulate news stories, making it difficult for the public to distinguish between real and fake information. This not only undermines the credibility of news organizations but also poses a threat to democratic processes by spreading false narratives. The ease with which AI can generate convincing content raises concerns about the potential for malicious actors to exploit these technologies for fraudulent or harmful purposes.

In conclusion, the application of AI in journalism brings numerous potential risks, including the spread of false information, algorithmic bias, information manipulation, ethical challenges, and news copyright disputes.

These risks not only affect the authenticity and credibility of news but also pose threats to social trust and public safety.

Therefore, the journalism industry must be more careful when using AI, ensuring the accuracy and authenticity of content while protecting the public's right to information and privacy.

****Higher Standards for Editing and Reporting in the AI Era****

So, what do we do? I think newsrooms need rules for using AI. We cannot let AI replace human judgment. My suggestion is that we must double-check AI-generated content very carefully to make sure it is accurate before publishing.

We also need to be honest about when we use AI. If an article is partly written by AI, we should say so. And if some facts, figures, and pictures come from other news outlets, we must clarify the information sources to respect others' efforts, as well as to maintain the order of journalism.

We also need to protect people's rights. A number of court cases in Beijing have shown that AI could hurt people's privacy and intellectual property. We need to balance using AI with protecting people's rights. The bottom line of AI application is that we cannot infringe upon others' reputation, privacy, and image.

But it is not just about rules. We need to educate ourselves and each other, and we need more research on the AI industry to seek boundaries on what we should do and how to do it.

In early March, China concluded its annual most important political event, the Two Sessions, the meetings of the country's top legislative body and top political advisory body. During that period, a number of national lawmakers and political advisers, along with many legal experts, have called for more research on AI regulations, rules, or even laws.

Meanwhile, I think we need more international cooperation to deal with these new challenges. We need to have more discussions on how to promote technological development while regulating its application.

As journalists in the fast-developing information and internet age, we have to keep up with the pace of technology and understand more about AI. We need to know how it works, how it can help us, and how it can hurt us. We need to stay informed and keep learning. Because if we don't, we might end up spreading misinformation or violating people's rights.



Ladies and gentlemen, AI is changing how we do journalism. It can make us more efficient, but it also brings risks. We need to use AI wisely, check our facts more carefully, and protect people's rights with more effort.

The rapid development of the information age has sparked heated discussions in recent years about whether journalists will be replaced by AI. However, in my view, the answer is no. What will be replaced are journalists who fail to use AI effectively. To be more precise, those who will be eliminated by the times are the ones who merely rely on AI for language translation and data retrieval but lack their own critical thinking and fail to offer unique value.

If we can use AI in a sensible manner, I believe it will help us do better journalism and make us better journalists.

Thank you!



Speaker

HWANG Seok-ha

Staff Writer
Busan Daily News
Korea

Educational Background

- ◆ 2023-2024: One-year fellowship at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism, Arizona State University (Fulbright-Humphrey Fellowship Program).
- ◆ 2009: Graduated from Pukyong National University with a degree in English Language and Literature (double major in Mass Communication).

Professional Experience

- ◆ Staff Writer, Busan Ilbo (2009 – Present)
 - Covering social and economic affairs, including local issues, politics, education, finance, marine, and fisheries industries in Busan and South Korea.
 - Conducting investigative reporting and writing feature stories on regional issues, utilizing data analysis.

Award-winning Career

- ◆ 2019 The 344th Journalist of the Month Award by the Journalists Association of Korea-'U.S. Forces JUPITR & CENTAUR Program at Pier 8'
- ◆ 2018 The Korean Newspaper Award by the Korean Association of Newspapers -'2017 The 1st year of Clean Energy' in Busan'
- ◆ 2016 The 47th Korean Journalist Award by the Journalists Association of Korea - '20 Years of Ecological Rivers, Lost Waterways'

Writing Work

- ◆ Joo-Rei's Story 1: Why Joo-Rei, Who was Adopted to Canada, Hurried to Grab a Broom and Mop? (<https://seoka.weebly.com/stories.html>)
Schools Disapper 1: Disposing of School Belongings during the Semester (<https://seoka.weebly.com/stories.html>)
- ◆ seoka.weebly.com/stories.html

HWANG Seok-ha

Journalism in the AI Era: The Intersection of Efficiency, Ethics, and Copyright

The advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly reshaping the landscape of journalism. In particular, generative AI has been seamlessly integrated into various aspects of news production, including translation, data analysis, and article writing, significantly enhancing journalistic efficiency.

However, while AI provides substantial benefits to the media industry, it also raises urgent ethical and legal concerns that must be addressed. Specifically, it is necessary to examine how the accuracy and reliability of AI-generated information can be ensured, how AI-assisted reporting and article writing can uphold the fundamental principles of journalism, and how AI's unauthorized use of news content for training purposes should be regulated. In this article, I explore how I have incorporated AI into my reporting process through specific case studies. Furthermore, I examine the ethical and legal challenges that journalists face in the AI era and propose viable solutions to address these concerns.

1. Leveraging AI for Baseball Reporting

The first time I integrated generative AI, such as ChatGPT, into my reporting was in 2023, just a few months after its initial release. At the time, I was covering international news. Since I frequently referenced foreign media reports in my articles on major global issues, I primarily used ChatGPT for translation. Of course, I had previously used other translation tools, but ChatGPT provided significantly higher accuracy and fluency. It was particularly effective in translating not only English but also Japanese and Chinese into smooth, natural Korean, which proved invaluable in my article-writing process.

Beyond simple translation, I began actively utilizing AI in my reporting in July 2023, when I was assigned to the sports desk at my newspaper. After completing a one-year training program in the United States, I returned to the newsroom, where my first assignment was covering Korea's professional baseball league. I was responsible for reporting on the results and analysis of games played by the Busan-based Lotte Giants, but adapting to this new beat was not easy. While I was familiar with the basic rules of baseball, I lacked the necessary expertise required to produce well-researched and insightful news coverage. The biggest challenge was analyzing the vast array of player statistics—many of which I had never encountered before.

Baseball is, above all, ‘a sport built on records’. Journalists covering baseball rely heavily on these statistics to craft detailed and insightful articles about key players. Additionally, past game records often serve as the foundation for predictive analysis, allowing journalists to anticipate how players might perform in upcoming games. This became particularly important when the Lotte Giants were preparing for a three-game series against another team, requiring me to write an analytical preview. While comprehensive player statistics and head-to-head records were available on the Korea Baseball Organization (KBO) website, interpreting the data remained a significant challenge.

The detailed player statistics were not available in Korean; instead, they were entirely presented using English abbreviations. For example, in batting stats, AVG stands for batting average, PA for plate appearances, AB for at-bats, H for hits, and HR for home runs. As for pitching stats, ERA refers to earned run average, SV to saves, HLD to holds, WPCT to winning percentage, and WHIP to walks plus hits per inning pitched. When I first encountered this data, it felt like staring at an enormous spreadsheet filled with unfamiliar symbols and numbers. In fact, before covering baseball, I wasn’t even familiar with certain metrics like WHIP.

To analyze and interpret these statistics, I turned to ChatGPT. This was my first time using AI for data analysis in my reporting. First, I captured the relevant player statistics from the Korea Baseball Organization (KBO) website and downloaded them as an image file. I then uploaded this file to ChatGPT (the paid version), which supports file attachments. Next, I entered a prompt to extract the insights I needed. For example, I uploaded the stats of Victor Reyes, the cleanup hitter for the Lotte Giants, and asked ChatGPT to analyze the data, highlighting his strengths and areas for improvement. The results were remarkable. Below is a summary of ChatGPT’s detailed analysis.

“Victor Reyes is a highly skilled contact hitter with a .352 batting average and 202 hits, serving as a key player in Lotte’s lineup, where he posted a .395 batting average with runners in scoring position and a .510 slugging percentage. However, his relatively low home run total (15) suggests a need to generate more power as a cleanup hitter. Additionally, his low walk count (46) indicates that he could benefit from refining his plate discipline and improving his on-base skills. His limited impact on the basepaths also reduces his overall versatility. Overall, Reyes excels at making consistent contact and delivering in clutch situations. If he can add more power to his game and refine his approach at the plate, he has the potential to develop into a more well-rounded hitter.”

Had I attempted to analyze Reyes’ statistics without any prior knowledge, it would have undoubtedly been a time-consuming process. More importantly, if I had faced this challenge under a tight deadline, I might have struggled to complete the article on time—or even



questioned whether I could finish it at all. Leveraging generative AI as a data analysis tool can significantly streamline the reporting and article-writing process. However, it is crucial not to blindly trust AI-generated results. ChatGPT, for instance, can sometimes produce inaccurate information—a phenomenon known as “hallucination,” where AI generates misleading or entirely false content. For this reason, fact-checking AI-generated content against verified, authoritative sources is essential to ensure accuracy and maintain journalistic integrity.

2. AI Ethics and Copyright

There is no doubt that generative AI has become an indispensable tool for journalists in their reporting. However, the key challenge lies in defining clear boundaries: To what extent should this technology be permitted? Where should restrictions be imposed? Does the use of AI compromise journalistic ethics? Establishing well-defined guidelines is crucial. Journalists worldwide are grappling with these challenges, and some media organizations have already taken swift action by implementing AI usage policies. Unfortunately, in South Korea, discussions on this matter have only just begun, particularly among regional newspapers.

Over the past year, I had the opportunity to spend a month reporting at The Arizona Republic, the largest regional newspaper in Arizona. The Arizona Republic is owned by Gannett, the media group that publishes USA Today. During my time there, I gained firsthand experience with the AI policies adopted by Gannett, USA Today, and its affiliated publications. Drawing from Gannett’s AI policies, I would like to highlight a few key takeaways. While these guidelines may not represent the definitive standard, they provide valuable insights into how Gannett’s journalists are navigating the challenges of AI integration in journalism.

Gannett emphasizes transparency, accuracy, fairness, and accountability as core principles when incorporating AI-generated content. Before using AI, journalists and editors must thoroughly evaluate the content’s purpose, origin, and production process. Since AI-generated information cannot be regarded as a reliable source, it must always undergo a rigorous fact-checking process.

Any use of AI must be clearly disclosed to readers. Additionally, all AI-assisted content must be meticulously reviewed and verified before publication. In particular, AI-generated images that appear photo-realistic do not provide an accurate representation of real events and are therefore strictly prohibited in news reporting. If such images are used, they must be explicitly labeled and undergo a rigorous internal approval process.

One of Gannett’s key principles is ensuring that AI-generated content remains free from bias and discrimination. AI-generated content can inherently contain biases related to race, gender, religion, and sexual orientation. Therefore, journalists must conduct a thorough review of AI-generated material to ensure it does not undermine fairness or reinforce discriminatory narratives. Additionally, journalists must adhere to strict privacy protection

policies and ensure that AI-generated content is not misused to spread misinformation. The ultimate responsibility for AI-assisted reporting rests with journalists, and any errors must be promptly corrected to maintain credibility and public trust. Gannett continuously updates its AI usage guidelines to uphold journalistic integrity and adapt to the evolving landscape of AI in media.

Finally, I would like to highlight the issue of AI's potential infringement on news copyrights, which poses a serious threat to the interests of media organizations. In the United States, a lawsuit is already underway between The New York Times and OpenAI over alleged copyright violations. Similar concerns are mounting within the South Korean media industry. To address this issue, there is growing demand for establishing clear legal frameworks to regulate AI's use of copyrighted news content for training and distribution. Without such measures, preventing the unauthorized use of news content by AI systems will remain a persistent challenge.

On February 28, 2024, the Korea Newspaper Association (KNA) submitted a proposal to the National Assembly and relevant government agencies, advocating for amendments to the AI Basic Act and the Copyright Act to establish a robust copyright protection framework for news content in the era of generative AI. The association proposed adding a provision to the AI Basic Act stating that "AI service providers must disclose training datasets." They emphasized that clear and enforceable regulations are essential to safeguard copyright protection and ensure the reliability of AI technology.

Additionally, the KNA called for revisions to the Copyright Act to explicitly designate news content as a distinct category under copyright protection. The association also urged the removal of the 'news reports containing only factual statements' clause, arguing that this provision weakens copyright protection for journalistic work.

Moreover, the Korea Newspaper Association (KNA) has announced plans to file a complaint with the Korea Fair Trade Commission (KFTC) over the unauthorized use of news content for AI training by corporations. Initially, the association determined that Naver had incorporated news content from media outlets into its AI services without proper authorization. Additionally, evidence suggests that foreign companies, including OpenAI and Google, have also illegally exploited articles from domestic media outlets. In response, the association plans to file complaints against these companies in phases.

The KNA argues that the unauthorized use of news content for AI training constitutes a violation of the Copyright Act and also amounts to an abuse of market dominance and an abuse of superior bargaining position under the Monopoly Regulation and Fair Trade Act (MRFTA).



AI has the potential to serve as a transformative tool for journalists in reporting and article writing. However, as technology advances, equal efforts must be made to address its ethical and legal implications. In particular, the unauthorized use of news content by AI poses a significant threat to media copyright and revenue models. Without clear legal safeguards, there is a high risk of jeopardizing the sustainability of journalism. Therefore, it is crucial to establish institutional frameworks that ensure fair compensation when AI trains on and utilizes news articles.



Speaker

Riazul HAQ

Special Correspondent
92 News
Pakistan

Educational Background

- ◆ Masters in Journalism
- ◆ Certificate Course in Media, Arizona State University USA

Professional Experience

- ◆ Worked in Print Media for eight years
- ◆ Investigative Journalist with Television (since 2018)
- ◆ Have been to United States and United Kingdom for journalism fellowships.

Award-winning Career

- ◆ Best Use of Data in a Human Trafficking Story (2019)

Writing Work

- ◆ Have extensively covered Governance, Human Rights and Politics in leading English Dailies like Dawn and Express Tribune in Pakistan

Shaping the Future of Journalism in the AI Media Era: Copyright and Ethical Challenges

The rise of AI-driven content creation is reshaping journalism. This presentation will discuss the challenges and opportunities of AI and journalism, focusing on copyright issues and ethical standards.

by Riaz Haq



Copyright Concerns in AI Journalism

AI Content Generation

Copyright ownership of AI-generated content is unclear. Legal precedent is developing.

Training Data

AI models learn from vast datasets, often including copyrighted material. Potential for infringement.

Deep fakes and Misinformation

AI-generated deepfakes pose challenges to attribution and copyright enforcement.

Made with Gamma

Ethical Challenges in AI-Driven Journalism

Bias and Fairness

AI models can reflect and amplify biases present in their training data.

Transparency and Accountability

Readers need to know when AI is used to create or curate news content.

Job Displacement

AI automation may lead to job losses for journalists. Reskilling and upskilling are needed.



Strategies for Navigating the AI Media Era

Develop clear ethical guidelines for AI use in journalism.



Invest in AI literacy for journalists and the public.

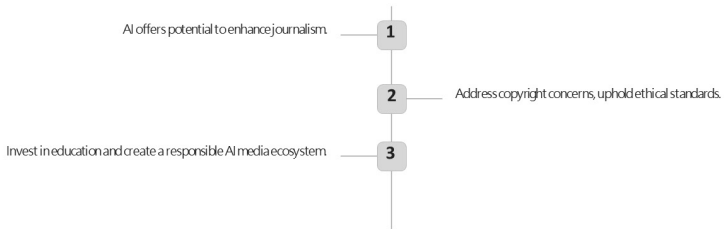


Collaborate with policymakers on copyright law and AI regulation.





Conclusion: Embracing AI Responsibly



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Speaker

Natalia SZEWCZAK

Journalist
Business Insider Poland
Poland

Educational Background

- ◆ 2009 – 2014 Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw (political science); Master Studies
- ◆ 2007 – 2009 Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw (political science); Bachelor studies (Bachelor's degree)
- ◆ University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn (political science), Bachelor studies

Professional Experience

- ◆ VIII 2017 – present (Warsaw)
 - Business Insider Polska (Business Insider Poland) - Polish edition of Business Insider
- ◆ XI 2015 – 2017 (Warsaw)
 - Forbes.pl - Forbes online edition
 - Onet Biznes - biggest website in Poland
- ◆ I 2015 – X 2015 (Warsaw)
 - TVN24 Biznes i świat (TVN24 Business and World) - second channel of TVN24, focused on business and international topics
- ◆ I 2009 – I 2015 (Warsaw)
 - TVN24.pl - first Polish news website and the biggest news website in Poland; TVN24.pl is an integral part of TVN24 - first and the biggest news television in Poland



Award-winning Career

- ◆ Grand Press Award 2024 (the most important award for journalists in Poland)
- category: specialized journalism

Writing Work

- ◆ title: The state gave my children 400 thousand zlotys. You would rather not get them.
As a result of the publication of this article Polish government changed the law and extended maternity leave for parents of premature babies (Grand Press 2024 award-winning article)
- ◆ title: Five minutes in North Korea. I went to the world's most guarded border
- ◆ title: This country is facing a demographic implosion. It is dying out at the fastest rate in the world
- ◆ title: Reunification with Kim's regime. There has been no such data in history
- ◆ title: Risk of war in Korea highest in history. "Possible dramatic move by Pyongyang"
- ◆ title: Chaos in Korea. "We have survived two dictatorships. People are angry"
- ◆ title: Turmoil in Korea: he invented martial law. The prediction came true

Natalia SZEWCZAK

Do not lose hope, remain vigilant. The future of journalism in the AI era

AI could not do that. My story

It was December 2020. Christmas. At 4 a.m. I suddenly found myself in the hospital – at this time I was pregnant with twins, Lena and Filip. They were born a few hours later. They were born three months and one day prematurely. The day of their birth remains the most terrifying day of my life. I have never been so scared as I was then. Immediately after birth, my children were placed on ventilators in intensive care, and no one could predict what would happen next. Everything could have happened then. Everything.

From the very first second of their lives, Lena and Filip fought for survival. They spent 65 days in the hospital, but they won. Today, they are healthy four-year-olds.

You may be wondering why I am sharing this story at a conference about shaping the future of journalism in the era of AI media. I will tell you why: because this event – the birth of my premature children – led to a change in the law in Poland. Over a year ago, my personal experiences inspired me to write an article. In it I described the absurd Polish law that robbed parents of premature babies of maternity leave. Instead of having more time to care for their children and focus on their healing, they were given less. For nearly 20 years, no journalists or politicians in Poland had paid attention to this issue. To make a long story short, after the publication of my article, a kind of magic happened: NGOs and other media took action, and the Polish government removed this absurdity and changed the law. I also received the Grand Press Award for this article – Poland’s most important and prestigious journalism award.”

But the most important part is this: 12 days ago, on March 19th of this year, a new law came into force in Poland. Parents of premature babies now have up to 15 more weeks of maternity leave than parents of full-term children. This is a significant and important change for tens of thousands of Poles.



Natalia SZEWCZAK

This article, which led to a change in the law, could never have been written by artificial intelligence. AI would not have noticed the absurdity in the law. AI would not have been able to change the law for the better.

This article, for me – and I hope for all of you, fellow journalists – is proof, an example, and a symbol of hope that there will always be a place for true, reliable, and in-depth journalism. We will always be needed. Even in the age of artificial intelligence. Or perhaps especially so. How AI can help journalists (become superjournalists)

You are probably hearing this story from Poland for the first time. But undoubtedly, each of you knows the Watergate scandal, one of the most famous political scandals in history, which led to the resignation of American President Richard Nixon. Had it not been for journalists Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein from „The Washington Post” and their investigation, we might never have heard of Watergate. Can anyone imagine AI conducting such an investigation, or something remotely similar? The answer is clear – no. It is the journalist who will tell us what is being overlooked and hidden. AI cannot do that. AI cannot achieve that.

Artificial intelligence will not meet with informants and gain their trust. AI will not uncover secret documents hidden deep in a drawer. AI will not attend a press conference and ask the prime minister or president a difficult question. When a catastrophe happens, would you send a journalist to the scene to speak empathically with witnesses and gather information, or would you entrust that task to AI?

Therefore, I am quite optimistic: artificial intelligence will not replace the core of journalism. However, AI can be tremendous help to us. One example is the use of AI in data analysis, where algorithms can quickly process vast amounts of information, identifying key trends and anomalies. AI tools help journalists transcribe interviews, structure data from massive volumes of documents, organize them, and extract the relevant information. In practice, this means that journalists can create articles more efficiently and quickly. They can also focus on more complex aspects of their work, such as conducting investigative journalism. Journalists assisted by AI have the opportunity to become superjournalists.

To avoid being vague, let me give you a few examples of how AI works in my company, Ringier Axel Springer Polska – one of the largest media companies in Poland. The news website Onet.pl, which Business Insider Polska is a part of, has night shifts.

The task of the journalist working at that time is to create several weather forecasts for many regions of the country. There is no reason why this should be done by a human. Currently, AI handles this task for them. During this time, the journalist can focus on more meaningful work and write articles that only humans can handle. The journalist is still doing the work of a journalist: keeping an eye on the authorities and describing the most important issues, but they no longer have to waste time searching for keywords and writing phrases for search engines, which is currently a significant pain point for the media.

AI also benefits readers. One of the new tools in my company is “Shorten an article with AI,” which allows for shortening long texts. Thanks to this solution, users – if they don’t have time to read long articles – can receive condensed content, which helps them quickly catch up with the most important information from the country and the world.

Fake news and deepfakes. The ethics of algorithms

Journalism supported by AI can become superjournalism. However, there is no doubt that with the increasing popularity of AI, there are also growing risks. Among them are those related to the potential manipulation of public opinion through algorithms that can easily and cheaply create fake news and deepfakes – realistic fake videos, photos, and audio recordings that are indistinguishable from genuine materials.

Artificial intelligence-based technologies, when misused, can contribute to the spread of misinformation, reinforce prejudices, and erode journalistic standards. In Poland, where the political and media landscape is polarized, the ethical use of AI becomes particularly important. But this problem affects practically every country – especially when we look at the global geopolitical situation: the war in Ukraine, the tense situation on the Korean Peninsula, or the massive changes in U.S. politics.

We must also remember that AI algorithms, which are based on data patterns and user behavior, can deepen media fragmentation, leading to the creation of information bubbles, which will only further intensify existing political divides.

So, what should we do to prevent this? First, AI-generated products should not be published without human oversight – because there is a risk of generative AI hallucinations, which means situations where AI models generate information based on false data.



Second, the media should implement AI transparency rules to build public trust and combat misinformation. Media organizations should take responsibility for ensuring transparency in AI usage by making readers aware of the role AI plays in the production and consumption of news. This means that materials created with the help of AI should be clearly labeled.

Ethical challenges should be subject to legal changes – media industries and policymakers should jointly develop regulatory frameworks to prevent the misuse of AI in journalism. It seems that legal solutions are lagging behind technological developments. And although this race is unequal, we cannot give up without a fight.

The European Union was the first in the world, followed by South Korea, to adopt the Artificial Intelligence Act. It specifies how AI models should be used and even lists what is prohibited. The regulation also introduces the obligation to label AI-generated content – but the question remains whether writing prompts is considered “creative input,” even if AI helps write an article. This law will not be applied until 2026, during which time AI may undergo significant changes and transform the media world.

Copyrights. The battle for content in the AI era

When we talk about the challenges that AI brings to the development of journalism, we cannot forget about copyright. As a rule, according to EU regulation, training AI systems on data belonging to rightsholders is allowed – unless they explicitly forbid it. However, there are some pitfalls here. The debate on this matter in Poland, as well as in the entire EU, is heated.

We all know that large tech companies, like Google, use the work of journalists and content from traditional media in AI training. Publishers reasonably expect Google to pay for using their content in AI training. On the other hand, tech giants are increasingly trying to be publishers without paying for the content created by others.

From the publishers’ perspective, this situation is difficult because, on one hand, they have to face the enormous dominance of global tech giants, and on the other hand, they need to ensure appropriate funding for their editorial teams. Publishers also notice that this situation is unfavorable because, as traditional media lose their influence in the online advertising market, the content distribution model changes, which weakens competition in the media sector.

It is worth noting that, in response to these problems, legal steps are being taken in Europe to regulate the online content market and ensure a fair distribution of advertising revenues. For example, in 2019, the European Union adopted the Digital Single Market Directive, which, among other things, forces platforms like Google to sign agreements with publishers and pay them for sharing their content. This is just one step toward ensuring greater fairness in the relationship between publishers and tech giants.

However, there are doubts about how to enforce this law so that it doesn't become a dead letter. The copyright issue led to a nationwide media protest in July 2024 – hundreds of editorial offices participated, calling for changes to the copyright law. They urged that the mechanism for negotiating payment for content used by global tech companies should not remain a legal fiction but should become a real tool. Eventually, a compromise was reached, although it is not fully satisfying for publishers. Now we are waiting for its effects: negotiations are ongoing between publishers and Google. If an agreement is not reached, intervention by the state administration will be necessary.

However, no one doubts this is not the end of work on the law, which will, in turn, redefine the legal relationships between media publishers and tech giants.

Do not lose hope

In the reality of media transforming under the influence of artificial intelligence, we can see both immense challenges and invaluable opportunities. The crisis of traditional media is a topic that has come up frequently in discussions over the past few years, but in the face of the dynamic development of artificial intelligence, its resolution may take on a completely new form.

Personally, I want to believe that thanks to AI, journalism can become of even better quality. During the AI transformation – which brings many dangers – readers will know that true and reliable information will not come from social media, but from traditional media, which will become a kind of compass of credibility.

Artificial intelligence presents us with many dilemmas, but it also offers new possibilities. This is the perspective and approach with which we should shape the future of the media.



Speaker

Diana FUENTES

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Educational Background

- ◆ Master of Arts in Mass Communication, Texas State University, 2022
- ◆ Bachelor of Science in Journalism, University of Texas at Austin, 1985

Professional Experience

- ◆ Executive Director, Investigative Reporters and Editors, April 2021-present
- ◆ Lecturer, Texas State University, January 2022 – present
- ◆ Deputy Metro Editor, San Antonio Express-News, August 2013 – April 2021
- ◆ Editor & Publisher, Del Rio News Herald, June 2011 – July 2013
- ◆ Editor, Laredo Morning Times, May 2004 – May 2011
- ◆ Night Metro Editor, San Antonio Express-News, February 2001 – April 2004
- ◆ Managing Editor, Beaumont Enterprise, August 1998 – February 2001

Award-winning Career

- ◆ Henry Guerra Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in Journalism, 2023
- ◆ National Hispanic Journalists Hall of Fame, 2022
- ◆ Jack Douglas Award, highest award in Texas journalism, 2013
- ◆ Dee Dee Fuentes Day, declared by Laredo City Council, May 25, 2011
- ◆ Hearst Eagle, 2004

Diana FUENTES

The New Life of AI in the 21st Century

Artificial Intelligence is nothing new. It often seems humankind is fascinated by the idea of making things faster, easier, better by meshing the creativity of human intelligence with the speed of machines.

John McCarthy, a U.S. computer scientist who worked at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Stanford, is credited with developing the term “artificial intelligence” in the 1950s. AI has been evolving and growing ever since.

The idea of whether machines could actually become independent thinkers was raised a century earlier by Ada Lovelace, an English scientist and lover of mathematics who published what would become a landmark paper in 1843 about Charles Babbage’s “analytical engine.” That early computer was truly an amazing achievement. Babbage never wrote about his own work, but French Professor Luigi Menabrea wrote a piece using notes he took during Babbage’s lectures. Lovelace translated Menabrea’s notes into English and took many more of her own in letters exchanged with Babbage, resulting in her 1843 paper. She helped show that machines could do more than just calculate numbers; they could interpret symbols and perform complex operations.

She also stated, however, that as amazing as that accomplishment was, machines couldn’t create anything on their own. They had to have content provided by humans. That isn’t truly original, she argued. “The Analytical Engine has no pretensions whatever to originate anything,” she wrote in her 1843 paper. “It can do whatever we how to order it to perform.” Alan Turing, also an English mathematician, called that “Lady Lovelace’s Objection.” That argument continues to rage today.

Some people think “hallucinations” – those fake but often oh-so-real results erroneously generated by AI – show signs of that independent intelligence. But AI programs that produce hallucinations had content to work with in the first place. Some far-thinking people are looking at ways that hallucinations might actually help journalists perhaps by coming up with ideas they hadn’t thought of, but right now more people are concerned about incorrect information getting out.

It’s that fear that often raises concerns about using AI. But we shouldn’t fear a tool.



Properly used AI tools clearly have the ability to shorten significantly the time it takes to do data processing, giving journalists more time to do creative work. What is produced by the tools needs to be verified, but it can be a time-saver. A major story published by the New York Times on Oct. 28, 2024, with the headline, “Inside the Movement Behind Trump’s Election Lies,” used AI to analyze the recordings of more than 400 video meetings conducted by the Election Integrity Network, a group designed to defend Donald Trump in voting fraud allegations.

The NYT team first used a machine-learning model to transcribe the recordings, which NYT said amounted to 5 million words, then used several carefully crafted large-language models to search through the transcripts to identify recurring themes and regular or notable guests at the meetings. It was a daunting task made simpler through AI.

“Five hundred hours of video reduced to about five,” said Dylan Freedman, a machine-learning engineer and journalist on NYT’s AI Initiatives team, who worked on the story. “That saved a lot of time.”

He said some of the prompts used to sift through the recorded material had 2,000 and 3,000 words to help narrow the focus and ensure accuracy. Once AI had finished its work, the human journalists stepped in to review the end product and verify results. Every single quote and video clip used in the story was verified by a human journalist who went back to the original recording where it was made to ensure the transcript was accurate, the context was correct and the speaker’s meaning was properly represented, he said.

All of the AI methods used, and the way they were used, were explained in common, everyday language in a breakout piece alongside the story when it was published. That is integral to transparency, Freedman said at a panel discussion at IRE’s NICAR25 conference in Minneapolis in early March.

Transparency is vital to maintaining trust with our audiences.

Trust and credibility are difficult to earn. It takes time to build a good reputation. Unfortunately, it is all too easy to lose.

That’s why it is essential that news outlets are very clear with their audiences about what they’re doing and when they do it. When an investigative story is printed, posted or broadcast, the news outlet should provide a short explanation in plain language about how AI was used if it was used. The more we do this, the more familiar and less scary it will become to the public. It will become routine.

News outlets also should consider conducting free, basic sessions for the public, perhaps in libraries or at town hall meetings, to show how AI works and how it can benefit them. Sometimes we expect our audiences to be quick adapters, to understand what we take for granted. We need to be willing to be open about our work, to be willing to share what we do and answer questions. Knowledge is power. We should be willing to share that power. There may not be a lot of people who attend these trainings, but even if a few people show up that is a few more people who will learn first-hand about the media and what we do. They, in turn, can help us explain to others.

Education is the key.

Investigative Reporters and Editors is dedicated to training journalists around the world in the latest data analysis tools and investigative reporting and editing skills, and that includes AI. We seek to foster excellence in investigative journalism and create a forum where journalists throughout the world can help each other, sharing story ideas, techniques and information sources.

We believe the best approach to AI is to learn to use the tools while continuing to explore the breathtaking possibilities — and keeping ethics top of mind. Humans need to be involved all along the way.

At IRE conferences, we offer a wide range of sessions such as: “Yes, you still need to calculate an accuracy rate for your AI workflow,” “Analyzing images and videos with AI,” “Developing an ethical AI policy for your newsroom” and “Auditing AI algorithms for bias.”

At NICAR25, for example, we offered a three-hour, hands-on class teaching journalists how to use large-language models to organize and analyze large amounts of data, including crime statistics, environmental ratings and campaign finance reports. Participants learned how to create a machine-learning model to classify text used in a variety of data sets, replacing a complex, traditional machine-learning system with the simpler, new class of LMM classifiers. But journalists in that class didn’t just learn the nuts and bolts of how to use the tool, they also learned how to evaluate the results using a rigorous, time-honored scientific approach. That helps ensure accuracy and can assure the public that the process used to support a story is trustworthy.

Freedman was on a panel titled, “Practical, ethical use of AI in the newsroom: Translation, audio processing and chatbots.” The journalists in that session talked about the risks and shortcomings of AI but also of the wonderful opportunities and how to incorporate its use in newsrooms responsibly.



If you are still considering how or even whether to use AI, or are still developing its use in your newsroom, consider including all departments in a comprehensive, longer-term discussion where everyone's voice is heard. Listening to what your colleagues in customer service, advertising and finance are thinking can help you see what the public is thinking. They also have a stake in what your outlet is doing with — and without — AI.

In the face of many attacks on journalism and journalists in many quarters, we are called upon to rally together and keep speaking truth to power and fighting for the people's right to know. We need to use all available tools and work together on behalf of our communities. IRE looks forward to working with all our colleagues around the world in carrying on this vital mission.



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