

THE ROLE OF MODERN INFORMATION WARFARE AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF JOURNALISM



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UDC: 004.8:355.4:070

LBC: 76.0:60.524.224:66

HoS: 93

DOI: 10.33864/2790-0037.2025.v6.i4.51-62

Keywords:

Information warfare,
Artificial intelligence,
Journalism,
Social media,
Manipulation,
Communication,
Visualization

ABSTRACT

This research aims to investigate the importance of artificial intelligence and its direct and general impact on contemporary information warfare in a journalistic approach. Meanwhile, this study also addresses the era of the emergence of information warfare and artificial intelligence, as well as their spheres of influence. The dissemination of information warfare through artificial intelligence and its consequences have also been extensively studied. Journalism has always played the most crucial role in information warfare throughout all periods, in this parallel, this circumstance will be examined in journalism and its comprehensive contribution to it. Information warfare is a sustainable form of struggling and defense, moreover AI has an undeniable potential to change it significantly. Eventually, critical details, interviews, different opinions from several researches and experts will be presented to witness the impact of contemporary dynamics.

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To cite this article: Nasibova, A. [2025]. The Role of Modern Information Warfare and Artificial Intelligence in the Context of Journalism. *History of Science journal*, 6(4), pp.51-62.

<https://doi.org/10.33864/2790-0037.2025.v6.i4.51-62>

Article history:

Received: 28.03.2025

Accepted: 15.09.2025



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MÜASİR İNFORMASIYA MÜHARİBƏSİNİN VƏ SÜNİ İNTELLEKTİN JURNALİSTİKA KONTEKSTİNDƏ ROLU



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Açar sözlər:

İnformasiya
Müharibəsi,
Süni intellekt,
Jurnalistika,
Sosial media,
Manipulyasiya,
Kommunikasiya,
Vizualizasiya

ANNOTASIYA

Bu tədqiqat süni intellektin əhəmiyyətini və onun müasir informasiya müharibəsinə birbaşa və ümumi təsirini jurnalistik yanaşma ilə araşdırmağı hədəfləyir. Eyni zamanda, burada informasiya müharibəsinin və süni intellektin meydana çıxma dövrü, həmçinin onların təsir dairələri də araşdırılır. İnformasiya müharibəsinin süni intellekt vasitəsilə yayılması və bunun nəticələri də geniş şəkildə öyrənilmişdir. Jurnalistika bütün dövrlərdə informasiya müharibəsində ən mühüm rol oynamışdır, bu paraleldə həmin vəziyyət jurnalistikada və onun hərtərəfli töhfəsində təhlil olunacaq. İnformasiya müharibəsi davamlı mübarizə və müdafiə formasıdır, üstəlik süni intellektin bunu əhəmiyyətli dərəcədə dəyişmək üçün danılmaz potensialı vardır. Nəticə etibarilə, müasir dinamikaların təsirini göstərmək üçün kritik detallar, müəssisələr, müxtəlif tədqiqatlardan və mütəxəssislərdən gələn fikirlər təqdim ediləcək.

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Məqaləyə istinad: Nəşibova, A. [2025]. Müasir İnformasiya Müharibəsinin və Süni İntellektin Jurnalistika Kontekstində Rolu. *History of Science jurnalı*, 6(4), səh.51-62.

<https://doi.org/10.33864/2790-0037.2025.v6.i4.51-62>

Məqalənin tarixçəsi:

Məqalə redaksiyaya daxil olmuşdur: 28.03.2025

Təkrar işlənməyə göndərilmişdir: 29.04.2025

Çapa qəbul edilmişdir: 15.09.2025



РОЛЬ СОВРЕМЕННОЙ ИНФОРМАЦИОННОЙ ВОЙНЫ И ИСКУССТВЕННОГО ИНТЕЛЛЕКТА В КОНТЕКСТЕ ЖУРНАЛИСТИКИ



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УДК: 004.8:355.4:070

ББК: 76.0:60.524.224:66

HoS: 93

DOI: 10.33864/2790-0037.2025.v6.i4.51-62

Ключевые слова:

Информационная
Война,
Искусственный
интеллект,
Журналистика,
Социальные медиа,
Манипуляция,
Коммуникация,
Визуализация

АННОТАЦИЯ

Данное исследование направлено на изучение значимости искусственного интеллекта и его прямого и общего влияния на современную информационную войну с журналистским подходом. При этом рассматривается эпоха появления информационной войны и искусственного интеллекта, а также сферы их влияния. Распространение информационной войны с использованием искусственного интеллекта и ее последствия также подробно исследованы. Журналистика всегда играла наиболее важную роль в информационной войне во все периоды, в этом контексте данное обстоятельство будет рассмотрено в журналистике и ее всестороннем вкладе. Информационная война является устойчивой формой борьбы и защиты, кроме того, искусственный интеллект имеет неоспоримый потенциал существенно изменить её. В конечном счете будут представлены критические детали, интервью, различные мнения ряда исследований и экспертов, чтобы отразить влияние современных динамик.

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Цитировать статью: Насибова, А. [2025]. Роль Современной Информационной Войны и Искусственного Интеллекта в Контексте Журналистики. *Журнал History of Science*, 6(4), с.51-62.
<https://doi.org/10.33864/2790-0037.2025.v6.i4.51-62>

История статьи:

Статья поступила в редакцию: 28.03.2025

Отправлена на доработку: 29.04.2025

Принята для печати: 15.09.2025



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1.Introduction

In the modern era, information warfare, with the emergence and rapid development of Artificial Intelligence, creates incredible opportunities and advantages for journalism, but also opens up challenges and countless problems. While AI plays a special role in journalism in terms of data analysis and content creation, it also raises issues such as deepfakes, algorithmic manipulation, disinformation, and exploitation of bias in the information. Compared to Artificial Intelligence, the history of Information Warfare is much older. Throughout all periods, Information Warfare has been used as a tool to achieve political, economic, and military objectives. It involves the deliberate and intentional manipulation of information, communication channels, and technology to influence the perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors of individuals or groups. In today's interconnected digital world, these tactics have become more sophisticated and widespread, allowing state and non-state actors to reach global audiences instantly. The speed and scale at which false information can spread online often outpaces the efforts of journalists and fact-checkers to correct it. This creates a battlefield where truth competes with fabrication, and credibility becomes a decisive weapon. As AI technologies evolve, the line between authentic and manipulated content grows increasingly blurred. Therefore, developing ethical standards, regulatory measures, and advanced verification tools has become a pressing necessity for protecting societies from the destabilizing effects of information warfare. Information Warfare can take many forms and can be conducted by states, non-state actors, or other entities with specific agendas. Forms used in information warfare include:

- Protection of information,
- Manipulation,
- Degradation,
- Psychological attacks,
- Hacker attacks, and others.

In this context, journalism stands at the intersection of truth and deception, serving both as a shield against manipulation and, at times, a vulnerable target of it. Understanding the intertwined role of Artificial Intelligence and modern information warfare is therefore essential to evaluating journalism's capacity to adapt, resist, and preserve credibility in an increasingly contested information environment [Afridi & Maik, 2024].

2.Development of Information Warfare and Journalism Approach

It is generally said that information warfare originated from the teachings of Sun Tzu. The Chinese warrior and philosopher Sun Tzu, in his book *The Art of War* written two thousand years ago, explained the principles of achieving victory without direct combat [Sinusoid, 2022].

Unlike traditional wars, information warfare can be conducted by a single individual. These "info-warriors" can spread viruses capable of causing significant harm to the global economy and people's psychology. In the meantime, information warfare also involves the use of information and information systems for both offensive and defensive purposes to deny, exploit, distort, or destroy enemy knowledge, communications, access, and processes. Today information operations hold special importance in wars taking place around the world [Bakshi, 2018].

In the mentioned context, Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 confounded many expectations about Russian military capabilities and Ukrainian resilience – including in the cyber and information aspects of the war. This paper examines Russia's deployment of cyber and information operations against Ukraine, assesses the effectiveness of Ukrainian responses, and outlines potential lessons for other states [Giles, 2023]. On the

other hand, Libicki [1995] particularly mentions that: "journalists play a significant role in managing the problems caused by information warfare".

According to Hannem Baker, Head of English Program Unit Media Center in Palestine information warfare for journalists involves the strategic use of information to shape narratives, influence public opinion, and achieve specific objectives. Media outlets or journalist managers may play a role by framing stories, selecting certain perspectives, or even withholding information to align with a particular agenda.

In this direction essential question arises:

How does media stream or journalist manage with information warfare?

In the context of supporting a country's policy, journalists face ethical dilemmas. While it's important to provide objective and truthful information, there may be pressure to align with national policies. However, maintaining journalistic integrity often requires resisting government-driven disinformation and presenting a balanced view.

The question for Mrs. Hannan during the interview - What do you think journalists should support her\his country policy against other country and if journalist meet disinformation from her\his government should disseminate it or not? Also, can you give some examples from your country's practices?

"In some cases, journalists might face challenges in disseminating information that contradicts their government's stance. Examples from various countries show instances where media outlets navigate the delicate balance between national loyalty and journalistic responsibility, raising questions about the role of press freedom and independence.

In the heart-wrenching reality faced by Palestinian journalists, the world witnesses their unwavering commitment to document and share the news of Israeli atrocities. Over 100 days of the Gaza attack, more than 100 journalists and media workers have tragically lost their lives, while 1200 others endure displacement. In the West Bank, 56 journalists have been arrested, leaving many separated from their families and loved ones. This poignant narrative underscores the sacrifices made in the pursuit of truth amid the harsh realities of conflict" [Bingle, 2023].

Information Warfare is an ideological and psychological influence that one country exerts on the territory of another. For example, we are talking about the ideological and psychological warfare that Azerbaijan carries out within Armenian territory targeting the Armenian population, and vice versa that Armenia carries out within Azerbaijani territory targeting the Azerbaijani population. Sometimes we face the term "information warfare" used locally in our context, but that doesn't quite fit the full scope. This is because information warfare has already gone beyond a local scale. In reality, information confrontation is an activity aimed at forming a positive perception of one's own country and a negative perception of the opposing side.

The only way to prevent this type of information warfare is for the country to have a unified and operational information policy. Unfortunately, we have not yet developed such an information policy [Copeland, 2025]. We still lack a unified strategic direction in the information space. This strategic direction should both protect and expand Azerbaijan's information space. However, the information space is not limited to geographical boundaries. It would be better to use the example of Azerbaijan to make this clearer: wherever national interests lie, that can be considered part of information space. For example, this includes the territory of Turkey, Armenia, Russia, the Turkic world, and Arab countries.

Unfortunately, geographically, Azerbaijan's information space is fragile. In the north, the territory is under the influence of the Russian information sphere. To the south, it is influenced by Iran; to the east, parts of it are affected by Georgia and Russia. The lack of a unified information policy - in conversation, it is claimed that it exists, but in reality, it does

not. The security of information space is not ensured. On the other hand, if it is about the information warfare between Armenia and Azerbaijan, it should not be confined to the period of the conflict itself. Information warfare has a much longer history. At the root of all warfare, including information warfare, lie stereotypes, making this concept very powerful [Ducu].

Namely, first through ethnic stereotypes, and then through political stereotypes, each country engages in shaping foreign public opinion about the other. In Azerbaijan, for instance, there are valuable works on Armenian-Azerbaijani relations. Taking Mir Mohsun Navvab's "Garabagnama": when it addresses Armenian-Muslim conflict, it does not frame it as Armenian Turkish, but Armenian-Muslim. Here, conflict is presented using religious stereotypes, linking Armenian aggression to this. And the same model surfaced in the Armenia-Azerbaijan-Karabakh conflict. Religious leaders, along with the leadership, can be exploited religious elements in the information war, firmly portraying it as a Christian-Muslim clash. In Europe, this narrative held sway. So, Russia did not accept it as religious confrontation, but gave Armenians concessions, framing it as people's right to self-determination [Hameleers, 2025]. Armenians treated it as an ethnic conflict and used these stereotypes accordingly. Iran, for its part, employed stereotypes by positioning itself as defender of Armenia "eternal blood brothers" from a shared root.

If it is also incorporated this stereotype-based policy as a tool for manipulating public opinion, it will be indeed put forward a successful argument. However, it is not limit the history of ideological warfare to the last 20 years. It existed during Soviet times, during the era of Tsarist Russia, and even earlier.

Another important point; it should be noted that Azerbaijan does not have an information strategy. No matter how many press councils are established, there is still a lack of unified strategy. There is no substantive progress. The main power in this information war lies in the interviews from the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Paying attention to Heydar Aliyev's era in power, it's clear that he engaged at the level of peers which is elected officials when handling information warfare.

At that time, Armenians were more sophisticated politically. They worked among the electorate, not just with elected officials, spreading propaganda among voters, whose pressure and insistence influenced as elected officials. But since around 2003, this tactic changed and Azerbaijan also began outreach to the electorate. It is well-known that previously, Azerbaijan had lobbying and diaspora strategies, later, those were dismantled. Meanwhile, Armenians remained active and stronger in these areas and exploited the mistakes from Azerbaijan comprehensively [].

In information warfare, what is said about Azerbaijan by the Armenians, and about Armenians by Azerbaijan - that is asymmetric warfare. There are no military operations; social and psychological methods are used to influence the enemy. Through soft power elements, negative public opinion is formed against the opposing side. What we have seen in the past 30 years is only asymmetric struggle, essentially. Many refuse to accept that this is information warfare; they say "it's not information warfare" - but it's bugged approach [Jensen & Ramjee, 2023].

Unprofessionalism, lack of systematization, absence of a concept, fragmentation, and self-initiative have shown their weaknesses. Armenians never highlighted the Karabakh issue upfront. Instead, they first presented the "Armenian genocide," portraying the Armenian people as "helpless." Then they introduced "historic Armenian lands" and only then did the Karabakh issue automatically fall in their favor. In this direction, invoking homeland, "a red carnation of faith" such messages didn't resonate effectively.

How should it be done?

If you're working with the West and wish to convey Azerbaijan's truths, you must emphasize legal and democratic principles. In the Islamic world, you must use the Islamic factor, Muslim solidarity; in the Turkic world, Turkic unity. However, Azerbaijan lacked such messaging. All prepared models that distributed everywhere; for example, some published books that foreign guests praised and left in hotels, then it would be claimed, "We have conveyed Azerbaijan's truths to the world public." No wonder, this was just superficial.

Coming to addressing world public opinion, why?

France and America know the Armenian genocide didn't occur. But this stereotype serves their policies, especially in regard to Turkey, regional issues, geostrategic and geoeconomic interests that they use it for that reason. It is impossible to give a definite, brief, and comprehensive answer to these questions. This topic has been studied by specialists over a long period of time.

First of all, it could be noted that any information war is undoubtedly an integral part of conventional warfare, the goal of which, as we know, is for the victorious side to achieve certain strategic gains. These may include territory, economic and military resources, demographic assets, and geopolitical influence with including ideological dominance (such as religion or the politics of the ruling class or social groups).

From one essential perspective, information warfare is nothing more than the use of informational tools by opposing sides, along with psychological, moral, and social influence on the subjects involved in the war. These subjects include the populations of both the home and enemy countries, as well as the personnel of military units on both sides, those on the front lines and those supporting combat operations. However, information warfare has always been and will remain only an additional tool to help achieve the strategic goals of one of the sides. At the same time, it is essential to emphasize the quality of the tools used in information warfare.

The deliberate use of completely distorted information in terms of time, place, and facts during information warfare is absolutely unacceptable. For example, Russian media and information channels may report "overwhelming success in combat operations in a particular area," while deliberately withholding information about significant losses in other areas of the front line, such as abandoned tactically important territories, destruction of command centers, and other developments that could cause serious operational-tactical damage to Russian forces. Likewise, Ukraine may claim "predominant success in military operations and the destruction of large numbers of enemy troops," while remaining silent about their own losses or the territories they've ceded to the opponent.

Naturally, information manipulation occurs on both sides.

Certainly, this is normal-provided the purpose is to gain an advantage over the opponent in emotional, moral, and psychological domains when addressing both their own population and that of the enemy. The same trends can be observed in the Middle East.

It is important to understand that information warfare involves not only "homemade resources" like the "yesterday-a-janitor-today-a-military-expert" types, but also specialized military units and intelligence agencies on both sides, staffed with highly professional analysts. These professionals work with incoming data, process it, and build forecasts based on the synthesis of reliable information from various sources.

In this context, the search for truth is accessible only to specialists, those with both general professional knowledge (history, economics, geopolitics, political economy, law) and specialized skills such as:

- Methods and techniques for processing and presenting information
- The theory and practice of spreading rumors
- Fundamentals of psychology and the mentality of societies living in specific regions.

All of this is handled by professionals within the respective units of opposing sides, and they conduct their work every hour that both in peacetime and during war.

As for everyone else, the “conclusions and forecasts” made by self-proclaimed experts, bloggers, etc., clearly lack the foundation necessary to achieve meaningful results. Working with information is a collective task, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities in processing and dissemination. It is not the domain of a single specialist. Launching an information attack on the enemy without the aforementioned components in place makes no sense. Ultimately, any distortion or incorrect presentation of information will backfire [Libicki, 1995].

To protect society from the effects of information manipulation, there are only two ways:

1. Completely isolate society from incoming information. This is the easiest and fastest way.
2. Provide education to individuals on how to receive and process information critically not just by explaining the information itself, but by teaching the methods, formats, and mechanisms of perception and delivery.

At last, it should be mentioned this second method is utopian, as it contradicts the interests and foundational principles of any state system.

3.AI creates expanded opportunities for journalism

Artificial Intelligence is an important tool in modern information warfare. It isn't considered modern information warfare without Artificial Intelligence. It enables sophisticated cyber threats through advanced malware and personalized social engineering, while also supporting large-scale disinformation campaigns that influence public opinion and policy. On the defensive side, AI enhances cyber defense and detecting anomalies, monitoring network traffic, and predicting potential threats. Additionally, AI increases the speed and accuracy of information operations by rapidly processing and flagging false information. Multimodal generative AI, which uses text, images, and audio, is an especially powerful tool for rapid analysis and communication, but human oversight remains essential to prevent misinterpretation and disinformation. Artificial intelligence is rapidly changing the way information warfare is conducted in the modern world. Victims are influenced, deceived, and all this ultimately serves a strategic purpose. When we say “Artificial intelligence as a new tool,” we now mean using AI technologies in new ways that go beyond traditional propaganda or cyberattack methods. It creates expanded opportunities for journalism by enhancing data analysis, automating content creation, enabling personalized news delivery, and supporting real-time fact-checking, ultimately increasing efficiency, reach, and audience engagement [Military Dispatches Editorial, 2024].

Artificial intelligence can automate routine tasks such as data sorting, audio transcription, and even the preparation of simple reports. This allows journalists to focus more on complex, creative, and investigative work. At the same time, the misuse of AI in journalism risks undermining public trust by spreading synthetic content that appears authentic. Governments and media organizations are therefore under pressure to establish clear policies, guidelines, and verification standards for AI-generated material [Vinuesa et al., 2020]. Collaborative efforts between technologists, policymakers, and journalists are essential to strike a balance between innovation and responsibility. The growing sophistication of AI-driven information warfare highlights the urgent need for media literacy among the public to strengthen resilience against manipulation. Ultimately, the role of AI in both enabling and countering information warfare will continue to expand, shaping the future of journalism and global communication.

4.Management, Supervision, Manipulation

Management and Supervision of Media

Regarding the contemporary innovations and their strong effect to media it should be control for the prevention of unexpected complications. The management must be effective and comprehensive, meanwhile it can make a condition for the supervision of media. Because this is the only way to reduce some risks, such as; manipulation, deceiving people, provocation and etc. All them should be considered separately.

Social Media Manipulation:

Manipulation via media platforms are increasing dramatically. In this context Libicki [1995] emphasize that on social media platforms, which are considered the main “battleground” of information warfare, both state and non-state actors can create fake accounts, use bots, or apply other tactics to manipulate public opinion.

Use of Algorithms:

About its issue the progress reveals that understanding and leveraging algorithms on social media platforms to amplify certain messages or suppress others is a common strategy.

Educate the Audience:

Beyond doubt, journalists can play a role in promoting media literacy among their audiences. By helping the public understand how to critically evaluate information, journalists empower individuals to distinguish between reliable and unreliable sources.

Undoubtedly the Information Warfare is Dynamic. Information warfare is constantly evolving as technology advances. Since information warfare often involves cyber threats, journalists should be aware of best practices in cybersecurity. This includes securing their communication channels, protecting sources, and staying alert to hacking attempts.

Vigilance on Social Platforms:

Given social media’s role in information warfare, journalists must actively monitor these platforms for emerging trends, false narratives, and manipulation attempts.

Journalists should be aware of psychological tactics used in information warfare, such as emotional manipulation, and aim to present information in a way that fosters critical thinking rather than emotional reaction.

They should also stay informed about new techniques and technologies used to spread disinformation. Continuous learning and adaptability are essential.

Journalists Can Shift Roles in Information Warfare:

Journalists can, at different times, become tools, targets, or victims in information warfare.

5.Importance of Media Literacy in AI Era

5.1.Vigilance on Social Platforms

Given social media's role in information warfare, journalists must actively monitor these platforms for emerging trends, false narratives, and manipulation attempts. Journalists should be aware of psychological tactics used in information warfare, such as emotional manipulation, and aim to present information in a way that fosters critical thinking rather than emotional reaction [Libicki, 1995].

There are, instead, several distinct forms of information warfare, each laying claim to the larger concept. Seven forms of information warfare that conflicts that involve the protection, manipulation, degradation, and denial of information can be distinguished: (1) command-and-control warfare, which targets the enemy’s leadership and decision-making centers; (2) intelligence-based warfare, which involves the design, protection, and denial of systems that gather sufficient knowledge to dominate the battlespace; (3) electronic warfare, which relies on radio-electronic or cryptographic techniques; (4) psychological warfare, in which information is used to influence the minds of allies, neutrals, and adversaries; (5) hacker warfare, which consists of attacks on computer systems; (6) economic information warfare, which blocks or redirects information to achieve economic dominance; and (7) cyberwarfare, which encompasses a range of futuristic scenarios. All these forms are weakly

related. The concept of information warfare has as much analytic coherence as the concept, for instance, of an information worker. The several forms range in maturity from the historic that information technology influences but does not control to the fantastic which involves assumptions about societies and organizations that are not necessarily true. Although information systems are becoming important, it does not follow that attacks on information systems are therefore more worthwhile. On the contrary, as monolithic computer, communications, and media architectures give way to distributed systems, the returns from many forms of information warfare diminish. Information is not in and of itself a medium of warfare, except in certain narrow aspects such as electronic jamming.

Journalists play an important role in managing the challenges created by information warfare. Navigating the complexities of this environment requires a combination of ethical principles, critical thinking, and strategic approaches. As for the duty of journalists in information warfare, they are unequivocally obliged to deliver accurate and truthful information. Therefore, journalists must be especially cautious against deliberate attempts to spread false or misleading information in the context of information warfare. They should verify information before publishing it and promptly correct any errors [Libicki, 1995].

They must resist manipulative narratives that aim at distortion and present facts in a fair manner. In information warfare, external actors may attempt to influence media organizations. False information can also be spread through anonymous sources or individuals who allegedly wish to remain unnamed. The rapid circulation of disinformation may require swift corrections to prevent further harm. To verify facts effectively and promptly, journalists are expected to have strong proficiency in using technology. In information warfare, deepfakes, bots, and other technological tools may be used to spread false information.

Eventually, information warfare takes many forms, from psychological and economic manipulation to cyberwarfare and disinformation campaigns, all of which exploit vulnerabilities in modern communication systems. In this context, journalists carry a crucial responsibility to uphold truth, resist manipulation, and apply ethical and technological skills to safeguard public trust. Strengthening media literacy and vigilance against false narratives is therefore essential to mitigate the destabilizing impact of information warfare on societies.

6. Conclusion

Journalists must be aware of the potential consequences of their reporting in information warfare, which can significantly influence the real world, especially through disinformation. Their work can shape public opinion, impact political decision-making, and even affect national security. Irresponsible or unchecked reporting may unintentionally amplify false narratives and strengthen the strategies of hostile actors. Therefore, journalists have a responsibility to practice rigorous fact-checking, apply ethical standards, and remain vigilant against manipulation.

The main solution is to increase media literacy. Only then can people recognize manipulation and avoid being deceived.

A recent survey found that more than 100 newsrooms participated, representing 46 countries across six continents. The adoption of AI tools such as ChatGPT and Google Bard has grown at an unprecedented pace, and the field of journalism is no exception to this trend.

In this direction the approaches of experts are so remarkable:

How can AI enhance the kind of journalism they aspire to practice? [LSE, 2023]

Saja Mortada – I was intimidated by the subject because, at the end of the day, I'm a journalist, not a technologist.

Sara Campos – As a product manager, I need to stay focused on the day-to-day work, particularly breaking news.

Charlie Beckett – (Director of Journalism AI, London School of Economics).

Modern information warfare, reinforced by the power of Artificial Intelligence (AI), creates both risks and opportunities for journalism. AI tools can automate tasks, increase efficiency, and enable deeper investigative possibilities by analyzing large datasets. At the same time, however, these technologies allow malicious actors to produce sophisticated disinformation, such as deepfake videos and automated bot campaigns, which undermine public trust. Journalists, by adhering to ethical principles, should use AI for fact-checking and content analysis, while also developing new skills to detect and counter AI-driven disinformation in order to maintain their credibility and prevent the spread of false information [Gharri, 2008].

It is said that China will become a global superpower in the coming millennium. In response to this prospect, the United States is spending billions of dollars on propaganda aimed at winning the hearts and minds of the world's population in order to prevent Islamic support for China's rise as a superpower. As military experts also claim, the war of intellect and ideas is expanding, which in turn leads to the dominance of media and digital communication technologies. Many already anticipate that the next generation of warfare could prove to be the most destructive, since media and information are capable of achieving far more than conventional warfare.

Artificial intelligence plays a significant role in the journalism of my country, being utilized as necessary. However, misinformation and disinformation often victimize journalists, leading them to unknowingly disseminate erroneous information within their media outlets. Lately, the frequency of retractions in Azerbaijani media has nearly matched that of published news stories. This situation underscores the importance of the project, as it becomes evident that both older journalists, who lack familiarity with AI tools, and younger generations, who sometimes misuse them, require guidance. The project aims to address this gap by fostering the development of AI within journalism and promoting adherence to ethical guidelines regarding its use among journalists.

Corollary, the project to be implemented will have an impact on the society in transmitting accurate and correct information in a world where artificial intelligence is developing.

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