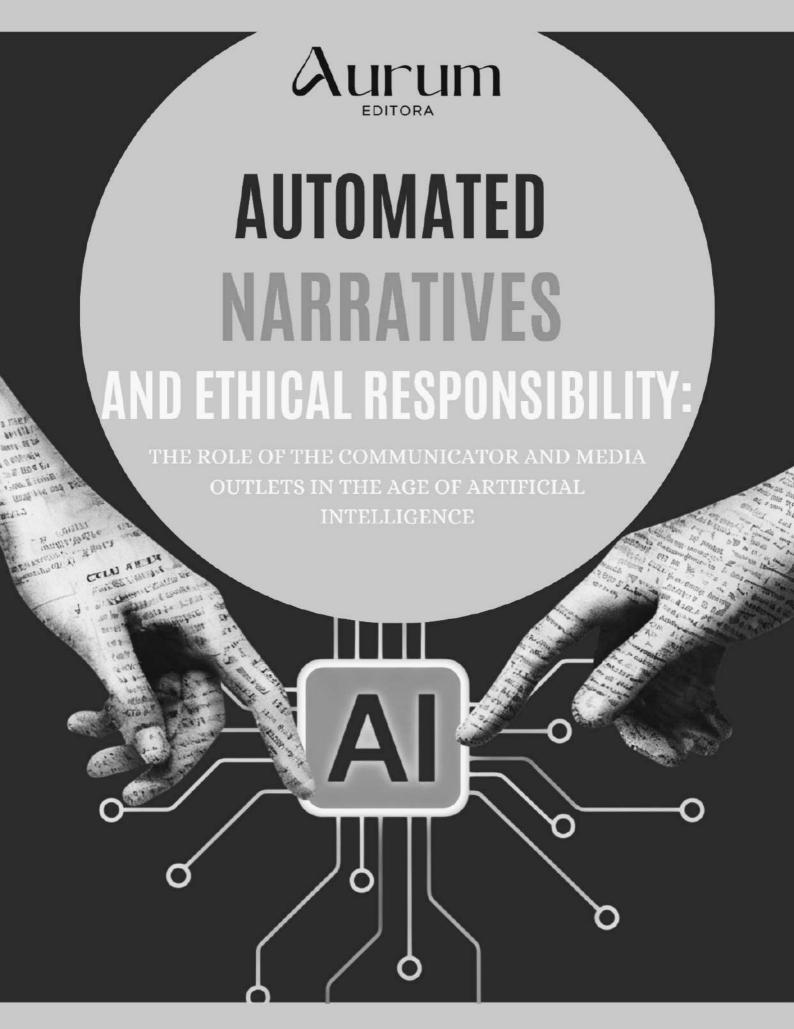


ANA GABRIELA SIMÕES THOMÉ SANTANA



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# **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to God,	for the strength a	and wisdom	granted,	and to my	family, the	foundation	of
love, support, and inspiratio	n at every stage o	of my life.					

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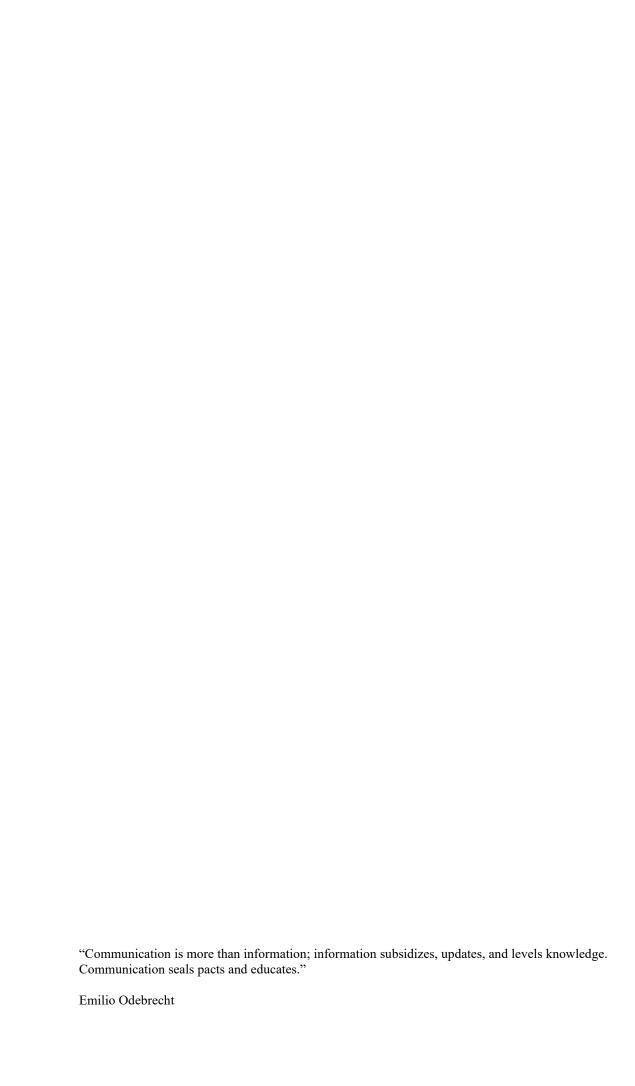
My sincere thanks to my parents, Reinaldo and Ana Cláudia, for their love, values, and teachings that shaped who I am. Every piece of advice and gesture of care was fundamental in my journey.

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Ana Gabriela Simões Thomé Santana



#### **ABSTRACT**

This paper explores automated narratives and the ethical responsibility of communicators and media outlets in the age of artificial intelligence (AI). The central objective is to analyze how automation impacts journalistic production and the ethical implications of this new scenario, especially considering the growing influence of AI in communication. The research is predominantly bibliographical, revisiting relevant concepts and theories to understand the intersection between technology, communication, and ethics. The methodology used is based on a critical analysis of existing literature, including works by renowned authors in the field, such as Yuval Noah Harari and Luciano Floridi, as well as case studies that illustrate the implementation of AI in journalism. The results indicate that automation can increase efficiency in content production, but it also raises concerns about informational superficiality and the possibility of bias in the data used by algorithms, compromising the quality and reliability of news. The analysis reveals that, while AI can play a positive role by freeing journalists from repetitive tasks, human presence is essential to ensure critical analysis and in-depth information. Furthermore, the research discusses the concept of "automated journalism" and how it is redefining the traditional roles of journalists, who now need to act as information curators, selecting and contextualizing machine-generated content. It found that interaction between humans and machines is essential to preserving informative quality and journalistic credibility. The conclusions point to the need for a balance between technological innovation and ethics in communication, emphasizing that responsibility must always fall on professionals, who must be prepared to deal with the challenges posed by automation. The work reinforces the importance of ongoing training and ethical discussions that guide journalistic practice in the digital age, emphasizing that communication is not neutral, but rather a space of power that must be constantly analyzed in light of ethical principles. The research also suggests that, to address the challenges of disinformation and "filter bubbles," it is essential to promote media literacy and digital literacy, empowering citizens to recognize biases and critically evaluate the information they consume. Thus, the paper concludes that mass communication can and should contribute to building a more conscious, ethical, and supportive society, guiding its content by formative principles and not solely by market interests. Ultimately, the presence of artificial intelligence in the information ecosystem requires a multidisciplinary and integrated response, involving government, the technology sector, the media, academia, and civil society, in order to build ethical and democratic governance of AI that respects human rights and promotes informational justice. The future of communication will depend on professionals' ability to adapt to new technological realities, ensuring that ethics and social responsibility remain at the core of journalistic practice.

**Keywords:** Automated narratives; Ethical responsibility; Communication; Artificial intelligence; Journalism.

# **SUMMARY**

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABNT – Brazilian Association of Technical Standards

AI – Artificial Intelligence (original: IA – Inteligência Artificial)

TCC – Undergraduate Final Paper (original: Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso)

ICT – Information and Communication Technologies (original: TIC – Tecnologias da Informação e Comunicação)

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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The rise of automated narratives represents one of the most significant transformations in contemporary communication, particularly in a context marked by the growing influence of artificial intelligence (AI) in the production and circulation of information. From the invention of Gutenberg's printing press to the consolidation of the internet and digital platforms, the history of journalism and communication has been deeply intertwined with technological development (Soria, 2014; Machado, 2003). However, the advent of software capable of autonomously producing journalistic texts, as demonstrated by the experiences of Narrative Science and Automated Insights, inaugurates a new paradigm that challenges traditional concepts of authorship, credibility, and ethics in communicational practice (Morozov, 2012; Carlson, 2014).

In this scenario, there is a noticeable shift from human centrality to algorithmic systems capable of organizing, filtering, and even generating narratives, raising crucial questions about the objectivity, neutrality, and intentionality of information. Studies show that readers often fail to distinguish between texts written by journalists and those produced by machines, which intensifies the debate on the limits and responsibilities of automated journalism (Clerwall, 2014). Although automation promises efficiency and speed, researchers such as Dalen (2012) and Latar (2014) emphasize that critical analysis, creativity, and the ability to contextualize remain essentially human competencies, without which communication risks being reduced to data devoid of social meaning.

The ethical dimension, therefore, emerges as a central element in this debate. As highlighted by Erbolato (1982), Vidigal de Carvalho (1995), and Guareschi (1997), communication means more than transmitting information: it is an act of sharing and collective construction of meaning, which demands responsibility regarding the social impact of disseminated content. Freedom of expression, in this sense, cannot be confused with the absence of ethical commitment, since media outlets and communicators play a decisive role in shaping public opinion and consolidating social values.

Moreover, the algorithmic logic of digital platforms introduces new mechanisms of power and control. Researchers such as Orlandi (2007), Serrano (2013), and Silveira (2019) point out that curation algorithms, by selecting and ranking information, can both broaden and restrict access to different perspectives, creating phenomena such as "filter bubbles" (Pariser, 2011) and fueling what Zuboff (2018) calls "surveillance capitalism." In this context, the opacity of digital platforms (Han, 2022) deepens symbolic inequalities and favors hegemonic political-economic interests, compromising the plurality of public debate.

Reflecting on automated narratives and ethical responsibility, therefore, means recognizing that technology is not neutral (Feenberg, 2010), but rather the result of social, political, and economic choices that shape communication and collective life. The role of communicators and media outlets in this scenario requires reaffirming values such as truth, diversity of voices, and the promotion of critical

citizenship, in order to confront the challenges imposed by artificial intelligence and algorithmic logic in the public sphere.

The advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) and its integration into communication processes have rapidly transformed the way narratives are produced, distributed, and consumed. If previous moments in the history of communication were marked by the invention of the printing press, the rise of radio and television, or the digital revolution brought by the internet (Soria, 2014; Machado, 2003), today we are witnessing a new milestone: the emergence of automated narratives. Software capable of generating journalistic texts, such as those developed by Narrative Science and Automated Insights, demonstrates that content production can occur almost independently of human action, inaugurating a paradigm that challenges traditional concepts of authorship, ethics, and responsibility (Morozov, 2012; Carlson, 2014).

This phenomenon cannot be analyzed in isolation. It is part of a broader context in which AI becomes a key player in reorganizing social, political, and economic dynamics. For Harari (2018), we are facing an era in which data and algorithms assume the role of primary resources of power, capable of shaping behaviors and collective decisions. Floridi (2013) draws attention to the need to discuss the ethics of information, since algorithms not only process data but also construct new realities and directly influence human perception. Chomsky (2021), in turn, warns of the risk of concentrating communicational power in large technology corporations, which weakens democracy and compromises diversity of voices. Complementing these perspectives, Lévy (1999) highlights that networked communication offers the potential for collective intelligence, but its realization depends on inclusive policies and critical digital literacy, without which the logic of exclusion and discursive monopoly prevails.

From these reflections, it becomes clear that the central issue is not merely technological but profoundly ethical. As emphasized by Vidigal de Carvalho (1995) and Guareschi (1997), to communicate means to share meanings and collectively construct reality, which makes it essential to consider the impact of disseminated messages. Erbolato (1982) had already warned that the media, while informing, also shapes values and behaviors, and must operate under an ethical commitment that goes beyond commercial or political interests. In this sense, the responsibility of communicators and media outlets expands in the face of the growing use of algorithms that, as Pariser (2011) observes, create "filter bubbles," restricting access to a plurality of information.

The critique by authors such as Zuboff (2018) and Han (2022) reinforces that we live under the dominance of "surveillance capitalism," in which personal data are transformed into commodities and used to predict and influence behaviors. In this scenario, algorithms operate opaquely, reinforcing symbolic inequalities and silently shaping public opinion. Orlandi (2007) calls this phenomenon a

"politics of silence," in which certain discourses are privileged while others are rendered invisible, limiting the range of possible meanings in the social sphere.

Thus, the discussion on automated narratives goes beyond the scope of technological innovation and requires a critical reflection on ethics, democracy, and citizenship. Communication, far from being neutral, is directly related to power struggles and the process of constructing social consciousness (Serrano, 2013; Silveira, 2019). In this context, reaffirming the human role in mediating information is fundamental—whether through critical capacity, creativity, or the ethical responsibility of the communicator. The contemporary challenge lies in balancing the benefits of automation with the need to preserve plurality of voices, factual truth, and commitment to human dignity.

Therefore, this discussion takes place in a complex terrain where artificial intelligence redefines journalistic and communicational practice but also reopens philosophical, ethical, and political debates on freedom, responsibility, and social justice. The communicator, in this scenario, is not merely a transmitter of messages but an essential agent to ensure that technology is used in favor of the public interest and the construction of a more critical, democratic, and plural society.

#### JOURNALISTIC AND AUTOMATED NARRATIVES

Although it presents a simplified view, the dualistic approach to the relationship between human beings and technology is still widely adopted today. Classifications such as Promethean or Faustian (Rüdiger, 2007), apocalyptic or integrated (Eco, 2006), cyber-optimists or neo-Luddites continue to be employed, demonstrating the ongoing effort of fields such as the Philosophy of Technology to reflect on these issues, whose origin lies in the concept of technique. While technique dates back to antiquity, the notion of technology emerged later. Lemos (2002) explains that technology corresponds to technique in the modern era, quite distinct from the ancient view and detached from its sacred connotations. It is a technique grounded in rationality, scientific advancement, Newtonian physics, Cartesian mathematics, and empiricism, which came to see nature as an "object of free conquest" (Lemos, 2002, p. 45).

According to Rüdiger (2007, p. 175), "technique is, in essence, a mediation of the process of forming human life under determined social conditions." He further states (2007, p. 186) that the operational knowledge we call technique articulates with the form of knowledge known as science through the mediation of the machine, potentially extending to all areas susceptible to automation, in accordance with the principles and characteristics of the historical period that constituted it: Modernity.

For Heidegger, technique represents a way for human beings to be in the world; however, with the advent of modernity, this relationship began to assume a character of domination and aggressiveness toward nature. From then on, nature became an object of knowledge and human manipulation, within a logic of continuous and irreversible progress. Sennett (2009) associates this moment with the opening of Pandora's box—a mythological figure who, when sent by Zeus, brought to the world not only innovation but also the destructive potential of human creations. In Greek culture, Pandora also symbolized objects manufactured by humans, capable of generating negative consequences for their own creator.

The major events of the 20th century, such as the world wars, Nazism, the Cold War, and the fear of nuclear conflict, made the worst predictions of the ancient Greeks concrete, precisely in a period that, paradoxically, believed itself to be more advanced thanks to technological progress.

Reflections on the connections between society and technology gave rise to new fields of study, such as the so-called Science and Technology Studies (STS). Authors like Castells (1999) and Feenberg (2002) have dedicated themselves to investigating this field, considering the complexity and multiplicity of factors involved in this relationship.

Feenberg (2002), in criticizing reductionist approaches to technology, initially proposes an overview of the most recurrent positions and, from this mapping, incorporates dimensions such as democracy, power, and freedom into STS discussions. In his analysis of modern societies, technology appears as one of the main sources of power, articulated with social contexts. He argues that political decisions with a direct impact on daily life are often influenced by agents who control technical systems,

such as large corporations, armed forces, or professional associations—including physicists, engineers, and, currently, software developers.

Feenberg draws on Marx's thought to reinforce his critique: just as the German philosopher questioned, in the 19th century, the idea of an economy governed exclusively by natural laws such as supply and demand, the role of technology should also not be analyzed without considering its articulations with society. A purely technical and isolated view would therefore be limited.

Following a perspective similar to the Marxist critique of the economy, Feenberg (2010) relativizes the supposed neutrality of technology, emphasizing that its emergence and evolution occur within the human universe and are shaped by it. Technical creation, according to the author, results from the interaction between reason and experience. Although knowledge of nature is essential for the functioning of any artifact, it must operate in a social context, also being influenced by the experiences of that environment (Feenberg, 2010, p. 17).

Parallel to the philosophical debate, cinema has played an expressive role in representing the technological imaginary, oscillating between fear and fascination. Numerous films illustrate this dualism through robots, machines, and artificial intelligences that turn against humans. Notable examples include the HAL 9000 computer in 2001: A Space Odyssey (Kubrick, 1968), the extermination threat in The Terminator (James Cameron, 1984), or virtual domination in The Matrix (Wachowski, 1999), where humans are transformed into energy sources.

In the television series Star Trek: The Next Generation and the film Star Trek – First Contact (Frakes, 1996), the Borg—biomechanical beings—represent another feared figure: a collective that assimilates other species, transforming them into part of its hive through cybernetic implants, eliminating their individuality.

However, fascination with machines predates the current dependence on technological devices such as cell phones, tablets, and other digital gadgets. During antiquity and the Middle Ages, reports of automatons were rare, but the 18th century saw a flourishing of such creations. Devaux (1964) describes, for example, the exhibition of the "Xylophone Player," a mechanical doll built by Roentgen, allegedly inspired by Marie Antoinette—a work that can still be admired in Paris today.

In a hall of the Palace of Versailles, among balloon skirts and court dresses, the skilled automaton maker Roentgen presents another masterpiece to Louis XVI. That Xylophone Player, with a low-cut bodice and embroidered silk dress, arouses general curiosity; whispers circulate about the doll's divinely modeled body beneath the dress, and astonishment grows at its precision and graceful poise. A lively little aria leaps forth under the flurry of ivory hammers; an entire century seems to emanate from that elegant, crisp music; and when the young lady, beneath the rings of her high coiffure, turns her head to bow, the resemblance provokes a murmur throughout the room... More touching and more perfect in mechanism than the Writer or the Musician by Jaquet-Droz, or Vaucanson's Duck and Flutists, the Xylophone Player faithfully evokes, in our view, the First Age of Automatism (Devaux, 1964, p. 7).

From its earliest days, journalism has been linked to some form of technology, with Gutenberg's printing process standing out as one of the main drivers of its expansion. Years later, in the late 20th century, the introduction of networks, the internet, and computers in newsrooms initiated a cycle of profound transformations that continues to this day, described by Soria (2014) as a true tsunami, reflecting the significant impact that digitization brought to the journalistic production process.

Machado (2003) explains that two perspectives emerged to interpret these transformations. The first, called instrumentalist, considered computers merely as additional tools for journalists, similar to past innovations such as the telegraph and the typewriter. The second perspective viewed the advent of digital technology as a much broader change. The uncertainty surrounding the consequences of digital dissemination makes it difficult to understand the particularities of journalistic practice in networks, including changes in professional profiles, organizational structures of media companies, and the role of users in content creation (Machado, 2003, p. 2).

Bradshaw and Rohumaa (2011) trace the history of online journalism in the West, identifying the British Today (1986) as a pioneer in digital content production and the Daily Telegraph as one of the first print newspapers to launch an online version in 1994. Today, in digital newsrooms, information flows continuously, allowing the construction of stories that often begin with brief updates and can expand into major reports, such as the award-winning Snow Fall by The New York Times (Branch, [200-]).

Technological changes and their impacts cannot be analyzed in isolation, as social and economic factors also play crucial roles in the complex landscape of contemporary media. Haak, Parks, and Castells (2012) discuss future trends in an interconnected digital era, arguing that new technological possibilities have not resulted in a crisis for journalism but rather in the need to revise the business models of major media companies.

The essential functions of journalism—observing relevant facts, asking appropriate questions, and explaining results—remain unchanged but have been reconfigured and expanded by new technologies. Haak, Parks, and Castells (2012) list several trends that characterize the journalism of the future, such as networked journalism, collective intelligence, user-generated content, data mining, and automated journalism.

Our focus is on automated journalism (AJ), characterized by the fact that part of journalistic content is now generated by machines through software, using everything from simple word lists to complex artificial intelligence models. This disconnection between text and journalist represents one of the most intriguing and problematic technological trends, as it challenges the traditional notion of authorship.

It is important to note that this topic is relatively new in journalism studies and should not be confused with Database-Driven Digital Journalism (JDBD), which has already been widely explored by

authors such as Barbosa (2007) and Fidalgo (2004). Although automation is part of JDBD, the AI algorithms that underpin automated narratives operate differently, facing the challenge of representing real-world processes in a computational environment.

AI software, unlike databases, is more complex and dynamic, learning and performing functions based on the data it processes. This complexity is reflected in the different forms of manipulation that databases and AI solutions provide. While databases operate at a macro level, organizing specific information, AI algorithms act at a micro level, constructing the text itself and challenging the boundaries of journalistic activity.

Morozov (2012), in his work A Robot Stole My Pulitzer!, reports the early steps of companies specializing in artificial intelligence, such as Narrative Science, in automating journalistic production. These companies began offering algorithm-generated journalistic texts as a service, aimed especially at media outlets operating in sports and finance. In these cases, content is built from numerical data and relationships between quantifiable variables, such as exchange rates or sports scores.

Figure 1 – Screenshot of an article on automated journalism

# A Robot Stole My Pulitzer!

How automated journalism and loss of reading privacy may hurt civil discourse.

By Evgeny Morozov | Posted Monday, March 19, 2012, at 7:11 AM ET

Automated journalism like that produced by Narrative Science could perhaps save media jobs, but it can also hurt divil discourse William Cottlieb/Library of Congress.

Can technology be autonomous? Does it lead a life of its own and operate independently of human guidance? From the French theologian Jacques Ellul to the Unabomber, this used to be widely accepted. Today, however, most historians and sociologists of technology dismiss it as naive and inaccurate.

Yet the world of modern finance is increasingly dependent on automated trading, with sophisticated computer algorithms finding and exploiting pricing irregularities that are invisible to ordinary traders.

Meanwhile, Forbes—one of financial journalism's most venerable institutions—now employs a company called Narrative Science to automatically generate online articles about what to expect from upcoming corporate earnings statements. Just feed it some statistics and, within seconds, the dever software produces highly readable stories. Or, as Forbes puts it, "Narrative Science, through its proprietary artificial intelligence platform, transforms data into stories and insights."

Source: Morozov (2012)

Narrative Science (NS) emerged from a research project called "Stats Monkey," developed by students and faculty from the Computer Science and Journalism programs at Northwestern University, within the InfoLab context. The project's main goal was to automatically generate summaries of baseball games in the United States. In 2010, the project was officially renamed Narrative Science, and soon after, the company patented an AI-based authoring platform called Quill.



Figure 2 – Big Ten portal specialized in sports news and client of Narrative Science

Source: Big Ten Network (2014)

The company Automated Insights (AI) also operates in the production of automated journalistic content for various clients. Founded in 2008 under the name StatSheet, the company received financial support from an organization promoting innovation in North Carolina, USA. From this incentive, it began a growth process that, according to information disclosed on its official website (Automated Insights, 2013), resulted in the automatic generation of more than 300 million texts by 2014, including both corporate reports and journalistic articles.

Arce (2009), still in a theoretical context, had already discussed the feasibility of automating discourse, incorporating Lage's (1997) reflections on the subject. Both, however, approached the issue conceptually, without conducting practical experiments. In the field of artificial intelligence, Coppin (2010, p. 24) observes that one of the main challenges lies in representing reality for computational systems, emphasizing that "for a computer to solve a problem related to the real world, it first needs a

way to represent the real world internally. By dealing with that internal representation, the computer becomes capable of solving problems."

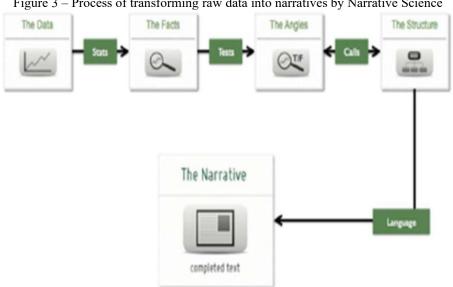


Figure 3 – Process of transforming raw data into narratives by Narrative Science

Source: Narrative Science (2010)

In journalism, the companies mentioned began producing automated leads because this textual structure has a well-defined internal pattern, which facilitates its conversion into computational instructions interpretable by machines. Carlson (2014) points to automated journalism as one of the most disruptive data-driven practices, precisely because of its low dependence on human intervention, which is largely limited to decisions made during system programming. It is worth noting that this human participation often occurs without the presence of professional journalists, considering that the main solutions already implemented are developed by private technology companies, which keep their processes secret through patents and operate under a closed industrial property model.

In his research, Carlson (2014) analyzes journalists' reactions to the adoption of Narrative Science services in newsrooms and observes that the advancement of automated journalism raises important questions about the future of the journalistic profession, traditional content production standards, and even the authority and identity of journalism as a socially recognized practice.

Clerwall (2014), in turn, adopts an experimental approach by investigating the reception of texts generated by humans and machines. Presenting these contents to readers without revealing their origins, he evaluates how participants perceive aspects such as quality, credibility, and objectivity. Although algorithm -generated texts were considered descriptive and monotonous, they stood out for their objectivity. The study also reveals that readers could not clearly distinguish between texts written by journalists and those produced by software.

Dalen (2012) focuses his analysis on the skills involved in journalistic activity and content commercialization. Based on professionals' perceptions of automated narratives, he identifies advantages and disadvantages. Journalists emphasized the importance of critical analysis, personalization, and creativity—skills that contrast with attributes such as factuality, objectivity, simplification, and speed, which are more compatible with automated systems. Even so, professionals acknowledged that automation can free up time for more in-depth investigations and more relevant reporting.

Although it does not directly address automated journalism, the study by Lewis and Usher (2014) analyzes the possibilities of cooperation between journalists and software developers, based on the case study of the Hacks/Hackers network. The authors apply the concept of "trading zones" to explore the potentials of collaboration, challenges, and opportunities of this interdisciplinary convergence.

Adopting a more critical perspective, Latar (2014) examines how the emerging logic of large-scale data extraction aims to translate social complexity through information generated in digital interactions and social media. He relates this phenomenon to the emergence of what he calls social physics, a new scientific approach that, inspired by the analysis of atoms in physics, seeks to understand social systems from fragmented data. Within this scenario, robotic journalism would be a byproduct, characterized by the automatic collection of massive data and its transformation, through software, into readable narratives without human intervention in the production stage.

Latar (2014) also draws attention to the economic implications of this change. Given the high costs of traditional journalistic production, he warns of the possibility of replacing journalists with software engineers and data analysts as the central figures in media companies. Parallel to the emergence of social physics, narrative practice—understood as the art of storytelling—is also being transformed into a scientific activity, with the use of artificial intelligence algorithms that leverage advances in linguistics and natural language processing. These algorithms are capable of transforming data into comprehensible stories in a matter of seconds (Latar, 2014, p. 65).

## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND COMMUNICATION

The concept of Artificial Intelligence (AI) emerged after an initial period in 1943, when Warren McCulloch and Walter Pitts proposed a mathematical model in which neurons could be in an "on" or "off" state, operating in a binary manner (Warwick, 2013). However, the term was only officially introduced in the 1950s, when McCarthy, Minsky, Rochester, and Shannon proposed a project aimed at simulating all aspects of learning and intelligence in a computer (Jackson, 2019).

Alan Turing significantly impacted the field of AI by posing a fundamental question: "Can machines think?" (Turing, 1950). In pursuit of this answer, Turing introduced the Turing Test, also known as the Imitation Game, which evaluates whether a computer can replicate human behavior without being

identified as a machine. This test essentially focused on a machine's ability to demonstrate intelligence. Turing (1950) expected that these intelligent machines would "compete with humans in all purely intellectual fields."

Currently, AI is classified into three main categories: Narrow AI, General AI, and Superintelligent AI (Ludermir, 2021). Narrow AI, or weak AI, uses specialized algorithms to solve problems in specific areas, while General AI, or strong AI, has algorithms as powerful as those of humans, using machine learning techniques to perform tasks. Superintelligent AI, still hypothetical, would surpass humans in almost all activities. Ludermir (2021) mentions that there are still no Superintelligent AI systems and questions the possibility of creating machines more intelligent than humans. In summary, Sterne (2017) states that AI reproduces human intelligence, encompassing a variety of technologies that make devices act like people.

In the 1960s and 1970s, AI focused on imitating human behavior, which generated discussions about the similarity between computers and human brains. In the following decades, new approaches allowed AI not only to replicate movements but also to develop its own "mind," capable of performing tasks more efficiently (Warwick, 2013).

Jackson (2019) argues that AI should be studied beyond its technical applications, considering how this science relates to humanity's expectations and fears. This implies understanding both humans and machines. ByteDance, a Chinese AI company, became the largest AI unicorn startup in 2021, valued at about 140 billion dollars. Its AI algorithms provide personalized content feeds on platforms such as TikTok and Douyin (Statista, 2021).

A unicorn company is a private organization valued at over one billion dollars. In 2022, there were more than a thousand unicorn companies worldwide, including well-known names such as Airbnb, Facebook, and Google (CBInsights, n.d.). In Portugal, in 2021, there were six unicorn startups, including Farfetch and Talkdesk (FCT, 2021).

AI is gradually transforming human daily life, presenting both positive and negative impacts. For example, AI can help avoid dangerous tasks or eliminate manual labor, freeing up time for other activities (Ludermir, 2021). AI systems that interact with humans need to understand their behavior and intentions, making them more useful and safer (Riedl, 2019). AI is capable of seeing (computer vision), hearing (speech recognition), and understanding (natural language processing) (Rouhiainen, 2018). Although it offers benefits such as transcription and translation, AI also raises social, ethical, and privacy issues (Ludermir, 2021).

Although the ability of machines to think is debated, it is widely recognized that computers still cannot learn as easily as humans (Jackson, 2019). Ray Kurzweil predicts that, in a few decades, machine

intelligence will surpass human intelligence, resulting in the "Singularity"—a technological shift so rapid and profound that it will alter the trajectory of human history (Eliot, 2022).

According to the preface by Fábio Gagliardi Cozman in Dora Kaufman's book, "AI technology is not infallible, like any technology; through in-depth debate, we can reduce its problems and increase its benefits" (Cozman, 2023, p. 4). It is essential that Artificial Intelligence be understood, with its functioning, capabilities, advantages, and disadvantages increasingly known, so that its use is optimized for the benefit of humanity, especially in education. Gabriel (2023) emphasizes that artificial intelligence:

"AI is a concept that dates back to Antiquity, whose term was coined in the 1950s, becoming since then officially an area of knowledge. Therefore, it is not a new subject, but due to technological evolution, it is currently the most disruptive technology we live with, tending to be the most powerful ever created by humanity. For this reason, it is essential that every human being—especially educators—understand what AI is and its impacts on humanity—both benefits and risks" (Gabriel, 2023, p. 193).

The progress of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in recent years has been remarkable, becoming central in various sectors in a short period. Gabriel (2020) highlights that one of the most significant forms of AI is machine learning, which analyzes data to identify patterns, allowing machines to learn and make decisions autonomously, similar to human reasoning. Fernandes (2023) observes that terms such as machine learning, neural networks, and algorithms have received significant media attention, reflecting the growing interest in this technology, with many companies recognizing its strategic relevance and investing heavily.

The concept of artificial intelligence was introduced by Alan Turing in 1950, in an article that proposed creating machines with human capabilities. This milestone initiated rapid development in AI research, which gained momentum at the Dartmouth Conference in 1955, where fundamental objectives and challenges were established. In 1957, the Perceptron emerged, the first neural network model capable of recognizing patterns, a critical advance in machine learning techniques (Fernandes, 2023). In 1965, the Eliza software, which simulated conversations with a therapist, became a precursor to today's conversational interfaces. Kaufman (2022, p. 153) mentions that "virtual assistants provoke polarizations" between those who consider them invasive and those who value their benefits, with Alexa dominating 70% of the voice assistant market in the U.S.

In 1985, interest in AI resurged with expert systems that solved problems in various areas. The Deep Blue computer, designed to play chess, defeated the world champion, highlighting the potential of machines (Fernandes, 2023). From 2010 onward, AI received new impetus with the advent of machine learning, enabling the development of software such as facial recognition, voice recognition, automatic writing, and even autonomous cars. Gabriel (2020) emphasizes that this continuous learning allows machines to evolve rapidly.

The evolution of AI reflects its transformative potential in society. From Turing's vision to advances in machine learning, AI is shaping the technological and social future. Sayad (2023, p. 26) notes that the term "artificial intelligence" raises speculations about machines surpassing humans. New software is becoming essential in daily life, facilitating routines and tasks.

Fernandes (2023) points out that increased processing power, access to large volumes of data, and advances in algorithms are factors that make AI promising. A recent example is ChatGPT, which offers detailed content and is used in schools to assist learning (Bom Dia Rio Grande, 2023). Sayad (2023, p. 17) clarifies that "AI systems, like ChatGPT, have no consciousness, feeling, or originality," and that the quality of the questions asked is crucial for the results. The presence of AI in our lives is growing, becoming indispensable for optimizing routines and standing out in areas such as medical diagnostics and artistic creation. These advances show AI's potential to transform society. Given this rapid evolution, it is essential to reflect on its impact on communication skills. Communication, always vital in human relationships, is being transformed by AI's growing influence.

Technology is seen as an ally in gamifying education and communication, helping to develop personalized skills and facilitating learning. Harasim (2015, p. 31) defines AI as a branch of Computer Science that seeks to make computers think and behave like humans, although the same author points out that cognitivism attempts to replace teachers. Feynman, cited by Kaufman (2022), argues that machines will never think like humans, just as an airplane does not fly like a bird. Machines are trained by humans, making it essential to prepare people to use and manage new technologies properly. Kaufman (2022) observes that AI algorithms identify statistical patterns but do not understand their meaning, remaining in the mathematical realm. Harasim (2015) mentions a letter released at the 2015 International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence, which highlights AI's potential to benefit humanity but also warns about the risks of autonomous robots that could cause harm.

Sayad (2023, p. 130) suggests revisiting theories of critical thinking, such as those developed by Adorno and Horkheimer. Although these authors belong to a distinct critical tradition, their historical reflections help understand the current challenges of communication in the face of digital technologies, without implying adherence to their ideological premises. Media education, according to Sayad (2023), seeks to understand the ethical impacts of media on citizens' lives. Ferrari, Machado, and Ochs (2020) state that media education involves skills to access, analyze, create, and critically participate in the informational environment. Santaella (2023, p. 58) emphasizes that AI challenges human self-perception, requiring new concepts about ourselves.

Kaufman (2022, p. 301) reinforces that "AI algorithms are mediating our communication and sociability," making it essential to understand their functioning. Sayad (2023, p. 11) observes that

generative AI transforms not only interaction with technology but also language and cognition, fundamentally altering communication and sociability.

Kaufman (2022, p. 37) also points out that digital technologies enable segmented communication, but AI offers even more efficient hyper-segmentation. This influence of AI on our communication skills brings challenges and opportunities. Rapid technological evolution demands constant adaptation, especially in communication. Kaufman (2022, p. 280) highlights that technology platforms, powered by algorithms, have privileged access to user data. Therefore, it is crucial that governments, educational institutions, and companies promote media education, developing citizens' critical capacity in the face of the vast flow of information generated by AI.

In a changing world, education must prepare individuals to understand and use AI ethically and responsibly, as well as encourage projects that seek solutions to complex problems, improvements in healthcare, and environmental preservation, among others.

## **Digital Communication**

For most of human history, communication occurred in face-to-face contexts, primarily through oral expression, driven by survival needs, while mediated communication was restricted to elite groups. However, the advancement of education and the graphic industry led to the emergence and dissemination of mediated communications, which intensified with the development of electronic technologies such as computers and smartphones (Thompson, 2018).

To communicate is the ability to share messages through the exchange of information, which is understood only within the context of social relationships. The internet, therefore, creates a new medium of interactive communication, enabling the transmission of information on a massive scale and in real time (Castells, 2015). Thus, digital communication applies to corporate communication as a strategic area of information and interaction (Corrêa, 2005).

The digital revolution impacted communication by developing a "dizzying dimension" that went through several phases until reaching what we know today (Thompson, 2018). Thompson (2018) presents the "Interactional Theory of Media," arguing that media should be analyzed together with the forms of action and interaction in their use, and not in isolation. He highlights mediated interaction, which enables the transmission of information to individuals separated by time and space, such as via telephone or email. With the growth of networks, online mediated interaction emerged, capturing new forms of relationships on the internet, with a dialogical nature aimed at a large number of recipients (Thompson, 2018).

The continuous and inseparable connection between communication and technologies is a dilemma that places the modern communicator in a constant relationship between communicating and

using information and communication technologies (ICT). Digital communication is, therefore, the use of Digital Information and Communication Technologies and associated tools to streamline integrated communication processes within organizations (Corrêa, 2005).

The impact of the internet on communication between companies and consumers is observed in two aspects: external and internal communication. External digital communication (outbound) is directed from the organization to the consumer, using resources such as websites, push notifications, and email marketing to personalize content. In contrast, internal digital communication (inbound) allows the customer to discover the company on their own, based on the communication strategies adopted. For example, the customer interacts with the company through social networks, online forms, or email, where the initiative comes from the consumer (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

However, not all communication processes within a company are digital, which creates a contemporary dilemma—the inseparable relationship between communication and technologies (Corrêa, 2005). For a long time, marketing campaigns were based on traditional media such as television, radio, print, and direct mail. With the internet, communications underwent transformations, with digital equivalents for traditional media now existing (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

#### ETHICS IN COMMUNICATION AND THE COMMUNICATOR'S RESPONSIBILITY

Analyzing a code of ethics for the media requires, above all, a reflection on the main controversies surrounding its relationship with public authorities and society in general. To do so, it is essential to understand the meaning of communication and recognize its relevance for human and social development. As a starting point, these aspects must be clarified.

Vidigal de Carvalho (1995) begins with the etymology of the verb "to communicate" to define communication as the act of sharing, dividing, and putting something in common. He emphasizes that never in history has it been so easy and quick to transmit information, with human beings now exposed to a constant and overwhelming flow of data. However, this information overload does not guarantee a deeper understanding of reality; on the contrary, it often hinders comprehension, disconnecting individuals from their daily lives and creating a more distant and artificial life experience.

Ortega y Gasset (1961) observes that to live implies being aware of what one lives, and this awareness is what distinguishes human existence. However, in modernity, many have lost this self-perception, being shaped by patterns imposed by the media, which raises serious concerns about the autonomy and authenticity of the subject in the face of life.

In the same sense, the decree Inter Mirifica, promulgated by Paul VI in 1963 and cited by Alberto André (1994), makes explicit the Catholic Church's position regarding the role of the media. The Church recognizes the importance of social communication instruments—such as the press, cinema, radio, and

television—as powerful means of influencing not only individuals but entire crowds. At the same time, it expresses concern about the risks of misuse of these resources, which can compromise society and human values.

Communication should, therefore, be encouraged, but always under responsibility. Freedom of expression cannot be confused with the absence of ethical commitment. The Church, according to this decree, reaffirms that the media can contribute to the moral and spiritual formation of people, but must be used with discernment, considering the content disseminated, the audiences reached, and the specific contexts.

Guareschi (1997) reinforces the idea of the human right to communication as the freedom of each person to express their word and thought. This perspective raises the need to reflect on the plurality of information disseminated: should communication reflect only a few dominant thoughts or open space for diversity of voices? The right of choice can only be fully exercised if there is access to different points of view.

The absence of control mechanisms by civil society over the media opens the way for them to serve private or corporate interests to the detriment of the common good. This raises an essential question: how to regulate communication ethically and in a way that favors human development and the formation of critical citizens?

Here, both authoritarian censorship and excessive freedom without responsibility are rejected. Instead, communication should be guided by respect for the human being and a commitment to building a fairer and more conscious society. As Erbolato (1982) stated, freedom of information must be defended uncompromisingly, but it must also respect ethical limits, especially when public morality or social security is at stake.

Communication should promote critical thinking and provide elements that allow individuals to form their own opinions. Topics such as fashion, religion, politics, and education should be presented as possibilities for reflection and not as absolute truths. The media, therefore, can play a fundamental role in ethical and civic formation, especially among children and adolescents who are in the process of building their identity.

In this context, it is evident that the media are not neutral. They influence behaviors, values, and ways of life. Therefore, their actions must be constantly analyzed in light of ethical principles, always aiming to value human dignity.

The reality of many families who have television as their only source of leisure and information is concerning, especially when combined with low educational levels. This seriously compromises the critical capacity of these populations. Continuous exposure to content that exalts consumerism and

competition, to the detriment of values such as solidarity and empathy, harms the formation of conscious citizens committed to the common good.

The Church, when addressing the issue in Inter Mirifica, highlights the need to know and apply moral norms in the use of the media. For this, the content transmitted, the means used, and the circumstances involved—such as time, place, target audience, and intentions—must be considered, as these factors can completely alter the moral value of the message.

The central concern is that the population, often unprepared, ends up accepting concepts and values without proper questioning. Therefore, a higher level of education is essential: the more educated society is, the greater its ability to decide autonomously what is appropriate or not for itself. In this sense, education should be understood as an instrument for strengthening critical discernment, enabling each individual to responsibly evaluate the content they consume and share. The central objective of communication should be the appreciation of human dignity in its entirety, guided by principles of truth and responsibility, and not merely by market interests. In this sense, both media institutions and citizens bear ethical responsibility for what is produced, disseminated, and consumed in the public sphere.

It follows, therefore, that mass communication can and should contribute to building a more conscious, ethical, and supportive society. This will happen to the extent that its content is guided by formative principles and not only by market interests. Valuing the human being in their integrity should be the main objective of any communication project. Social control over the media, in this case, does not mean censorship but collective responsibility for what is consumed, defended, and transmitted in society.

#### **Communication and Ethics: Main Issues**

Erbolato (1982) raises crucial questions about the criteria adopted by mass media: are they truly aware of the social responsibility they bear? The author criticizes the recurrence of content such as the display of pornography disguised as comedy films, the exposure of violence in programs considered suitable for all ages, the abusive use of eroticism in advertising, and the dissemination of sensationalist news with provocative headlines. He warns that these practices directly affect the way audiences think and act. With the accelerated pace of modern life, people have lost the ability to reflect, investigate, and reason critically, being bombarded by visual and auditory stimuli that subtly or explicitly shape their personality and opinions (Erbolato, 1982).

This reflection leads to a broader critique of the unrestricted freedom that media claim under the pretext of self-regulation. What is observed, however, is an increasing emphasis on exploiting sensuality, violence, and emotional appeals as strategies to attract audiences—which, in turn, guarantees the economic sustainability of these companies. There is, therefore, a worrying tendency to naturalize as "reality" scenes and behaviors that, in practice, do not reflect the daily lives of all people. This raises the

question: to what extent does this representation of "reality" contribute to valuing human dignity, solidarity, and trust?

Erbolato (1982) also denounces the political use of the media by governments, which often try to shape public opinion in their favor through information manipulation. This occurs, for example, by denying access to information, disseminating only official statements, or broadcasting advertising content that glorifies government actions. Such practices weaken the investigative and critical role of the press and compromise its commitment to truth.

This promiscuous relationship between media and state power is aggravated when considering the economic dependence many media outlets have on public funding. Teixeira Coelho (1989) states that threats to withdraw government funding may be enough to influence the editorial line of major newspapers. Historical cases, such as the use of propaganda by Hitler during the Third Reich or the actions of the Department of Press and Propaganda (DIP) under Getúlio Vargas, are emblematic examples of the instrumentalization of media as an ideological tool.

Erbolato (1982) stresses that the media, by influencing collective behavior, must act with ethical responsibility. This includes not only the content they disseminate but also the way they do so—highlighting the insistent use of jingles, images, slogans, and sensational formats that condition the public to consume, even when the products and services offered are not truly necessary.

On this point, Vidigal de Carvalho (1995) criticizes the intentionality of advertising in shaping a hedonistic and utilitarian mentality, using resources that may conflict with ethical values. Advertising creates an artificial reality that conditions people's behavior, promoting dehumanizing models aimed solely at market dominance. The eroticized use of bodies in advertising campaigns, according to the author, is a clear example of how a noble dimension of the human being—sensuality—is distorted, turning it into a disposable product and an object of manipulation.

In this context, the constant display of eroticized content in the media, even in products aimed at children, reflects an irresponsible practice. This eroticization trivializes the human body, reducing it to an object and encouraging behavioral patterns that are not always aligned with the family or cultural values of society. Youth, still in the process of ethical and moral formation, becomes especially vulnerable to these influences.

Di Franco (1996) criticizes the omission of media sectors regarding issues such as AIDS, arguing that, in the name of a "politically correct" view, any debate that contradicts the sexual freedom massively promoted by the media is avoided. According to him, sensuality should be treated as part of the integral constitution of human personality, and not with the superficiality with which one comments on the weather.

This lack of space for divergent opinions makes evident a disguised form of censorship: society is not allowed to discuss the directions of cultural and behavioral changes promoted by the media. The imposition of "liberal" sexual models is not accompanied by dialogue with the population, resulting in a kind of moral anarchy, where there is no room for the human being to be the agent of their own ethical formation.

The pursuit of profit justifies, according to many, the adoption of aggressive and sensationalist commercial strategies. However, it is necessary to question whether all content should be allowed, especially when eroticization is used to promote products and values. Advertising, as Erbolato (1982) points out, should be understood as a force that shapes behavior, requiring ethical regulation.

In the cultural field, a worrying movement of homogenization is also observed, driven by the so-called cultural industry. The centralization of media production in large urban centers, such as São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, tends to render invisible the country's regional and cultural diversity. The result is a standardization of tastes, habits, and behaviors—a process that, although not necessarily planned, limits the free expression of local cultures.

Teixeira Coelho (1989) argues that, due to income inequality in Brazil, one cannot claim the existence of a homogeneous consumer society. There are, in fact, pockets of consumption coexisting with zones of underconsumption and even poverty. Even so, cultural aspects such as language, fashion, music, and ideologies are widely disseminated by the media, forming behavioral patterns that tend to overshadow diversity.

Finally, Erbolato (1992) points out the growing presence of the female body in the media, almost always associated with eroticism and sexual exploitation. This reflects not only the commodification of the body but also the use of sensuality as a sales resource, emptying its humanizing meaning.

The discussion on ethics in the media, therefore, is not merely theoretical. It is an urgent necessity in a scenario where economic, political, and cultural interests override collective well-being. Media regulation, provided it is based on the plural participation of civil society, can contribute to more responsible, humanizing communication aligned with democratic values.

In this context, the communicator's responsibility in the contemporary setting goes beyond the mere act of transmitting information. It involves an ethical commitment to truth, to the critical formation of the public, and to the promotion of values that respect human dignity. In an era marked by the speed of information and the expanded reach of media, the communicator's role becomes even more relevant, as their actions directly influence the construction of social and cultural meanings.

According to Erbolato (1982), the media hold immense power and, therefore, their use requires ethical responsibility. The author warns that a seemingly simple news story, if written with intentionality and sensationalist style, can gain undue prominence and manipulate the reader's perception. This

observation demands from the communicator a keen discernment regarding the selection of facts and the way they are presented, as their choices impact public opinion and often shape behaviors.

In this sense, Vidigal de Carvalho (1995) emphasizes that communicating is more than informing: it is putting something in common, sharing, dividing. Communication, therefore, cannot be neutral or irresponsible, as it involves human relationships and presupposes otherness. The absence of ethics in communicational practice results in alienation, manipulation, and denial of the right to quality information.

The ethics of communication should be understood, as Guareschi (1997) suggests, from the recognition that the right to communication is, above all, a fundamental human right. Every individual has the right to express their thoughts and to have access to a variety of viewpoints. When the communicator omits, distorts, or limits this access, they violate basic principles of democracy and citizenship.

Furthermore, the communicator has the duty to resist commercial, political, or ideological pressures that may compromise the truthfulness of information. As Teixeira Coelho (1989) states, media outlets, due to their financial dependence on advertisers and government resources, may be led to yield to spurious interests. It is therefore up to the communicator to maintain professional integrity and seek ways to ensure editorial independence.

Another essential aspect is the care with content that feeds sensationalism, the spectacularization of violence, or excessive eroticization. Di Franco (1996) warns of the risk of the media trivializing serious and relevant issues, treating them superficially and irresponsibly in the name of audience ratings. The communicator's responsibility, in this regard, is to act with sensitivity and respect for social values, avoiding the promotion of content that reinforces prejudices, stigmas, or destructive behaviors.

Therefore, the communicator's responsibility is directly linked to a commitment to truth, to the plurality of ideas, and to building a fairer and more conscious society. More than a transmitter of messages, the communicator must be an ethical agent, aware of the transformative power of language and the social role they play. By understanding communication as a space for human encounter and not for domination, the professional contributes to consolidating a democratic, critical, and plural culture.

#### MEDIA OUTLETS AND CURATION ALGORITHMS

The media have always played a crucial role in democracies, being called the "fourth estate" since the French Revolution for their function of monitoring the other three: Executive, Legislative, and Judiciary. Despite the apparent consolidation of this role, its historical trajectory has been marked by threats to autonomy. Currently, the risk comes from the dominance of the neoliberal market, where

economic forces associated with corruption seek to control the media narrative to maintain financial hegemony.

Even though the three branches of government still retain, to some extent, democratic instruments, the media have increasingly been subjected to the interests of capital. Between the 1980s and 1990s, public communication systems were weakened—with support from the right, omission, and sometimes even endorsement from the left—while the media consolidated as an essential tool in shaping (and manufacturing) public opinion, assuming a central role in contemporary democracies.

Today, the right to communication is concentrated in the hands of a few companies that exercise covert control through the selection, distortion, and dissemination of irrelevant content. Censorship is no longer directly attributed to the State but to the media themselves, which determine what will be said and how, acting on behalf of the groups that control them.

This logic creates what Orlandi (2007) calls a "politics of silence," in which saying something automatically erases other possible meanings, suppressing alternative interpretations. This silence is a sophisticated form of censorship that delimits the boundaries of discourse in the media, preventing the circulation of meanings that challenge the prevailing discursive hegemony.

This scenario results in a media system in the hands of corporate conglomerates more influential than state powers themselves, as Serrano (2013, p. 72) points out. Under the guise of press freedom, these groups regulate the discursive flow and remain unpunished even when they manipulate information, spread lies, or offend opponents. Thus, the media become ideological instruments of the State, perpetuating dominant positions and exploiting capitalist interests.

The discursive production of these groups aligns with hegemonic political-economic interests, restricting the limits of what can be said within the discursive formation of traditional media (DFTM). This structure is committed to the knowledge of the elites, contemporary spokespersons of neoliberal doctrine, reinforcing the monopoly of the communication sector.

In this context, the internet initially emerged as an alternative space for the production and circulation of discourses. Many envisioned it as a democratization of communication, given the possibility for any citizen, equipped with a device and connection, to connect to the world. Indeed, portals, social networks, and independent channels gained space and built relationships of identification with millions of individuals.

The internet also brought greater competition to the media sector, especially affecting print media. Digital spaces changed the way news is produced and distributed, raising expectations of breaking the monopoly of large journalistic corporations.

However, imbalances and subordination persisted, now in new forms. The lack of transparency in the circulation of information allowed old media monopolies to dominate the digital environment as well.

Media convergence, combined with permissive legislation on cross-ownership, enabled a few groups to concentrate TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, and portals—including control over the internet.

The "Media Ownership Monitoring" (MOM-Brazil) research, conducted by Intervozes with Reporters Without Borders, points out that the most accessed portals in Brazil belong to the largest media groups. Sites such as globo.com (Grupo Globo) and uol.com.br (Grupo Folha) not only lead in access but also dominate the sharing of political news on social networks.

Although algorithms have replicated monopolies, they have also caused significant social transformations. The main instrument of control today is invisibility, operated by multinational platforms that mediate the circulation of meanings and directly influence the formation of public opinion. Silveira (2019) explains that today, opinion formation occurs in digital networks, especially on platforms like Google and Facebook, which maintain structures of control and domination.

Based on Philip M. Napoli, Silveira (2019) argues that media should be seen as regulatory institutions because they shape and restrict communicative behaviors. Thus, digital platforms integrate the State's Ideological Apparatus of Information, redesigning its structures and imposing new forms of inequality and subordination.

These platforms operate under contradictions: while connecting people, they act in the invisible modulation of information flow, determining what will be visible and what will be silenced. They are essential to the democratic process but, at the same time, accumulate more data about individuals than states themselves, operating silently on their habits and behaviors.

Large companies use algorithms to collect and monetize user data, organizing them to create detailed profiles that feed political campaigns, commercial strategies, or public policies. This is a new form of domination, based on surveillance and predictive modeling of human behavior.

The logic of algorithmic functioning is guided by financial interests. Those with capital can acquire datasets on specific profiles and, from that, shape targeted discourses, as Silveira (2019) points out. Thus, the internet strengthens the economic power of those who can pay for the infrastructure of data collection, analysis, and storage.

As a result, relationships between politicians, businesspeople, and media become closer, creating a web of power that uses data to modulate users' informational experience. This is a fusion between commercial marketing and state propaganda, in the model Zuboff (2018) calls "surveillance capitalism."

These corporations not only concentrate information but also reconfigure forms of discursive control. On one hand, they produce strategic silences; on the other, they foster discourses of enmity. Even ordinary, fragmented, and diffuse discourses become targets of surveillance because they represent the social voice.

Orlandi (2004, p. 63) analyzes social discourse as a space of "disorganized" speech, where there is a lack of meaning and discursive reorganization. For her, this type of discourse expresses social division, with the urban acting as a catalyst for symbolic processes. Digital materiality, in this case, operates similarly: it structures and reorganizes meanings based on the normalization of computerized enunciative spaces (Gallo; Silveira, 2017).

This normalization creates a discursive circuit that attempts to simulate a "global conversation" (Silveira, 2015) but, in practice, limits the plurality of meanings, generating misunderstandings and erasures. This process fits into the context of the "politics of enmity" that Mbembe (2017, p. 72) identifies in contemporary democracies, marked by separations, hostility, and a cult of the enemy.

If in cities subjects "disorganize" themselves in search of meaning, in digital spaces there is a supposed promise of re-signification. However, what is seen is increasing control over discourses and subjects, in a constant game between street and screen, individual and mass. Popular protests and resistance, for example, are often co-opted or neutralized by control technologies that observe and redefine them.

Thus, digital environments have reconfigured forms of resistance, now subordinated to the interests of capital and authoritarian states. This process deepens the "permanent preventive war" described by Pêcheux ([1979] 2011, p. 74), in which propaganda, based on words, images, and emotions, becomes a device of political psychology.

Although platforms have expanded the space for minority voices, they have also enabled the strengthening of authoritarian and populist discourses. Many of these political actors have reconfigured their image by identifying with common discourse, the ordinary, promoting a symbolic rearticulation of social interaction.

In Brazil, this rearticulation involves the fusion between traditional monopolies and U.S.-based digital giants. There was no rupture in the broadcasting monopoly—only its reinvention and subordination to new global power centers.

Even though Brazilian society is not yet fully digitalized, the power of digital media is undeniable. Everyone, connected or not, is somehow subject to its norms, including through exclusion.

#### A THE INFLUENCE OF MEDIA ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Contemporary society is deeply embedded in a logic of communication mediated by complex power structures, where media outlets and curation algorithms play a central role in organizing social narratives and shaping public opinion. Traditionally, the press was recognized as the "fourth estate," especially since the French Revolution, for its role in monitoring the three classical powers: Executive, Legislative, and Judiciary. However, as Serrano (2013) points out, this power historically associated with

democracy has been progressively subordinated to the interests of capital, transforming into a fundamental cog in the ideological apparatus of the contemporary State.

The neoliberal logic, with its emphasis on competitiveness, profit, and deregulation, has allowed large corporate conglomerates to concentrate media control, replacing public interest with economic interest. This capture of the communicational space results in the erosion of plural debate and the imposition of a politics of silence, as analyzed by Orlandi (2007). For the author, this process occurs through discursive selection that determines what can or cannot be said, what should be highlighted, and, above all, what should be erased. It is a symbolic and covert censorship, in which saying "x" prevents "y" from even being considered, restricting the field of possible meanings and limiting the space for critique and difference.

The expectation that the internet would democratize access to communication, giving voice to historically marginalized groups, proved illusory. Although there have been advances in this regard, the reconfiguration of old media monopolies occurred quickly and efficiently. As Silveira (2019) highlights, the groups that dominate traditional media also came to control the digital environment, adapting to new formats and using strategies of convergence and cross-ownership. This allowed the same companies to dominate television, radio, print media, and now the largest online news portals, such as the Globo and Folha groups.

In this scenario, curation algorithms began to play a strategic role in organizing and circulating information. Pariser (2011) warned about the dangers of so-called "filter bubbles," created by algorithmic personalization, which isolates users in informational universes based on their previous interests. This practice compromises the diversity of public debate and reinforces alienation, as individuals consume only content with which they already agree, becoming more susceptible to ideological manipulation.

Zuboff (2018) defines this phenomenon as a business model based on massive extraction of personal data, known as "surveillance capitalism." More than a critique of the market itself, the author warns about the risks of opaque use of private information, transforming human experience into raw material for commercial and political practices without proper consent and transparency. In this model, users' behavioral data are extracted, analyzed, and transformed into predictive products, sold to companies and governments to anticipate and influence behaviors. It is a process that, in the author's words, turns human experience into free raw material for hidden practices of extraction, prediction, and sale.

By operating opaquely, algorithms establish a new form of power—invisible yet omnipresent. Byung-Chul Han (2022) argues that, despite contemporary discourse on transparency, we live in a society profoundly opaque regarding the digital mechanisms that govern our interactions. Users do not know how

information is filtered, ranked, or hidden, generating a structural asymmetry between large technology platforms and citizens.

According to Gallo and Silveira (2017), these digital platforms should be understood as institutions that normalize enunciative spaces and regulate discursive circulation based on political and market interests. They operate as an integral part of the State's ideological apparatus, installing new forms of contradiction, inequality, and subordination. This discursive normalization, which claims to organize a "great global conversation" (Silveira, 2015), ends up reinforcing mechanisms of symbolic exclusion and disorganizing the social fabric through controlled meanings.

Jenkins (2009) also warns about the role of digital platforms in reconfiguring contemporary communication. For the author, although there is participatory and interactive potential, users must develop critical awareness of the processes that structure the production and circulation of information. Without this, the promise of a culture of convergence is captured by the logic of capital, turning participation into yet another commercially exploited product.

Alongside this critique, Pierre Lévy (1999) emphasizes that networked knowledge requires specific competencies that go beyond technical skills, encompassing ethics, cognition, and politics. The formation of informational citizenship, therefore, depends on critical and continuous digital literacy, capable of confronting new forms of domination and symbolic censorship installed in the digital space.

The worsening of this scenario is also related to what Mbembe (2017) calls "politics of enmity," a phenomenon through which contemporary democracies produce and reinforce social divisions, hostilities, and antagonisms, often mediated by communication devices. Platforms, as privileged intermediaries of informational flows, also actively participate in constructing these antagonisms, sometimes silencing certain voices, sometimes amplifying authoritarian or populist discourses.

Finally, Pêcheux ([1979] 2011) points out that the control of discourses, even within social peace, constitutes a permanent ideological war. This war is waged through words, images, gestures, and feelings, finding in digital communication a fertile ground for the propagation of dominant ideologies. Media and algorithms, in this context, not only disseminate content but organize the very structure of thought and perception of subjects, shaping their worldviews.

Given this, it becomes urgent to rethink the role of communication in contemporary times, requiring democratic regulation of platforms, expansion of media diversity, strengthening of independent outlets, and the formation of critical and engaged citizens. The future of democracy depends, to a large extent, on the ability to resist new forms of symbolic domination, restoring the public sense of communication and ensuring the plurality of voices and narratives in all social spaces.

#### FROM JOURNALISM AS CURATION TO ALGORITHMIC LOGIC: DISPUTES OVER MEDIATION

The transformations of journalism in the face of the emergence of a new digital ecosystem are the starting point of the analysis by Corrêa and Bertocchi (2012). The authors argue that the Semantic Web, algorithms, and applications are not limited to being mere tools; they are, in fact, elements that profoundly reconfigure the production, distribution, and consumption of information. This reconfiguration requires a new positioning from communication professionals, and the main thesis defended by Corrêa and Bertocchi (2012) is that, in this scenario of informational abundance and growing automation, the role of the journalist evolves into that of a curator. This curator is conceived as an essential human agent, whose primary function is to give meaning and perspective to the vast and, at times, chaotic volume of available data.

Corrêa and Bertocchi (2012) begin their discussion by demystifying the Semantic Web (SW). Far from being an "autonomous intelligence," the SW is presented as an ambitious project to create an "unambiguous web" (Siegel, 2010), a digital environment where machines would be able to understand the meaning of data and thus eliminate ambiguities. However, implementing this vision in the journalistic field proves complex. Journalistic activity, by its very nature, deals intrinsically with ambiguity and subjectivity—elements that contrast with the machine's relentless pursuit of semantic accuracy, achieved through ontologies.

The central point of the authors' analysis lies in the impact of curation algorithms. Ubiquitous tools such as Google, Facebook, and various personalized news apps operate based on sophisticated algorithms that filter and organize content, promising a highly relevant and customized information experience for the user. However, this personalization, although seemingly beneficial, entails a significant cost. Corrêa and Bertocchi (2012, p. 130) warn of the risk of a process that "dispenses with the variables of journalist and socially relevant event." Automation, when taken to the extreme, can trap citizens in "filter bubbles" (Pariser, 2011). In these bubbles, the user is exposed only to what the algorithm deems to be of interest, eliminating contradiction and discomfort, which ultimately impoverishes public debate and understanding of reality.

It is precisely in this context of algorithmic personalization and bubble formation that the figure of the journalist-curator gains strength and becomes essential. Corrêa and Bertocchi (2012) argue that human curation is indispensable to overcome the inherent limitations of machines. While algorithms tend to "look backward," relying on users' past behavior to predict preferences, a human curator is "freer to look forward," adding "new and unexpected perspectives to information" (p. 137). This curation is not limited to merely selecting links; it encompasses critical analysis, in-depth contextualization, and value aggregation, transforming raw data into knowledge that is meaningful and situated.

The authors also note the response of newsrooms to this challenging scenario, identifying a "middle path." News organizations have invested in proprietary content management systems (CMS) incorporating semantic markers and have explored the "appification" of content (Carr, 2011, cited by Corrêa; Bertocchi, 2012). A notable example of this hybrid approach is The New York Times experiment, which, by temporarily replacing its Twitter bots with journalists, realized that although automation optimizes costs, it cannot effectively engage with the audience or significantly influence collective opinion (Sonderman, 2011, cited by Corrêa; Bertocchi, 2012). This reinforces the thesis that human interaction and nuance are irreplaceable in certain dimensions of journalism.

Complementing this discussion on the reconfiguration of news mediation, Castro (2019) investigates the profound transformations that the rise of algorithms imposes on journalism. Based on extensive bibliographic research, Castro (2019) argues that "algorithmic governance" (Castro, 2018, p. 37) makes porous the boundaries that traditionally defined what news is, who produces it, and how it is distributed. The direct result of this governance is a weakening of journalism's mediating role, historically based on editorial criteria, and the rise of a new logic in which digital platforms become the main mediators, overshadowing editorial power in favor of the "power of algorithms" (Castro, 2019, p. 51).

For Castro (2019), journalism's role in modernity was clear and well established. The press consolidated as an industry and a fundamental pillar for shaping public opinion. The author invokes the gatekeeping theory (Lewin, 1947; White, 1950) to explain how traditional journalism functioned as a "gatekeeper," filtering reality based on newsworthiness criteria and news values (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). This editorial logic, although subject to influences and biases, ensured a process of selection, hierarchy, and contextualization, offering the public an intelligible slice of the world, as in the famous New York Times motto: "All the news that's fit to print" (Castro, 2019, p. 38).

The core of Castro's argument lies in analyzing the news business and algorithmic filtering. He demonstrates how oligopoly platforms such as Google and Facebook, by becoming the main distributors of content, appropriate the functions of traditional outlets and gain ascendancy over them. The author points to the economic fragility of the press, which becomes dependent on traffic generated by these platforms and, consequently, susceptible to changes in their algorithms. The massive migration of advertising to the Google-Facebook duopoly, as predicted by McLuhan (1994, p. 207), represents a "disruptive technology" (Christensen, 1997, apud Castro, 2019, p. 43) that shakes journalism's traditional business model, forcing it to rethink its sustainability and role in the digital society.

The shift from editorial logic to algorithmic logic, as detailed by Castro (2019), is not limited to distribution and business models; it redefines the very nature of information filtering. Editorial gatekeeping, previously exercised by specialists based on newsworthiness criteria and news values, is replaced by algorithmic gatekeeping. The latter is "customized to the extreme" (Castro, 2019, p. 45),

creating a detailed profile of each user to deliver supposedly personalized content. This customization, while promising individual relevance, leads to the formation of "echo chambers" (Sunstein, 2007) or "filter bubbles" (Pariser, 2011, cited by Castro, 2019, p. 47), homogenizing audiences and eroding conventional newsworthiness criteria. What gains prominence in this new paradigm is not necessarily what is socially relevant but what has the greatest potential for individual engagement, fundamentally altering the hierarchy of information.

In addition to filtering, Castro (2019) also addresses the impact of technology on news production. Artificial intelligence, for example, enables content generation outside the traditional journalistic field, while cost simplification opens space for amateurs to produce journalistic-like material. Faced with this scenario, mainstream journalism reacts by seeking to reaffirm its authority and appealing to normative criteria, as exemplified by The New York Times slogan (2016): "Real news needs real journalism." However, the author notes that the credibility of traditional journalism is already eroded, which paradoxically opens space for hybrid initiatives combining the work of professional journalists and volunteers, indicating a reconfiguration of sources of authority and production.

The transition to what Castro (2019) calls "communicative capitalism" (Dean, 2009, cited by Castro, 2019, p. 51) synthesizes his analysis. In this model, the meaning of information is overshadowed by its "circulatory power." Castro (2019) clearly and deeply maps the multiple facets of this complex transformation. By avoiding technological determinism, he frames the rise of algorithms within the broader context of neoliberal rationality, offering a critical analysis essential to understanding not only the future of news but also the reconfiguration of power in the contemporary information ecosystem.

This reconfiguration of power and the logic of information, driven by algorithms, is a point of convergence with the analysis of Zanetti and Luvizotto (2023), who offer a forceful diagnosis of the crisis of democracy and journalism in Brazil. For these authors, both phenomena are symptoms of a broader process of disarticulation of the public sphere. The central thesis of Zanetti and Luvizotto (2023) is that the algorithmic logic of large technology companies, combined with "hybrid war" strategies, has fragmented public debate, weakened rationality, and opened space for the rise of anti-democratic discourses. They start from the premise that the contemporary public sphere is "divided, less rational and more emotional, shaped by the algorithmic communicative logic of technology companies" (Zanetti; Luvizotto, 2023, p. 46), configuring what they call a "mediated public sphere."

In this context, "hybrid war" is a key concept for Zanetti and Luvizotto (2023), being described as a "media phenomenon par excellence" (Zanetti; Luvizotto, 2023, p. 48). This form of conflict operates in a diffuse and decentralized manner, using disinformation to create social confusion and political instability. The algorithms of social networks are identified as the main vector of this strategy, as they allow the creation of ideological "bubbles" that reinforce predispositions and restrict access to divergent

sources of information, discrediting professional journalism and other institutions. The contribution of social psychology, through the notion of social representations by Sandra Jovchelovitch (2000), enriches the analysis, explaining how meanings are negotiated in everyday interactions and how the historical fragility of the Brazilian public sphere creates an "ideal scenario for the emergence of populism" (Zanetti; Luvizotto, 2023, p. 51).

The crisis of journalism, for Zanetti and Luvizotto (2023), is, in fact, a symptom of a broader crisis of the very project of liberal modernity (Souza, 2018, p. 58). By adopting neoliberal logic and moving away from its Enlightenment principles, commercial journalism contributed to the scenario of which it is now a victim. The direct consequence is the loss of credibility and the disarticulation of its function as a mediator between the citizen and power. Algorithmic logic aggravates this situation, shifting the value of truth to the "value of viral exposure" (Sodré, 2020, p. 52, apud Zanetti; Luvizotto, 2023, p. 51). Despite this pessimistic diagnosis, the authors point to a path of resistance: the recovery of journalism as a "social producer of knowledge," beyond the commercial logic of media companies, is seen as a "crucial point" (Zanetti; Luvizotto, 2023, p. 51). This implies a reconnection of the profession with its democratic values and a commitment to the humanization of subjects, in opposition to the disinformation and polarization fostered by hybrid war. Zanetti and Luvizotto (2023) provide a solid theoretical framework for understanding the complexity of the moment, characterizing the current crisis as a consequence of algorithmic mediatization and hybrid war, and call for a repositioning of journalism that reaffirms its epistemological foundations and its commitment to democracy.

Deepening the discussion on automation in news production, Carreira (2017) proposes the existence of a new phase, the "Fifth Journalism," characterized by the ability of machines not only to assist but to generate news autonomously. This rupture, driven by Artificial Intelligence (AI), profoundly alters production routines, business models, and the very identity of the journalist, generating a fertile field of potentials and questions. Carreira's (2017) research is based on a solid theoretical foundation that articulates the Philosophy of Technology, Information Theory, Cybernetics, and Actor-Network Theory (ANT), adopting a non-deterministic perspective. For the author, technology is a product of human action, and its consequences are shaped by social, historical, and economic contexts, allowing software to be analyzed not as a mere tool but as an "actor" or "actant" that establishes new associations and modifies the environment in which it operates (Carreira, 2017, p. 27).

Carreira (2017) structures the evolution of journalism into five phases, adding the Fifth Journalism, which begins around 2010 (Carreira, 2017, p. 60). This new period is defined by the "elimination of the need for human presence to investigate, analyze, write, and distribute certain types of news" (Carreira, 2017, p. 94). The dissertation maps in detail the companies and technologies that lead

this transformation, such as the Quill software by Narrative Science and Wordsmith by Automated Insights, as well as initiatives by outlets like Associated Press, Forbes, and Los Angeles Times.

One of the highlights of Carreira's (2017) work is the analysis of the consequences of automation. On the positive side, the author points out that automation can be a solution to the crisis of the business model, allowing the production of news at a volume and speed humanly impossible, meeting the logic of the "long tail" (Anderson, 2006, cited by Carreira, 2017, p. 138). This makes it possible to cover niches previously unfeasible, such as minor league games or financial results of thousands of companies, exemplified by Associated Press, which drastically increased its production of quarterly news (Carreira, 2017, p. 140).

However, Carreira (2017) does not ignore the risks inherent in this automation. Mass personalization, although commercially advantageous, can lead to the creation of "filter bubbles" (Pariser, 2011) that isolate the individual in a universe of information that only reinforces their beliefs—a concern that echoes the analyses of Corrêa and Bertocchi (2012) and Castro (2019) on "filter bubbles" and "echo chambers." Another central concern raised by Carreira (2017, p. 156) is that of ethics and responsibility, with crucial questions about data accuracy and algorithm transparency. She emphasizes that algorithms are not neutral, as they incorporate human biases, whether in programming or in learning from biased data (Hammond, 2016, cited by Carreira, 2017, p. 150).

Based on research such as that of Clerwall (2014), Carreira (2017) shows that computer-generated texts tend to be perceived as more informative, reliable, and objective, although less enjoyable to read than journalists' texts (Carreira, 2017, p. 167). This perception of credibility may encourage the adoption of technology but also raises the fear that companies may omit machine authorship to benefit from the trust associated with the human journalist. Carreira (2017) concludes that automation represents both a threat and an opportunity. Technology can free journalists from repetitive tasks, allowing them to focus on reports that require creativity and critical analysis (p. 180). However, this requires a restructuring of routines and a revaluation of the skills that differentiate humans from machines.

Despite the promises of volume and speed brought by automation, the fundamental question of whether news written by algorithms really differs from those produced by humans is addressed by Edson C. Tandoc Jr. et al. (2022). Starting from the premise that many studies on automated journalism assume this difference without proving it empirically, the authors conducted a comparative content analysis of articles published by Bloomberg. This study complements Carreira's (2017) view of "Fifth Journalism" by providing empirical evidence of the capabilities and, more importantly, the limitations of automation in practice. C. Tandoc Jr. et al. (2022) rely on Bourdieu's field theory and the concept of journalistic boundaries, arguing that automation, as an external logic, has the potential to challenge and transform the

internal rules of the journalistic field. The choice of Bloomberg is relevant due to its pioneering and extensive use of automation in the production of financial news.

The methodology employed by C. Tandoc Jr. et al. (2022) involved a manual content analysis of 1,280 articles, divided between human and algorithmic authorship, published in 2016 and 2017. The articles were compared based on traditional markers of journalism, such as news values (negativity, impact), topic, sources, format, and presence of interpretation (opinion, context, and analysis). The results reveal a complex picture: on the one hand, algorithms demonstrate the ability to "imitate human production, at least to some extent" (C. Tandoc et al., 2022, p. 114), with both types of articles focusing on timeliness and predominantly using the inverted pyramid format.

However, the differences are more notable and reinforce the need for human curation advocated by Corrêa and Bertocchi (2012). News written by humans tends to present greater negativity and impact, news values that, according to C. Tandoc Jr. et al. (2022), are more difficult to "templatize" (p. 114). In addition, human articles are significantly longer, include human sources in almost all cases (93.5%), and are much more likely to contain analysis and opinion. In contrast, algorithmic articles are almost exclusively focused on business news (97.9%), are shorter, and practically do not use human sources (99.4% had none). Although they provide context, they rarely present opinion or in-depth analysis. These findings suggest that, at Bloomberg, automation is "kept in its place by human managers" (C. Tandoc et al., 2022, p. 114), with machines delegated to more repetitive and number-oriented tasks, freeing journalists for more diverse topics that require greater interpretive capacity. This corroborates Carreira's (2017) idea that automation can free journalists for tasks that require creativity and critical analysis but also underlines the persistence of a qualitative boundary between human and machine production.

The transition from editorial logic to algorithmic logic, as outlined by Castro (2019), represents a profound reconfiguration of disputes over news mediation. The rise of algorithms, although bringing efficiencies and new forms of production such as Carreira's (2017) "Fifth Journalism," also imposes significant challenges. Extreme personalization, which leads to the formation of "filter bubbles" (Corrêa & Bertocchi, 2012; Carreira, 2017) and "echo chambers" (Castro, 2019), fragments the public sphere and makes it more susceptible to "hybrid war" and disinformation, as Zanetti and Luvizotto (2023) warn. The empirical analysis of C. Tandoc Jr. et al. (2022) demonstrates that, despite the ability to imitate, automation still does not replicate the depth, analysis, and complexity of human journalistic production, reaffirming the need for the journalist as curator and algorithm refiner. This complex interaction between the human and the machine defines the contemporary battlefield for truth and relevance in information.

## The "Filter Bubble" Phenomenon and the Fragmentation of the Public Sphere

The emergence of a new media ecosystem, deeply shaped by technology, has brought to light complex phenomena that threaten the integrity of public debate and the very structure of democracy. Among these phenomena, the proliferation of disinformation and the formation of "filter bubbles" stand out as pressing challenges. Leandro Sebastian Pereira da Silva and Marcos Américo (2025), in their article "Algorithms: the fake news factory and the engineering of disinformation", investigate the central role of algorithms in the creation and dissemination of disinformation in the contemporary media ecosystem. Through a systematic literature review, the authors argue that Artificial Intelligence (AI) and "filter bubbles" have not only provided a "fertile ground for the spread of fake news" but also generated a "gradual process of alienation" that threatens fundamental pillars of society, such as education, democracy, and quality communication (Silva; Américo, 2025, p. 1). The work stands out for analyzing the technological infrastructure that sustains disinformation, treating algorithms not as neutral tools but as active agents in the engineering of a social crisis.

Silva and Américo (2025) begin by contextualizing society's immersion in a new media ecosystem, where technology directly influences "the way of thinking, feeling, and acting" (Silva; Américo, 2025, p. 3). In this scenario, individuality is amplified, and social networks become the main source of information for many, creating an environment conducive to systemic disinformation. They distinguish the concepts of misinformation (innocent error) and disinformation (deliberate deception), aligning with Zattar (2017) and Fallis (2015) to focus on the intentional and misleading nature of fake news (Silva; Américo, 2025, p. 5).

The central point of Silva and Américo's (2025) study is the demystification of how algorithms work on platforms such as Google and Facebook. The authors explain how ranking algorithms, such as Google's PageRank and Facebook's EdgeRank, define content visibility. They detail how EdgeRank, in particular, creates a personalized news feed that, with the growth of information volume, evolved into a system that displays only the "top news feed" (Pariser, 2011). This selection, far from being neutral, is optimized to maximize engagement and, consequently, the platforms' profit, which depends on advertising (Castells, 2024, cited by Silva; Américo, 2025, p. 9).

The direct consequence of this algorithmic architecture is the creation of the "filter bubble" (Pariser, 2011). Silva and Américo (2025) describe how this phenomenon isolates individuals in "echo bubbles," where their beliefs are constantly reinforced and opposing opinions are suppressed. This environment "restricts the debate of ideas" and "curtails opposing opinions," becoming "very harmful to democracy" (Silva; Américo, 2025, p. 10). When debate with the different does occur, it often generates a "bad emotional experience," fueling hatred and polarization.

Silva and Américo (2025) explore the economic dimension that encourages the proliferation of fake news. The authors point out that the business model based on clicks, exemplified by Google AdSense, leads sites to resort to "sensationalist news, absurd content, conspiratorial, false or defamatory content that causes greater impact" to maximize revenue (Oliveira, 2020). The mention of the Sleeping Giants Brasil movement illustrates a form of resistance to this perverse logic.

One of the most current and alarming aspects addressed by Silva and Américo (2025) is the recent change in Meta's content moderation policy. The decision to replace fact-checking with "community notes," announced by Mark Zuckerberg in early 2025, is presented as a "setback in measures to combat disinformation" (Causin; Lima, 2025, cited by Silva; Américo, 2025, p. 15). This change, according to the authors, favors the circulation of conspiracy theories and weakens quality control mechanisms, highlighting the complexity and interests involved in the governance of digital information.

Silva and Américo (2025) conclude that algorithmic disinformation represents a "real threat to society" (p. 17), contaminating freedom of expression and promoting a "nightmare" where the free internet reveals "the worst of human beings, without social filters" (p. 17).

# IMAGE, MEMORY, AND ETHICS IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: CHALLENGES OF MANIPULATION AND DE-SPIRITUALIZATION

The rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) not only reconfigures the production and distribution of news but also the very nature of the image and its relationship with memory and truth. Magnolo (2024), in her article "Images made by Artificial Intelligence: ethical dilemmas and biases in the rescue of the past", delves into this frontier, analyzing the ability of AI to generate images that recall, reconstruct, and re-signify the past. The author argues that this new form of remembrance, although fascinating, carries profound ethical dilemmas and algorithmic biases that urgently need to be debated. Magnolo (2024) stands out for categorizing these new forms of remembering, offering a starting point for understanding the risks and potentialities of AI as a new and powerful agent of collective memory.

Magnolo (2024, p. 135) contextualizes generative AI as a revolutionary force that, by creating new and authentic content, raises questions about authorship, creativity, and the re-signification of the past. Emblematic examples, such as the Volkswagen commercial that "revived" Elis Regina through deepfake and the return of Elvis Presley to the stage as a hologram, illustrate how technology is being used to "eternalize personalities and events" (Magnolo, 2024, p. 135). This capacity for reconstruction collides directly with the conception of memory as a "human act of resistance" (Benjamin, 2012, cited by Magnolo, 2024, p. 135), inaugurating a new field of disputes over authenticity and historical representation.

Generative AI, by creating "new" content, raises questions about authenticity and creativity (Magnolo, 2024, p. 135). This tension between humans and machines is also satirized in the media, as in The Economist campaigns that mock the supposed autonomy of AI (Figure 4). These pieces reinforce the debate on originality, a central theme for Magnolo (2024), who warns about the devaluation of the human "aura" (Benjamin, 2012) in favor of algorithmic reproduction.

> Make AI worried you're going to take its job.

Figure 4 – The Economist campaign (2025) questioning AI's creative autonomy

Source: The Economist (2025)

The author proposes a categorization to analyze images generated by AI that refer to the past, using Content Analysis. The categories are: Remember/Celebrate, where AI is used for tributes, such as the recreation of characters from Castelo Rá-Tim-Bum in high resolution, raising questions about the "aura" of the original work (Benjamin, 2012); Imaginaries of the past, exploring how AI can fill historical gaps and confront stereotyped representations, as in the work of Mayara Ferrão with narratives of affection for Black and Indigenous women from the colonial period; Re-signify, exemplified by the Volkswagen case, where the suppression of critical excerpts from the original song demonstrates an "appropriation by the capitalist industry to serve specific interests" (Magnolo, 2024, p. 154); and finally, Historical Error, which exposes the problem of algorithmic biases in a striking way. This last category is crucial, citing cases such as Google's AI generating images of Black Nazi soldiers and Meta's AI being accused of racism for failing to create images of an interracial couple (Magnolo, 2024, pp. 141, 156). These examples prove that algorithms, trained with data that reflect society's prejudices, have the power to perpetuate and even expand discrimination (Faustino and Lippold, 2023, pp. 17–18). Magnolo (2024, p. 140) concludes that, although technology advances rapidly, ethical reflection on its consequences is slower, requiring regulation that can mitigate biases and ensure responsible use.

Complementing the discussion on image manipulation and visual disinformation, Gómez-de-Ágreda, Feijóo, and Salazar-García (2021) offer an in-depth and systematic analysis of the use of images as a tool of disinformation in what they call the "cognitive domain." The authors argue that digital technologies, especially Artificial Intelligence, have created new and powerful forms of manipulation that transcend traditional tactics, constituting a new type of conflict. The main contribution of the work is the proposal of a new two-entry taxonomy that classifies manipulated images not only by the degree of technical alteration but also by the objective pursued, offering a map to understand and combat the war for perception.

Gómez-de-Ágreda, Feijóo, and Salazar-García (2021) start from the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, which exacerbated dependence on digital media and created an environment of uncertainty conducive to the spread of "rumors and hoaxes more or less interested" (Gómez-de-Ágreda; Feijóo; Salazar-García, 2021, p. 2). They highlight that, although disinformation is not a new phenomenon, the combination of digital technologies and the "superficiality of attention" of a population overloaded with data has generated a "qualitative leap" in forms of manipulation (p. 6). The image, historically seen as a guarantee of truthfulness, becomes the main battlefield. The article reviews military and intelligence doctrine on "influence operations," demonstrating that the manipulation of perceptions is a consolidated strategy in hybrid conflicts. The "cognitive domain" is defined as the non-physical space that encompasses human perceptions, emotions, and motivations, and which can be influenced to "modify the manifest behavior of people affected by the conflict" (Calvo-Albero et al., 2020, cited by Gómez-de-Ágreda; Feijóo; Salazar-García, 2021, p. 7).

The innovation of the article lies in its proposed taxonomy. On one axis, they classify the degree of image manipulation, ranging from simple decontextualization (using a real image in a false context), through partial images, retouched, digitally altered, to deepfakes and images generated ex novo (p. 8).

On the other axis, they classify the intention behind the manipulation: satire, propaganda/advertising, disinformation, and manipulation/construction of the narrative. The combination of these two axes generates a matrix of four quadrants that maps the different actors and their objectives, from the "prosumer" who viralizes content for engagement to state actors who conduct sophisticated influence operations with deepfakes (p. 10). The authors emphasize that the most advanced technologies, such as deepfakes, although extremely dangerous, are still not widely used due to their complexity and cost. However, they warn of the risk of the "liar's dividend," where the mere possibility of an image being false is enough to undermine confidence in visual evidence (Chesney; Citron, 2018, cited by Gómez-de-Ágreda; Feijóo; Salazar-García, 2021, p. 14). They also discuss countermeasures, arguing that the solution is not purely technological but must involve a "clear, honest, empathetic communication policy"

(Calvo-Albero et al., 2020, cited by Gómez-de-Ágreda; Feijóo; Salazar-García, 2021, p. 15), as well as media education and appropriate legislation.

Deepening the ethical dimension of Artificial Intelligence, Brochado (2023) proposes a dense and urgent philosophical reflection on the challenges that AI imposes on the human condition. The author starts from the thought of the Brazilian philosopher Henrique Cláudio de Lima Vaz to argue that the current technological revolution is not just another change but an "unprecedented civilizational mutation" (Brochado, 2023, p. 79) that threatens to empty the spiritual essence of the human being. The great merit of the article is to rescue the robustness of Vazian Ethics to dialogue with contemporary dilemmas, defending that only a deep understanding of the moral person and dignity can offer a counterpoint to the "de-spiritualization" promoted by the mechanization of life (p. 94).

Brochado (2023) begins by contextualizing Lima Vaz's work as a beacon for thinking about our time, highlighting his concern with the "civilizational mutation" (Lima Vaz, 1999, p. 9, cited by Brochado, 2023, p. 78). For Vaz, technological progress, while freeing man from the shackles of nature, paradoxically causes a "progressive fading" of spiritual values (Lima Vaz, 1999, p. 7, cited by Brochado, 2023, p. 81). The author applies this intuition to the AI scenario, where the "mythification of machinic processes" (p. 75) leads to considering computer programs as intelligent entities and, at the height of ambition, as "artificial moral agents" (p. 87).

The author criticizes the "anthropomorphizing aura" that surrounds AI, arguing that it represents a form of "human alienation from its own essence" (Brochado, 2023, p. 84). When analyzing the concept of algorithm and machine learning, Brochado demystifies the idea that machines "think" or "learn" in the human sense. Citing Whitby (2004), she states that the computer is a "completely obedient fool" that executes patterns, and that its apparent intelligence is, in fact, "tedious stupidity" compensated by "tremendous speed" (p. 85). The confusion between brain and mind, energy and information, is pointed out as a fundamental mistake that sustains the belief in AI as analogous to human intelligence.

The most provocative point of Brochado's (2023) article is the discussion about the creation of "artificial moral agents." She sees in this endeavor a "technopaideia" that, ironically, seeks to rehabilitate classical ethics through machines. However, she warns that this view is based on an "efficacious rigorism," ignoring that genuine intelligence requires an "experienced judgment" that current systems do not possess (Smith, 2019, p. 90, cited by Brochado, 2023, p. 88). The promise of morally incorruptible robots is seductive but paradoxical, as it could lead us to seek in machines a perfection that would correct the "character flaws of the human being" (p. 89). This is where the dialogue with Lima Vaz becomes crucial. Brochado resorts to Vazian Ethics to reaffirm the centrality of the "moral person" as the foundation of dignity and Law. Freedom, for Vaz, is what allows us to postulate ends and values, and it is this dimension that is being threatened by the "mutational de-spiritualization of human nature" (p. 89).

The author argues that Law cannot regulate AI only based on a pragmatic personification, such as that of the legal person, as this ignores the "intrinsic spirituality" that defines the moral person (p. 93). The true answer, according to the author, lies in postulating the "human spiritual metabolism" as a condition for any regulation, a metabolism that constitutes us as "open and generous beings" (Lima Vaz, 2000, p. 237, cited by Brochado, 2023, p. 96).

## THE HUMAN ROLE IN THE AGE OF AI: THE REAFFIRMATION OF OPINION, CREATIVITY, AND CRITICAL THINKING

The rise of artificial intelligence (AI) in the 21st century has generated radical transformations in various fields of human knowledge. Whether in journalism, education, the creative industry, or people management, automated systems have begun to perform tasks previously considered exclusively human, generating debates about what remains for the thinking subject. However, as AI advances, the importance of genuinely human aspects such as creativity, critical interpretation, and the ability to make ethical judgments is also reaffirmed. The future of technology, it seems, will not be one of substitution but of collaboration.

AI has demonstrated high performance in mechanical, organizational tasks and even in generating automated content. However, experts point out that imagination, intuition, empathy, and ethical judgment remain irreplaceable. According to the article Bem-vinda, IA (FUTURECOM, 2025), the human role will be even more essential precisely because AI depends on input, context, and interpretation—elements that only human beings can provide in depth. Creating, imagining, dreaming, and making complex decisions continue to be attributes unattainable for the machine.

In this scenario, AI takes on the role of a creative assistant, capable of organizing data, suggesting paths, and offering agility. However, those who define the questions, adjust the parameters, and validate the results remain human. The most significant innovation, therefore, arises from the collaboration between natural and artificial intelligence, where each part contributes with its specific potentialities (FUTURECOM, 2025).

On social networks and digital platforms, recommendation algorithms strongly influence the construction of public opinion. Articles such as those by Valle; Fernández Ruiz and Buttner (2024) and the data collected by Radfahrer (2025) warn that AI not only organizes the content visible to users but also shapes their perceptions through invisible filters. This process creates informational bubbles, where individuals are repeatedly exposed to content that confirms their beliefs, limiting divergent thinking.

This scenario is especially dangerous when combined with the proliferation of fake news and hate speech. AI, by personalizing experiences and prioritizing engagement, often contributes to social polarization and disinformation (Fenati, 2025). The ethical and responsible formation of citizens becomes

an urgent necessity so that each person develops discernment to evaluate content, identify biases, and resist informational manipulation. The use of artificial intelligence must be accompanied by initiatives that strengthen individual autonomy and the ability to judge based on values, facts, and clear ethical principles, ensuring that technology remains at the service of truth and freedom.

Maintaining a plural and healthy public space depends on people capable of recognizing bias, comparing sources, debating arguments, and resisting the automation of opinion.

Educators, philosophers, and technologists have converged on a common point: critical thinking is the main defense against the risks of blind automation. According to Sayad (2023), it is essential to teach new generations to interact with AI reflectively. This includes analyzing the results generated by chatbots, questioning the neutrality of algorithms, and understanding the technical and ethical limitations of these systems.

For this, pedagogical practices such as debates, discussion circles, media analysis workshops, and critical content production are recommended. As highlighted by Sebrae (2024), thinking critically in the age of AI means asking: "Who programmed this?", "For what purpose?", "What biases are embedded in the data?".

Furthermore, critical thinking is necessary even to use AI well. It is what allows separating useful suggestions from generic answers, identifying factual errors, and adapting content to the real context.

Using AI intelligently, in this sense, means knowing how to question, interpret, and decide.

Artificial intelligence (AI) has been causing profound transformations in the way information is produced, distributed, and consumed. One of the most visible impacts occurs in journalistic production, through the so-called automation of journalism or robot journalism, which is characterized by the use of algorithms to write articles autonomously. International agencies such as Associated Press and Reuters already employ AI-based systems to generate content on economic data, sports, and financial markets, based on databases updated in real time. This practice provides advantages such as agility, increased productivity in newsrooms, and efficient coverage of factual and repetitive events (Marconi; Lakatos, 2017). However, it imposes risks, among which stand out informational superficiality, the absence of critical analysis, and the possibility of reproducing algorithmic biases, compromising the quality and reliability of news (Fidalgo, 2020).

The growing integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the production of journalistic content has raised important discussions about the need for transparency to maintain credibility and audience trust. Some media outlets are already implementing disclosure policies regarding the use of AI, seeking to build credibility and gain public trust. This proactive approach aims to establish ethical rules for the use of these tools, optimizing time and expanding content reach, but always with the supervision and editing of a human professional.

A notable example is Associated Press (AP), which has adopted a strategic and ethical approach to the use of artificial intelligence. The agency employed Natural Language Generation (NLG) tools to automate financial reports and sports summaries, significantly increasing its production since 2015. In addition, AP adopted innovations in automatic transcription, public safety alerts, video summarization, translation of weather alerts, and organization of emails and meetings, especially through the Local News AI Initiative. Despite these automations, AP maintains a firm commitment to editorial quality, establishing in its internal guidelines that generative tools should not be used to create content published automatically; all material generated must be verified by journalists, and images or videos produced by AI are accepted only as illustrations, provided they are clearly labeled. The agency also signed contracts with companies such as OpenAI and Google, providing its news archive for training and integrating news updates into the Gemini chatbot, always focusing on information reliability and editorial recognition. AP also invests in the continuous training of journalists in the face of AI challenges, offering webinars, inperson training, practical guides (LocalizeIt), and a specific chapter in the AP Stylebook dedicated to the responsible use of technology (Associated Press, 2024).

Other initiatives include Trusting News guides on how to disclose the use of AI, offering text templates that newsrooms can adapt to explain which tool was used, for what purpose, and that there was subsequent human verification, based on research on what the public wants to know (Trusting News, 2024). The Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA) also recommends that outlets using AI

adopt clear policies on the use of technology in reporting, editing, and distribution, emphasizing journalistic principles such as accuracy, context, trust, and transparency (RTDNA, 2024). These examples demonstrate an initial but still uneven movement toward standardization and responsibility in the use of AI in journalism.

In addition, AI has been widely used in creating personalized content, mainly on digital platforms and marketing strategies. Automated tools are capable of generating texts, images, videos, and ads tailored to users' interests and behavior, which enhances engagement and audience segmentation. However, this type of personalization can reinforce informational bubbles, limiting individuals' exposure to different points of view and promoting homogeneous and confirmatory content consumption (Pariser, 2012). This scenario is aggravated by the proliferation of fake news and deepfakes, which use AI technologies to create extremely realistic false content such as manipulated videos and misleading texts capable of influencing elections, political decisions, and public perception. According to Zuboff (2020), these practices represent one of the most dangerous aspects of surveillance capitalism, as they exploit personal data for manipulative and commercial purposes.

Such changes also profoundly affect the reception of information, especially due to the growing use of recommendation algorithms. These systems filter and deliver personalized content based on users' browsing patterns, interests, and previous interactions, operating invisibly on social networks such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook. This algorithmic logic generates what Pariser (2012) calls the "filter bubble," in which the user begins to consume information that confirms their beliefs and values, making it difficult to encounter divergent perspectives. As a result, so-called "echo chambers" emerge, where the constant repetition of similar discourses contributes to reinforcing cognitive biases and ideological polarization (Sunstein, 2018).

This transformation has also changed information consumption habits. Instead of actively seeking reliable and diverse sources, users often passively consume the content delivered to them by algorithms, without questioning its origin or veracity. This behavior fuels the spread of radical and sensationalist discourses, favored by mechanisms of emotional engagement (Han, 2017), and highlights the urgency of investing in media literacy. For Buckingham (2010), the critical formation of citizens in the 21st century must include the ability to understand the mechanisms of algorithmic curation, evaluate sources, and identify discursive manipulations, which is essential for conscious action in the digital environment.

In this context, ethical, political, and social issues related to the lack of transparency in algorithms also emerge. Digital platforms and search engines operate with unclear criteria about which information is prioritized or hidden, which directly affects the right to information and the plurality of voices (Zuboff, 2020). In response to these challenges, regulatory initiatives have been discussed. The European Union stands out with the proposal of the AI Act, which establishes rules for the ethical and transparent use of

AI, while Brazil advances with Bill No. 2,338/2023, which aims to ensure fundamental rights, data protection, and accountability for damages caused by automated systems (Brazil, 2023). These impacts also reconfigure the role of the journalist, who now performs functions of curation, analysis, and data verification, in addition to traditional text production. Fidalgo (2020) emphasizes that the communication professional must combine technical and ethical skills to act as a critical mediator between reality and automated data. Finally, the dissemination of AI-generated content raises dilemmas around authorship and intellectual property. There is still no legal consensus on who should be considered the author of texts, music, or images created by AI, nor on who assumes responsibility in cases of plagiarism, damage, or legal violations (Floridi et al., 2018).

Thus, the presence of artificial intelligence in the informational ecosystem requires a multidisciplinary and integrated response, involving the government, the technology sector, the media, academia, and civil society. It is essential to build an ethical and democratic governance of AI that respects human rights, promotes informational justice, and preserves the integrity of communication in the digital world.

### CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES AND POSSIBLE FUTURES

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the production and distribution of information represents one of the most significant transformations of the digital age, but it also brings with it complex and urgent contemporary challenges. One of the main problems currently faced is automated disinformation, driven by technologies capable of generating texts, images, and videos with a high degree of verisimilitude, such as deepfakes. These tools have been used to create manipulated content that influences democratic processes, distorts public opinion, and compromises the reliability of information sources. According to Zuboff (2020), such practices are part of a broader system called surveillance capitalism, in which personal data are used to predict and shape individual and collective behaviors.

Another central challenge is the lack of transparency in the algorithms that organize and prioritize content in digital environments. Platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and Google operate with opaque algorithmic systems, whose recommendation criteria are not clearly disclosed to the public. This makes it difficult to understand why certain content is displayed, thus reinforcing what Pariser (2012) called the "filter bubble," a phenomenon in which users are exposed only to content that confirms their beliefs, limiting informational diversity. In addition, these algorithms can incorporate discriminatory biases from the data with which they were trained, perpetuating inequalities and making dissenting voices invisible (Floridi et al., 2018).

The concentration of power in the hands of large technology corporations also represents a considerable risk. Companies such as Google, Meta, and OpenAI hold not only the most advanced AI

systems but also control over the platforms through which most of the information consumed by the global population circulates. This creates a highly centralized informational environment, where technical decisions directly affect democracy, civil rights, and public debate (Sunstein, 2018). The absence of effective regulatory mechanisms aggravates this scenario, allowing predatory practices, economic manipulations, and political interference on a global scale.

Furthermore, the lack of preparation of the population to deal with the complexity of AI in the informational context stands out. Most users do not have sufficient critical training to understand how algorithms work or to assess the veracity of the information received. In this sense, media and digital literacy becomes an urgent necessity. According to Buckingham (2010), it is essential that individuals develop skills to critically analyze the media and understand the processes of production, circulation, and reception of messages mediated by intelligent technologies.

According to Rosado (2023), artificial intelligence (AI) has demonstrated significant potential to transform various areas of human life, with a direct impact on future generations. The automation of repetitive and operational tasks is one of AI's main promises, allowing human beings to focus on more creative, analytical, and strategic activities. This can result in greater efficiency and productivity in sectors such as manufacturing, transportation, customer service, and services in general. In addition to freeing up time, this automation also stimulates the development of critical thinking and creativity, since professionals will no longer be limited to mechanical and exhausting routines.

In the health sector, for example, AI emerges as a revolutionary tool. Intelligent algorithms can analyze large amounts of clinical data, assisting in more accurate diagnoses, drug discovery, and the proposal of personalized treatments. This technology not only optimizes the time of health professionals but also contributes to improving the quality of care and accelerating scientific research. Likewise, advances in urban mobility with autonomous vehicles, guided by intelligent systems, also show the benefits of this technology. According to the UN Global Status Report on Road Safety, traffic accidents are the leading cause of death among people aged 5 to 29. AI can significantly improve road safety, reduce congestion, and optimize logistics and delivery of goods (Rosado, 2023).

Another sector with great potential for transformation is education. AI enables the creation of personalized teaching systems, capable of adapting content according to the performance and needs of each student. This can increase the effectiveness of the learning process, improve student engagement, and offer more targeted support to teachers. By analyzing individual progress, identifying knowledge gaps, and proposing specific materials, AI contributes to a more inclusive and efficient educational environment (Rosado, 2023).

In the field of science and research, AI also accelerates discoveries and advances. Complex simulations and analysis of large volumes of data become more viable and faster, benefiting areas such as

biomedicine, materials engineering, and the search for alternative energy sources. However, much of these studies are still at an early stage, especially in Brazil, which indicates the need for continuous investments in innovation and scientific research (Rosado, 2023).

On the other hand, as AI integrates into human routines, serious ethical and social concerns arise. Privacy, information security, and algorithmic biases are increasingly discussed topics. The indiscriminate use of personal data by intelligent systems can jeopardize fundamental rights and open space for discrimination. Thus, future generations will have the responsibility to create norms and ethical guidelines that ensure the fair and responsible use of these technologies (Rosado, 2023).

Transparency and AI governance also prove essential. Although the use of the internet has been widespread for decades, only recently have more specific laws emerged aimed at protection against cybercrimes. This shows that regulation usually follows technological advances with delay, which reinforces the importance of acting preventively in the case of AI. Ensuring that it is a positive ally of society—and not a force that replaces human labor or compromises social coexistence—requires coordinated political, educational, and legal actions (Rosado, 2023).

According to Rosado (2023), in the field of communication, especially journalism, the impact of AI is even more visible. Tools such as ChatGPT and other language models are being used to support content creation, suggest text structures, organize information, and even automate part of newsroom routines. These resources can be valuable by speeding up processes, optimizing journalists' time, and enabling them to focus on more analytical and creative tasks. In a scenario where the speed of information is a determining factor, AI can contribute to the personalization and engagement of articles, adapting content to readers' profiles and interests (Rosado, 2023).

However, the use of these technologies requires care and responsibility. Journalistic ethics cannot be neglected, especially regarding fact-checking and source credibility. AI should act as a support tool, not as a substitute for human experience. The growth of digital journalism, driven by expanded internet access, has increased the demand for information and, consequently, for the use of support technologies. Still, it is the journalist's role to know how to distinguish the limits between automation and the essence of the profession, which is based on critical investigation, social responsibility, and the production of reliable knowledge (Rosado, 2023).

Thus, it is essential that communication professionals understand not only the functionalities of these tools but also their limitations and impacts. Incorporating AI into the daily life of newsrooms and other media can facilitate processes and expand possibilities, but always based on ethical principles and a human perspective that preserves the quality of information (Rosado, 2023).

Therefore, the possible futures and trends of artificial intelligence in information lie between promising technological advances and considerable ethical challenges. The conscious and regulated use

of AI can favor innovation, efficiency, and access to information, but only if guided by values that place the human being at the center of technological development. The decisions made today will define the role that this technology will play in the future—whether as an instrument of emancipation or as a mechanism of control (Rosado, 2023).

## PANORAMA DE AUTORES (HARARI, FLORIDI, CHOMSKY, LÉVY, ETC.)

It is about knowing how to place it at the service of human discernment. Creativity is a structuring attribute of human experience. Solving problems, imagining new scenarios, innovating in methods, and reinterpreting contexts are forms of creativity present in science, education, business, and everyday life. AI can be an important ally in this process, as shown by studies by Fabrega (2025) and Redu Digital (2025).

These articles point out that AI can contribute to brainstorming, idea organization, and data cross-referencing, expanding the possibilities of the human creative process. However, they warn of the risks of standardization and repetition if the use of technology is done without a critical spirit. AI tends to reproduce existing patterns, as it learns from historical data. Creative rupture, in turn, requires boldness, error, intuition, and context—elements that the machine still does not understand.

As highlighted by the publication Tecnologia com alma (G1, 2024), human creativity gains more space, not less, when AI takes care of the repetitive part, freeing time and energy for what is new, subjective, and sensitive.

If AI can calculate, simulate, and predict, only humans are capable of judging based on values, emotions, and ethical contexts. Strategic, social, or existential decisions cannot be fully entrusted to algorithmic logic, as they involve aspects that escape mathematics. According to the article published by Marostegm (2024), there are clear limits to the performance of AI, and exceeding them can generate unfair, impersonal, or morally inadequate decisions.

In this sense, people management, conflict mediation, education, justice, and politics continue to demand presence, empathy, and human responsibility. As stated by Inova Coop (2024), even in the most automated contexts, the human factor remains essential as a filter of integrity and conscience.

This judgment also applies to AI itself: who decides when and how to use it, with what parameters, in what contexts? Such choices shape the impact of technology on society and, therefore, cannot be blindly delegated to statistical models. The future will not belong to artificial intelligence alone, but to intelligence amplified by human critical awareness.

The debate around artificial intelligence (AI) and its impact on the production, circulation, and reception of information has mobilized thinkers from different areas of knowledge, each offering interpretations and distinct proposals about the paths humanity is taking in the face of technological

advances. Authors such as Yuval Noah Harari, Luciano Floridi, Noam Chomsky, Pierre Lévy, Shoshana Zuboff, Byung-Chul Han, among others, contribute to this panorama with analyses that range from optimism about the possibilities of innovation to skepticism or criticism regarding the social, ethical, and political risks arising from the use of AI. By considering these thinkers together, it becomes possible to build a broader and more critical view of contemporary challenges and possible futures of the information society.

The Israeli historian Yuval Noah Harari is one of the most popular intellectuals today when it comes to the future of humanity in the face of artificial intelligence. In works such as Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow (2016) and 21 Lessons for the 21st Century (2018), Harari argues that AI is promoting a revolution deeper than any previously recorded, including the Industrial Revolution. For the author, intelligent algorithms are about to surpass human decision-making capacity in areas such as health, security, transportation, and, above all, information. Harari warns that, by collecting and processing large volumes of personal data, machines may come to know individuals better than they know themselves, which represents a risk to freedom, autonomy, and democracy. In his view, information, mediated by AI, could be used as a tool of manipulation and political control if there are no ethical and regulatory structures to limit its abusive use.

In contrast, the Italian philosopher Luciano Floridi proposes a more normative and constructive approach, centered on the creation of an ethics of information. Floridi is the author of fundamental works such as The Ethics of Information (2013) and The Logic of Information (2019), in which he develops the concept of the "infosphere"—a hybrid environment between the digital and the real, in which we live immersed and constantly interact with data and informational systems. For him, AI must be regulated based on solid ethical principles, such as transparency, justice, dignity, responsibility, and sustainability. Floridi argues that society needs to learn to "govern" AI, promoting what he calls a good AI society, with institutions and citizens aware of their role in the use and supervision of these technologies. His proposal is optimistic but requires a profound educational, political, and philosophical transformation so that intelligent systems not only serve economic interests but are guided by the common good.

The American linguist and philosopher Noam Chomsky, known for his criticisms of political power and the media, presents a more skeptical view regarding the capabilities attributed to AI, especially with regard to language. In recent interviews and articles, Chomsky criticizes the indiscriminate use of the term "intelligence" to describe statistical models such as ChatGPT and other natural language processing tools. For him, these systems do not understand the meaning of words; they only operate by statistical correlation, without consciousness, intention, or reasoning. Chomsky argues that human language is based on innate and complex mental structures that AI models are still far from replicating. He warns that

overestimating AI can generate dangerous illusions about its real capacity for judgment, which compromises the quality of information and the role of critical thinking in society.

On the other hand, the French philosopher Pierre Lévy, one of the pioneers in the study of cyberculture, sees in AI and digital technologies an emancipatory and collaborative potential. In works such as Cyberculture (1999) and Collective Intelligence (1994), Lévy states that we are living a transition to a new cognitive ecology, in which human intelligence is amplified by machines and digital networks. His concept of "collective intelligence" proposes that knowledge can be built in a shared way, with the participation of multiple subjects mediated by interactive technologies. For Lévy, AI, if well used, can promote the democratization of knowledge, facilitating access to information and stimulating intellectual cooperation on a global scale. However, he also recognizes that these benefits will only be achieved if there is digital inclusion, technological literacy, and equitable conditions for participation.

In addition to these authors, it is worth highlighting the contribution of Shoshana Zuboff, who introduced the concept of "surveillance capitalism" to denounce the economic exploitation of personal data by large technology corporations. In The Age of Surveillance Capitalism (2020), Zuboff denounces that companies such as Google, Meta, and Amazon use AI algorithms to predict and influence behaviors, converting human life into raw material for commercial purposes. She warns that the invisible and continuous capture of data represents a threat to privacy, freedom, and individual sovereignty, configuring a new form of power that escapes traditional forms of democratic regulation. For her, it is urgent to create a new legal and institutional architecture that limits the power of these platforms and guarantees the protection of citizens in the face of the growing informatization of social life.

In the same critical field, the South Korean philosopher Byung-Chul Han analyzes the psychic and social effects of the digital society, marked by excessive transparency, individualized performance, and algorithmic surveillance. In works such as Psychopolitics (2015) and The Transparency Society (2017), Han argues that we live under a regime of self-control stimulated by digital platforms, where AI plays a central role in the standardization of behaviors and the erosion of subjectivity. According to him, the pursuit of efficiency, productivity, and constant exposure is dehumanizing social relations, making the subject increasingly docile, anxious, and isolated, which directly impacts how information is received, interpreted, and shared.

From this overview, it is observed that AI, in the context of information, cannot be analyzed only from the perspective of technological innovation. It requires an ethical, philosophical, political, and cultural approach that takes into account human interests, structural risks, and the possibilities of collective emancipation. While Harari and Zuboff warn about the predatory use of AI by power institutions, Floridi and Lévy bet on its regulation and constructive application, while Chomsky and Han highlight the epistemological limits and existential dangers of technological dependence. Together, these

authors contribute to a plural and necessary debate on the role of artificial intelligence in building informational futures, helping to shape a critical and conscious view of the digital world in which we live.

Given the complexity surrounding the impacts of artificial intelligence (AI) on information, it is essential to observe how different contemporary thinkers have reflected on this transformation. Various philosophical, sociological, technological, and communicational approaches provide complementary lenses to understand the risks, limits, and potentialities of AI in the 21st century. In this sense, authors such as Harari, Floridi, Chomsky, Lévy, Zuboff, Han, Castells, and Haraway present valuable contributions that help build a critical and plural panorama. While some point out the dangers of using AI without adequate regulation, others highlight its possibilities for emancipation, democratization of knowledge, and scientific advancement. Below, the comparative table summarizes the main views of these authors, offering a condensed reading of their areas of activity, theoretical positions, and most representative works in the debate on AI and information.

Table 1 – Overview of authors on Artificial Intelligence and Information

Author	Area	View on AI	Main Contributions	Reference Works
Yuval Noah Harari	History / Philosophy	Critical and warning about future risks	Highlights the risk of loss of human autonomy; AI as a tool for control and data manipulation	21 lições para o século 21, Homo Deus (21 Lessons for the 21st Century, Homo Deus)
Luciano Floridi	Philosoph y / Ethics of Informati on	Ethical, regulatory, and philosophical view	Proposes ethical governance of AI; concept of infosphere; defense of responsible and transparent AI	The Ethics of Information, The Logic of Information
Noam Chomsky	Linguistic s / Philosoph y	Skeptical about real intelligence of AI	Argues that AI does not understand language like humans; criticizes uncritical enthusiasm for statistical language models	Interviews, lectures, and various texts
Pierre Lévy	Philosoph y/ Cybercult ure	Optimistic and collaborative	Creation of the concept of collective intelligence; AI as a tool to democratize knowledge	Cibercultura, Inteligência Coletiva (Cyberculture, Collective Intelligence)
Shoshana Zuboff	Sociology / Political Economy	Strong criticism of commercial and invasive use of AI	Concept of surveillance capitalism; AI as an instrument of exploitation and loss of privacy	A era do capitalismo de vigilância (The Age of Surveillance Capitalism)
Byung-Chul Han	Philosoph y/ Contempo rary Society	Critical of excess transparency and automation	AI as a threat to subjectivity; criticism of performance logic and algorithmic control	Psicopolítica, Sociedade da Transparência (Psychopolitics, The Transparency Society)

Manuel Castells	Sociology / Communi cation	Analytical, focused on informational networks	Studies the network society and information flows mediated by technology	A Sociedade em Rede (The Network Society)
Donna Haraway	Philosoph y / Gender Studies	Post-humanist, critical and alternative	Introduces the concept of cyborg; proposes a hybrid view between human and machine	Manifesto Ciborgue (A Cyborg Manifest)

Source: Prepared by the author (2025)

The comparative analysis of these authors reveals that there is no absolute consensus on the role of artificial intelligence in contemporary society, but rather a field of tensions between technological optimism, ethical criticism, and political concern. The contrast between the approaches reveals an axis that ranges from the hope for a collaborative and regulated AI, as suggested by Floridi and Lévy, to the warning against its systemic dangers, as defended by Zuboff, Han, and Harari. These complementary perspectives are fundamental so that contemporary society not only keeps pace with innovation but actively participates in the construction of principles, laws, and limits that should guide the development and use of these technologies. Thus, understanding these different perspectives is an indispensable step to fostering an informational culture that is critical, democratic, and committed to the common good.

This research was developed from a qualitative and exploratory approach, with the objective of understanding the ethical challenges associated with automated narratives and the role of communicators and media outlets in the age of artificial intelligence. The method adopted was bibliographic and documentary research, which, according to Gil (2019), consists of the systematic analysis of materials already published in books, scientific articles, dissertations, legislation, and institutional documents, allowing the construction of a solid framework to support the theoretical discussion. For this purpose, a literature review was carried out in academic databases such as Scielo, Google Scholar, and journals specialized in Communication, Ethics, and Artificial Intelligence, in addition to consulting classic and recent works on the subject.

The selection of material followed criteria of thematic relevance, timeliness, and scientific recognition, prioritizing publications between the years 2015 and 2024, a period in which there was significant advancement in narrative automation technologies. Authors who discuss communication ethics and social responsibility were included, such as Vidigal de Carvalho (2018), Guareschi (2000), and Erbolato (2004), as well as critical thinkers on the impact of technology and media, such as Zuboff (2019), Byung-Chul Han (2018), and Castells (2009). Analyses specifically addressing artificial intelligence and automated narratives were also incorporated, based on recent articles published in scientific journals and technical reports from international organizations. This time frame made it possible to align classic theories with current productions, highlighting the dialogue between consolidated foundations and new trends in the field.

The analysis of the materials was conducted through critical reading, note-taking, and thematic categorization. According to Bardin (2016), content analysis allows organizing and interpreting the collected data based on previously defined categories, ensuring greater systematization of the investigative process. In this sense, three axes of analysis were structured: (1) the potentialities and risks of narrative automation in social communication; (2) the ethical and professional implications for journalists and communicators; and (3) the role of media outlets in mediating between technology, information, and social responsibility. This organization of axes enabled an integrated view of the phenomenon, avoiding fragmentation that could compromise the critical understanding of the object.

The methodological process also involved comparing different theoretical perspectives to identify convergences and divergences regarding ethical responsibility in the face of the use of artificial intelligence in content production. According to Minayo (2012), triangulation of sources and frameworks strengthens the validity of qualitative research, making it possible to understand the complexity of the object of study. Thus, the method was not limited to a mere description of the literature but sought to articulate theories and empirical evidence to support the proposed discussion.

In addition, the methodology included the analysis of institutional documents and international reports from organizations such as UNESCO and the European Union, which have discussed guidelines for the responsible use of artificial intelligence. These complementary materials allowed broadening the theoretical perspective, connecting the Brazilian reality with global trends and regulations, which contributed to situating the research in an international context of ethical and regulatory debates.

As the phenomenon investigated involves perceptions, values, and interpretations about ethics in communication, the qualitative approach proved to be the most appropriate to capture the nuances of the theme. Exploratory research, in turn, allowed mapping a field still under construction, without the intention of exhausting the subject, but of providing subsidies for future reflections and the development of new studies.

It is also worth noting the methodological limitations. As this is a bibliographic and documentary research, interviews or empirical field surveys were not conducted, which restricts the analysis to the interpretation of works and documents. However, this limitation was minimized by the diversity of sources used, covering national and international authors, as well as recent technical reports. For future research, it is recommended to conduct empirical studies, such as interviews with journalists and communicators, or even comparative analyses of content produced by narrative automation systems in different cultural contexts.

Finally, the methodology adopted sought to ensure scientific rigor, clarity, and coherence with the outlined objectives, allowing the results obtained to reflect in a critical and well-founded manner the ethical challenges of automated narratives in the contemporary context of communication.

The results of the research show that automated narratives constitute an expanding field in journalism and contemporary communication, bringing with them both potentialities and highly relevant ethical challenges. It was observed that automation in content production enables gains in agility, reach, and personalization of messages, allowing media outlets to meet the demands of a society marked by the speed of information and the multiplicity of digital platforms. However, this technical efficiency also carries risks that demand critical reflection on the limits of professional performance and the responsibility of communicators toward the public.

In this sense, authors such as Vidigal de Carvalho (2018) and Guareschi (2000) emphasize that communication cannot be reduced to a merely technical process, as it involves ethical and social dimensions indispensable for the preservation of citizenship and democracy. The use of artificial intelligence systems in news production, while democratizing access to information, can also generate effects of discursive homogenization and weakening of journalism's critical role, as indicated by Erbolato (2004) and Han (2018). These aspects make urgent the construction of ethical parameters that guide both communication professionals and media outlets in the use of these technologies.

Furthermore, the analysis revealed that the concentration of power in large technology corporations intensifies the risks associated with the so-called surveillance capitalism, a concept developed by Zuboff (2019). The massive collection of data and its use for targeting automated content raise profound questions about privacy, manipulation of public opinion, and erosion of citizens' autonomy. This scenario dialogues with the reflections of Castells (2009), who had already pointed out the centrality of digital networks in the reconfiguration of power relations and the strengthening of social asymmetries.

Another point identified refers to the need for critical training of communicators, since the insertion of automated narratives in journalistic processes does not eliminate but re-signifies the social function of the professional. As highlighted by Vidigal de Carvalho (2018) and Guareschi (2000), it is up to the communicator to adopt an ethical stance in the face of market pressures and technological logic, ensuring that the information conveyed preserves values such as truthfulness, plurality, and respect for the receiver. Thus, automation should not be seen as a replacement for human activity but as a tool that requires conscious and responsible mediation.

The results also point out that the advancement of automated narratives increases the challenges for media outlets regarding credibility. According to Erbolato (2004), ethics in communication is a structuring element for maintaining public trust, so the indiscriminate use of algorithms without transparency can compromise the institutional image of the press. This finding reinforces the importance of adopting governance, regulation, and oversight practices that ensure greater clarity about the processes of production and dissemination of automated information.

Thus, the findings of the research demonstrate that the debate on automated narratives cannot be restricted to a technological perspective but must be broadened to encompass ethical, political, and social dimensions. The discussion undertaken here confirms the initial hypothesis that artificial intelligence, although representing an innovative and efficient resource for communication, also amplifies risks of manipulation, disinformation, and weakening of the public sphere, therefore demanding the construction of solid ethical guidelines. In this context, Minayo's (2012) idea is revisited that understanding social phenomena requires multiple approaches and triangulation of knowledge, which proves particularly necessary given the complexity of the theme.

In summary, the discussion of the results shows that the future of automated communication will depend on the balance between technological innovation and ethical responsibility. It is up to communicators, media outlets, and society as a whole to rethink the ways of producing and consuming information so that artificial intelligence is integrated in a way that strengthens—and does not weaken—the democratic values that sustain the exercise of citizenship.

Given the complexity surrounding automated narratives, it was found necessary to systematically organize the main points raised by the literature, in order to make explicit both the benefits and the weaknesses of this phenomenon in the field of communication. The studies analyzed highlight that, although artificial intelligence provides significant advances in terms of agility, reach, and content personalization, it also brings with it ethical risks related to informational manipulation, concentration of power in large technology corporations, and loss of journalistic credibility. To synthesize these findings and facilitate the visualization of the most recurrent dimensions, the following table presents the potentialities and ethical challenges pointed out by the authors, distributed across different axes of analysis.

Table 2 – Potentialities and ethical risks of automated narratives according to the literature

	1able 2 – Potentialities and etnical risks of automated narratives according to the interature								
Dimension	Identified Potentialities	Ethical Risks and Challenges	Reference Authors						
Technological	Agility in news production; greater audience reach; content personalization.	Discursive homogenization; weakening of critical analysis.	Erbolato (2004); Han (2018)						
Social	Expansion of access to information; democratization of communication flow.	Manipulation of public opinion; erosion of citizen autonomy.	Guareschi (2000); Vidigal de Carvalho (2018)						
Political	Possibility of greater transparency and oversight.	Concentration of power in big techs; surveillance capitalism.	Castells (2009); Zuboff (2019)						
Professional	Re-signification of the communicator's role as a critical mediator.	Partial replacement of human activity; loss of journalistic credibility.	Vidigal de Carvalho (2018); Erbolato (2004)						
Ethical	Development of new guidelines and normative parameters.	Absence of regulation; lack of transparency in algorithms.	Minayo (2012); Guareschi (2000)						

Source: Prepared by the author based on Vidigal de Carvalho (2018), Guareschi (2000), Erbolato (2004), Han (2018), Zuboff (2019), Castells (2009) e Minayo (2012).

The analysis of Table 2 synthesized the main potentialities and ethical risks of automated narratives according to the literature, and its critical interpretation allows understanding how different dimensions intertwine in contemporary communicational practice. More than presenting isolated advantages and disadvantages, it is necessary to make the authors dialogue, revealing convergences, tensions, and interpretative gaps about the impacts of artificial intelligence (AI) on narrative production.

In the technological dimension, Erbolato (2004) and Han (2018) highlight, on the one hand, the agility and personalization capacity that automated systems offer, but, on the other, warn of the risk of discursive homogenization. This paradox is central: the same technology that promises plurality, by allowing more content to circulate quickly, can lead to a standardization of language and information. Han (2018), when addressing the "transparency society," observes that the excess of digital visibility can result in uniformity, emptying critical thinking. Erbolato (2004), when analyzing the media, reinforces that speed should never be confused with depth, as the logic of speed tends to impoverish analysis. When these authors are placed in dialogue, it is clear that both recognize the value of technological innovation

but converge on the concern that technique, if not regulated by ethical principles, produces a shallow discourse that compromises the social function of journalism.

Faced with the risks, the industry is already taking proactive steps to promote transparency. Initiatives such as Associated Press's disclosure policies and Trusting News guides illustrate this response to the ethical demand for clarity. This movement is academically supported: a 2024 analysis of 37 AI guidelines in the media highlighted human oversight and the preservation of journalistic values as pillars (ARXIV, 2024). In addition, the FCC's proposed regulation in the U.S., which requires disclosure of AI in political ads, signals a broader institutional effort (Federal Register, 2024).

However, transparency faces a paradox: although 94% of consumers desire it, the mere notice of AI use can undermine content credibility. Studies indicate that content labeled as "AI-generated" is perceived as less trustworthy. However, this negative effect can be mitigated with specific practices, such as including a clear list of sources (Trusting News, 2025) or opting for disclosures that require a click, which generate less emotional rejection than immediate notices.

Additionally, the FCC's proposed regulation in the U.S., which requires disclosure of AI-generated content in political ads on radio and TV, signals a broader institutional movement toward transparency, even beyond news production. Although promising, these initiatives reveal inequalities in adoption, with predominance in North America and Europe and scarcity in Latin America, and the lack of standardization suggests a long road to universalizing best practices (Federal Register, 2024).

A recent study conducted by Hassan et al. (2024), which analyzed 37 guidelines for the use of artificial intelligence in media organizations from 17 countries, shows that the ethical discussion around AI in journalism has been consolidating globally. Among the most recurrent principles are transparency, human oversight, explainability of algorithmic systems, clear disclosure of automated content, and preservation of privacy and informational justice (Hassan et al., 2024). These elements directly dialogue with the dilemmas discussed in this work, reinforcing that the future of automated narratives depends not only on technical advances but on the adoption of normative standards that ensure credibility and ethical responsibility.

The predominance of guidelines from North America and Europe, in contrast to the scarcity of references in Latin America, opens space to reflect on global regulatory asymmetries and the need for local initiatives that guarantee alignment between technological innovation and democratic values. Additionally, the FCC's proposed regulation in the U.S., requiring disclosure of AI-generated content in political ads broadcast on radio and TV, points to a broader institutional movement toward transparency and responsibility in the use of AI, even outside the direct context of news production (Federal Register, 2024). Although these initiatives are promising, practice is still uneven, and the lack of standardization suggests that there is a long way to go to ensure that all media outlets adopt best transparency practices.

The social dimension highlights another contradiction: the promise of democratizing access to information versus the risks of manipulating public opinion. Guareschi (2000) emphasizes the human right to communication as an essential principle for citizen autonomy. In this sense, AI could expand access and strengthen citizenship. However, Vidigal de Carvalho (2018) warns that, without a critical perspective, the same technology that expands the communication flow can be instrumentalized to induce behaviors and limit individual autonomy. When we put these two authors in dialogue, the need emerges to balance informational inclusion with the promotion of critical media literacy. Democratization is only effective when accompanied by training tools that enable citizens to identify manipulations, recognize biases, and interpret contexts. Otherwise, the abundance of information does not strengthen but weakens citizenship.

In the political dimension, Castells (2009) analyzes networks as spaces of greater transparency and oversight, which opens perspectives for a more plural and connected public sphere. However, Zuboff (2019) problematizes this optimistic view by pointing out that "surveillance capitalism" concentrates informational power in the hands of large corporations, the so-called big techs. Thus, while automation could enhance democratic practices, it threatens sovereignty and political diversity by subjecting information circulation to market logic and massive surveillance. The dialogue between Castells and Zuboff highlights a fundamental tension: technology can be both a tool of emancipation and domination, depending on how it is regulated and socially appropriated. When applying this debate to automated journalism, it is clear that the same algorithm capable of monitoring governments can also reinforce informational monopolies and compromise democracy.

The professional dimension brings to light an ethical dilemma for journalism. Vidigal de Carvalho (2018) sees in automation an opportunity to re-signify the communicator's role, who would act as a critical mediator, selecting and contextualizing the information produced by machines. Erbolato (2004), on the other hand, highlights the risks of replacing human labor, warning of the loss of credibility when the narrative is reduced to data without interpretation. The dialogue between both indicates that the journalistic profession is not in extinction but in transformation. It is up to the communicator to assume a curatorial role, ensuring that machine agility is accompanied by ethical analysis and social commitment. This movement requires not only professional adaptation but also a revaluation of critical training in universities, which must prepare future communicators to deal with technological complexity without abandoning the ethical dimension of their practice.

Finally, the ethical dimension brings together the contributions of Minayo (2012) and Guareschi (2000), who point both to the development of new guidelines and to the risks of lack of regulation.

Minayo (2012) emphasizes the need for ethics to accompany technological advancement, creating normative parameters that ensure transparency and the protection of rights. Guareschi (2000), when

addressing communication as a human right, reminds that without critical regulation, algorithms tend to reproduce inequalities and silence voices. This dialogue shows that regulation should not be understood as censorship but as a way to balance innovation and responsibility, ensuring that technology serves the public interest. The absence of normativity, as the authors point out, favors market logic and compromises the social function of communication.

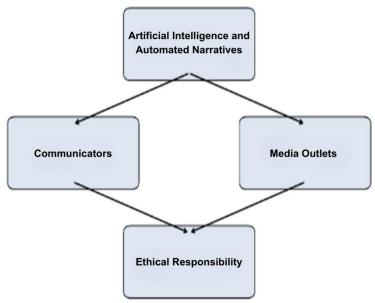
When analyzing the table in its entirety, it is clear that the five dimensions are interconnected. Technology influences social relations, which in turn affect politics; these impact professional practice, and all ultimately refer to the ethical field. The dialogue between authors shows that there is no rigid opposition between potentialities and risks but rather a field of disputes and social choices. AI can expand citizenship or reinforce alienation, can democratize or concentrate power, can re-signify the journalist's role or reduce it to irrelevance. The direction taken will depend on the ability to build ethical and democratic governance of information, in which professionals, civil society, governments, and corporations act in an integrated manner.

Thus, the results indicate that the future of automated narratives is not predetermined by technique but by the articulation between ethical values, political decisions, and professional practices. The dialogue between Erbolato, Han, Guareschi, Vidigal de Carvalho, Castells, Zuboff, and Minayo reveals that the central issue is not only technological efficiency but above all how society decides to use it. This is the contemporary challenge: to balance innovation and ethics, ensuring that automation is an ally of democracy, diversity, and social responsibility.

The systematization presented in Table 2 allows observing, in an objective way, that automated narratives operate in a space of tensions between technological innovation and social responsibility. While offering valuable resources to increase efficiency and reach in communication, they also raise ethical dilemmas that require constant reflection by communicators and media outlets. However, a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon demands more than a simple listing of potentialities and risks: it is necessary to visualize how these elements articulate in a dynamic process of interactions. For this, the following flowchart seeks to illustrate the relationship between artificial intelligence, communication professionals, media organizations, and the central core of ethical responsibility, highlighting the points of convergence that structure the contemporary debate.

Figure 5 – Relationship between artificial intelligence, communicators, media outlets, and ethical responsibility

Relationship between AI, communicators, media outlets, and ethics



Source: Prepared by the author (2025)

The presented flowchart illustrates the interaction between the main elements involved in automated narratives. Artificial intelligence, represented at the top, appears as the starting point for the production of automated content, influencing both the performance of communicators and the strategies of media outlets. These, in turn, play distinct but interconnected roles: communicators are responsible for critically mediating technological application, while media outlets incorporate such resources into their information dissemination processes. Both converge toward the central axis of ethical responsibility, which constitutes the fundamental dimension to ensure credibility, transparency, and social commitment in communication practices. Thus, the figure reinforces the need to balance technological innovation and democratic values, as highlighted by Vidigal de Carvalho (2018), Guareschi (2000), Erbolato (2004), Zuboff (2019), and Castells (2009).

This study aimed to analyze automated narratives and the ethical dilemmas surrounding their use in the field of social communication. From the outset, the objective was to understand how artificial intelligence, when applied to the production of media content, generates opportunities for innovation while also raising risks for democracy, citizen autonomy, and the role of the communicator. Throughout the methodological process, structured through bibliographic and documentary research, it was possible to systematize different perspectives and construct a critical analysis of the relationship between technology, society, and ethical responsibility.

The results obtained, especially through the organization of potentialities and risks, allowed for the visualization that automated narratives are not limited to a technical advancement, but rather constitute a multidimensional phenomenon. Each analyzed dimension—technological, social, political, professional, and ethical—revealed its own contradictions and demonstrated that the impacts of narrative automation depend directly on human choices, institutional regulations, and the critical capacity of communicators and media organizations. This finding reinforces the idea that there is no absolute technological determinism: the future of machine-generated narratives will be shaped by how society chooses to use and mediate them.

In the technological dimension, it was identified that the agility and personalization of content are undeniable achievements. However, the homogenization of discourse and the weakening of critical analysis indicate that speed cannot replace depth. This demands from professionals a curatorial stance, capable of reconciling machine efficiency with the complexity of human interpretation.

The social dimension revealed another relevant paradox. On one hand, narrative automation expands access to information and promises to democratize the communicational flow. On the other, it opens space for manipulations that weaken citizen autonomy. This tension highlights the importance of media literacy policies and critical audience education, so that the abundance of data does not become an overload or vulnerability to manipulative discourses.

In the political field, automated narratives proved to be tools for transparency and oversight, but also instruments for the concentration of power in the hands of large technological corporations. This contradiction points to a global regulatory challenge: how to balance innovation and surveillance, ensuring that algorithms serve the public interest and not merely market strategies? The reflection conducted by this study indicates that democracy will only be strengthened if there are governance mechanisms that limit abuses and ensure informational plurality.

The professional dimension demonstrated that communicators are not facing inevitable replacement, but rather a profound transformation of their functions. The journalist of the future will not be merely a content producer, but a critical mediator, responsible for giving meaning to what the machine generates. This reconfiguration of the profession demands new competencies, such as technological

proficiency, ethical sensitivity, and interdisciplinary analytical capacity. At the same time, it reveals the need for universities and educational institutions to revise their curricula, preparing professionals capable of dealing with automation without relinquishing the critical essence of journalism.

In the ethical sphere, the study highlighted the centrality of responsibility as the articulating axis of all previous dimensions. The absence of algorithmic transparency and adequate regulations represents a real threat to credibility and social trust. However, it was also observed that ethics should not be understood merely as a set of external norms, but as a practice incorporated into professional and organizational routines. The construction of effective ethical guidelines will depend on collaboration among communicators, media outlets, regulatory institutions, and civil society.

By integrating these dimensions, the study concluded that automated narratives operate in a space of continuous tensions, where innovation and responsibility walk side by side. The research reinforces this perception, showing that artificial intelligence influences communicators and media outlets, but all converge toward a central axis of ethical responsibility. This graphical representation does not exhaust the complexity of the topic, but contributes to visualizing the interdependence of the elements involved.

The contributions of the research lie, therefore, in systematizing an emerging field, bringing together reflections from classical and contemporary authors, and articulating these ideas from a critical perspective. The study not only described potentialities and risks but also pointed to possible paths for communication to maintain its commitment to democracy, diversity, and citizen autonomy.

It is important to acknowledge, however, the limitations of the study. As a bibliographic and documentary research, it was not possible to conduct empirical field analyses or interviews with professionals directly involved in the use of automated narratives. This absence does not compromise the validity of the study but indicates a gap to be addressed in future investigations. Subsequent research may explore practical experiences in newsrooms, assess public reception of content generated by artificial intelligence, and compare regulatory models in different countries.

In light of the reflections presented, it is concluded that the central question is not whether automated narratives should exist, but how they will be used and regulated. Technology, by itself, does not guarantee democratization, nor does it determine authoritarianism; what defines the course is the interaction between ethics, politics, and professional practice. The contemporary challenge lies in building an information governance model that preserves democratic values, ensures plurality, and promotes transparency.

In light of the reflections developed throughout this research, an original practical orientation model is proposed here, called the "Ethical Quadrilateral of Communication in the Age of AI." This model seeks to synthesize four fundamental dimensions for automated narratives to be used responsibly and in accordance with democratic and ethical values of communication:

Freedom of expression – must remain a non-negotiable value, in line with the strongest traditions of protection of free speech, such as in the United States. However, it is recognized that the mere guarantee of expression does not ensure the ethical quality of information, especially in a context where any individual, equipped with a cellphone, can produce and disseminate potentially harmful content.

Responsible regulation – regulation should not operate as censorship, but as a guarantee that journalistic outlets maintain fact-checking practices and prevent the spread of fake news amplified by automated systems.

It involves establishing accountability protocols for media companies and platforms, without compromising the plurality of public debate. Communicator's self-criticism – artificial intelligence should also be understood as a tool for reflection, allowing the communicator to confront their own biases and thus improve professional practice. The communicator remains indispensable as a critical curator and ultimate responsible party for the content.

Critical education of society – finally, it is essential to invest in media and digital literacy, enabling the population to identify automated narratives, distinguish between opinion, propaganda, and news, and exercise a critical eye toward the multiple forms of disinformation. Educational programs, from schools to everyday news consumption, can contribute to a more prepared and conscious society.

This Ethical Quadrilateral allows us to understand that the solution does not lie solely in technical or legal restrictions, but in the combination of freedom, responsibility, self-criticism, and education. In this way, AI can be integrated into the media ecosystem without compromising the pursuit of truth, human dignity, and public trust—values that remain central to communicational practice.

In light of these reflections, questions remain open, such as: How to regulate AI democratically without falling into censorship? What ethical limits should journalists adopt when facing opaque algorithms? How to ensure informational plurality in a scenario of "filter bubbles"? Will AI be another tool for emancipation or for social alienation? These questions reinforce that the topic requires continuous and multidisciplinary investigations, emphasizing the non-negotiable value of human dignity in the face of automation and the premise that the pursuit of truth cannot be replaced by algorithmic engagement metrics. Although the integration of AI offers significant benefits in terms of optimization and reach, its application must be accompanied by an unwavering commitment to clarity and responsibility. The examples of media outlets that have already adopted disclosure policies, the guidelines of organizations such as Trusting News and RTDNA, and regulatory proposals such as that of the FCC demonstrate a growing recognition of the importance of informing the audience about the presence of AI in content production. However, the disparity in the adoption of these practices and the absence of universal standardization indicate that the journey toward full and consistent transparency is still underway. It is imperative that the media industry continues to develop and implement robust disclosure policies,

ensuring that technological innovation serves to strengthen—not erode—the trust relationship between news producers and the public.

Thus, the final considerations of this study reinforce that technological innovation should not be seen as an enemy of ethics, but as an opportunity to reframe and strengthen it. It is up to communicators, institutions, and society to choose whether artificial intelligence will be a tool for emancipation or alienation. This is the true horizon that opens before automated narratives: a future in dispute, whose direction will depend on the collective capacity to balance efficiency, credibility, and social responsibility.

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## **REALIZATION:**



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