



Electronic Journalism Writing: From Online Journalism to Artificial Intelligence

Characteristics and Emerging Developments

Louahem M'sabah Meriem

20th August University, Skikda (Algeria), meriem.louahemmsabah@univ-skikda.dz

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Abstract:

The emergence of electronic journalism has profoundly reshaped the media landscape by introducing innovative tools and features that have transformed the structure, techniques, and sources of communication. This evolution has fostered a new model of journalistic writing characterized by interactivity, diversity, and inclusiveness. In parallel, the advent of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies and their advanced applications has introduced deeper changes in journalistic methods and styles, giving rise to what is now known as AI journalism—an approach that employs software and algorithms to generate media content. Accordingly, this study aims to examine the transformations that have affected journalistic writing practices in the digital era, particularly the transition from electronic journalism to AI-driven journalism. The findings highlight the necessity for journalists to acquire new competencies in writing and digital literacy that align with ongoing technological and editorial advancements.

Keywords: *Electronic journalism; writing for online journalism, artificial intelligence, AI journalism, digital media transformation;*

I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid and continuous evolution in communication and information technologies has generated new, non-traditional tools and platforms for media production and news dissemination most notably the Internet and mobile networks. Beyond these innovations, the digital revolution has expanded the horizons of traditional media institutions in terms of their working environments and professional specializations, whether editorial, production-related, artistic, or technical. Consequently, media audiences are no longer confined to specific geographical areas or cultural identities.

This expansion compelled the print press and journalists along with it to adapt to new modes of journalistic practice that accommodate technological and editorial change. The integration of communication technologies has enabled newspapers to enhance their content and incorporate computers throughout press production systems, from information gathering to printing, as well as to utilize satellites for the publication of international and regional editions.

By the early 1990s, computers and the Internet had begun to penetrate American and Canadian newsrooms extensively, to the extent that the Internet became an indispensable tool for information gathering, news production, and communication. This development triggered a significant transformation in journalistic performance and professional routines. The Internet's use marked the foundation of online journalism when traditional newspapers began publishing their editions on the Web as early as 1992, with the Chicago Tribune among the first to do so.

With the proliferation of modern technological and digital innovations, many media organizations adopted these tools in line with the dynamics of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. These technologies included cloud computing, broadband Internet, artificial intelligence, and what is often termed seventh-generation journalism. Collectively, these developments enhanced the capacity to produce and distribute media content to increasingly diverse and sophisticated audiences.

In this context, artificial intelligence introduced novel concepts to the media field, including AI journalism, robotic journalism, and algorithmic journalism, all of which have accelerated the digital transformation of media institutions. Supported by the Web and AI-driven tools, the media have acquired distinct characteristics that must be understood in order to grasp how journalistic practices have evolved—and how writing techniques have adapted accordingly.

Based on these observations, the present study seeks to answer the following research question:

What are the manifestations of change in journalistic writing from electronic journalism to artificial intelligence?

To address this question, the paper is organized into three main sections:

- Section One: Electronic journalism and its writing practices.
- Section Two: Artificial intelligence and AI-driven journalistic writing.
- Section Three: Manifestations of change in journalistic writing from electronic journalism to artificial intelligence.

1. Electronic Journalism and Its Writing Practices

1.1 The Concept of Electronic Journalism

The definitions of *electronic journalism* are numerous and diverse, making it difficult to establish a single, comprehensive concept—much like the challenge of defining *new media*. Each researcher or specialist in information and communication technologies has approached the term from a distinct perspective, resulting in multiple yet often convergent interpretations (Belkheiri, 2014).

Various expressions have been used to describe this phenomenon, including *electronic journalism*, *Internet journalism*, *web journalism*, *e-versions*, *computer-assisted journalism*, *instant journalism*, *virtual journalism*, *interactive journalism*, *convergent journalism*, and *paperless journalism*. The multiplicity of these terms underscores the complexity of identifying a unified definition of electronic journalism.

Amy Lawrence defined electronic journalism as “instant electronic versions of printed newspapers” (Ramadan, 2018). However, this definition has been criticized for being overly restrictive, as it ties the concept too closely to traditional journalism. Not every print newspaper necessarily has an online version, nor does every online outlet originate from a print publication. Therefore, the definition fails to encompass the independent nature of many digital platforms.

Another definition posits that “electronic journalism is the form of journalism that abandons the traditional paper-based format and replaces it entirely with a digital one” (Belkheiri, 2014). This interpretation reflects the shift of contemporary journalism toward abandoning print and adopting the electronic space as its exclusive field of media practice.

Operational Definition of Electronic Journalism:

This paper adopts the definition provided by Dr. Aliya Ramadan (2018)

Electronic journalism is a form of human communication conducted through cyberspace via the Internet and other information and communication networks employing the techniques, mechanisms, and skills of print journalism, while integrating information technologies suited to the digital medium. It involves the use of text, sound, and images at varying levels of interactivity with the audience.

1.1. The Emergence and Development of Electronic Journalism

The origins of electronic journalism are generally traced back to the early 1990s. However, some scholars argue that its beginnings can be dated earlier—specifically to 1976—when a collaboration between the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) and the BBC in Britain introduced a teletext news service. By 1979, a more interactive form of this service, known as videotex, emerged in the United Kingdom.

By the mid-1990s, electronic journalism reappeared in a new form, becoming a distinctive media phenomenon closely associated with the revolution in information and communication technologies. Although determining the exact date of the first electronic newspaper is challenging, researchers often cite the Swedish newspaper Helsingborgs Dagblad as the first in the world to adopt this

model. In 1992, Chicago Online launched the first electronic newspaper on America Online. Moreover, in 1993, the College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Florida established Palo Alto Online, the first dedicated online journalism site (Jouamaa, 2017). These developments marked the initial phase of digital journalism as a recognized field within media studies.

1.2 Characteristics of Electronic Journalistic Writing

Electronic journalistic writing is characterized by its dependence on digital technologies that merge and overlap in a multimedia environment (Mahrez & Sifoun, 2022). The main characteristics include:

- **Hypertext:**
Refers to non-linear digital text composed of interconnected nodes and links that allow readers to navigate between related pieces of information. These connections can be internal—linking to content within the same platform—or external, directing readers to other sources. Hypertext enhances interactivity by providing contextual depth and multidimensional reading paths.
- **Hypermedia:**
Extending beyond hypertext, hypermedia integrates multiple forms of media—sound, video, graphics, and animation—into journalistic storytelling. This convergence produces a richer and more engaging narrative environment.
- **Hyperlinks:**
Widely used across online journalism, hyperlinks appear as highlighted text or embedded images that, when clicked, lead readers to additional or supporting information. Hyperlinks emphasize the non-linear nature of online writing, creating an intricate web of interconnected meanings that deepen the reader's understanding.

Through these features, electronic journalistic writing weaves textual, visual, and auditory elements into dynamic narratives, offering immediacy, interactivity, and enhanced user engagement that traditional journalism cannot easily achieve.

1.3 Rules of Writing in Electronic Journalism

The digital transformation of journalism has not eliminated the importance of traditional journalistic skills; rather, it has complemented them with new competencies required in online environments. Scholars generally agree on a set of principles that ensure effective electronic editing (Belkheiri, 2014):

1. **Clarity:**
Essential due to the speed and abundance of content on the Web. Readers devote limited time to processing complex ideas, so clarity and conciseness are critical.
2. **Consistency:**
The article's structural and stylistic elements must be coherent and harmoniously aligned.

3. Accuracy:

Precision and credibility remain vital, as audiences depend on digital news outlets for timely and reliable information.

4. Proportionality:

The amount of information provided should align with journalistic norms—sufficient to inform but concise enough to maintain engagement.

5. Constructiveness:

Journalists should leverage the digital environment to connect textual units, create hyperlinks, and build an integrated network of meanings.

Dr. Aliya Ramadan (2018) further identifies complementary principles specific to electronic writing:

- **Conciseness:**

Digital writing should be brief and structured into short, easily digestible paragraphs.

- **Immediacy:**

Online news publication often requires instant updates and rapid editing cycles.

- **Segmentation of long paragraphs:**

Lengthy sections should be broken down into lists or bulleted items to improve readability. Although uncommon in print journalism, this technique is highly effective online as it keeps the reader focused on key points.

Collectively, these principles highlight that successful electronic journalistic writing combines the precision of traditional journalism with the adaptability and interactivity demanded by digital media environments.

2. Artificial Intelligence

2.1 The Concept of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence (AI) has been defined in multiple ways, reflecting its interdisciplinary nature and broad scope of applications.

Definition 1:

AI is the science that seeks to develop computer systems capable of operating with efficiency comparable to that of human experts. It refers to the ability of machines to imitate and simulate cognitive and motor processes, reproduce human reasoning and decision-making, learn from past experiences, and respond intelligently to external stimuli. In essence, AI mirrors human cognition and performs similar intellectual functions (Sweilem & Safi, 2024).

This definition highlights the extent to which AI performance is evaluated by its capacity to replicate human capabilities.

Definition 2:

AI is a scientific field concerned with explaining and simulating intelligent behavior through computational processes performed by machines. It is a branch of computer

science dedicated to the automation of intelligent behavior (Al-Jabr, 2024).

Unlike the first definition, this one emphasizes the behavioral and procedural aspects of AI systems.

Definition 3:

AI is a branch of computer science that develops systems capable of processing information, learning from experience, and adapting to environmental changes. Its core techniques include machine learning, neural networks, and natural language processing (NLP). Applications extend from intelligent robotics to data management systems, aiming to enhance user experience across different sectors. AI contributes to improving efficiency, productivity, and innovation, while the design of AI algorithms requires the integration of mathematics, statistics, and data science (Hussein et al., 2024).

This definition stresses the practical and computational foundations of AI and its growing role in contemporary innovation.

Operational Definition:

In this study, artificial intelligence is defined as a modern scientific field that seeks to endow machines and computers with human-like cognitive abilities, automating tasks traditionally associated with human intelligence—such as learning, problem-solving, and decision-making. AI also explores cognitive processes through computational modeling, enabling machines to perceive, interpret, and act upon information autonomously.

2.2 The Emergence of Artificial Intelligence

The conceptual roots of artificial intelligence trace back to ancient myths and philosophical ideas about creating artificial beings capable of thought or consciousness. Early philosophical inquiries into logic and reasoning laid the groundwork for modern computational thought.

The real turning point came with the invention of the programmable digital computer in the 1940s—a machine built upon principles of logical and mathematical reasoning. This invention inspired scientists to explore whether machines could simulate human thought and problem-solving, leading to the vision of an “electronic brain” (Al-Jabr, 2024).

AI formally emerged as a scientific discipline in the 1950s. The **1956 Dartmouth Conference**, organized by John McCarthy and colleagues, is widely recognized as the foundational moment of AI, as it introduced the term *artificial intelligence* and united pioneering thinkers in this emerging field.

In subsequent decades, significant advances were made in algorithms and computing power, enabling machines to learn and adapt. Research efforts combined expertise from computer science, mathematics, psychology, and linguistics to define the parameters of intelligent behavior (Hussein et al., 2024).

Between 1957 and 1974, computers became faster, cheaper, and more accessible, while machine learning algorithms improved considerably. The 1980s saw a resurgence of AI research due to enhanced computational capabilities and greater funding. Pioneers such as John Hopfield, Geoffrey Hinton, and David Rumelhart made breakthroughs in deep

learning, while Edward Feigenbaum's development of expert systems enabled machines to emulate human decision-making.

Despite intermittent "AI winters" marked by reduced funding and skepticism, the field continued to evolve. Today, after decades of theoretical and practical progress, AI has become a tangible reality, enabling unprecedented data processing, predictive modeling, and decision automation across industries (Dailami, 2023).

2.3 Types of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence can generally be classified into three main types, depending on its ability to replicate or extend human cognitive functions (Al-Jabr, 2024):

1. Weak or Narrow AI:

Also known as *light AI*, this category encompasses systems designed to perform specific tasks or solve particular problems. The knowledge acquired in one context cannot be transferred to another. Such systems exhibit limited scope and lack general reasoning capabilities.

2. Strong or General AI:

General AI refers to systems capable of performing any intellectual task that a human can. These systems can apply knowledge across diverse domains, adapt to new situations, and demonstrate a degree of self-awareness. The ultimate goal of strong AI is to achieve human-equivalent intelligence.

3. Superintelligent AI:

This form of AI surpasses human cognitive abilities, demonstrating superior analytical, creative, and problem-solving capacities. Superintelligent AI represents the most advanced and potentially transformative level of machine intelligence, often discussed in theoretical and ethical debates.

2.4 Characteristics and Features of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence possesses several defining features and capabilities that distinguish it from traditional computational systems (Bouma'raf, 2024):

- Problem-solving capability: AI can analyze and address problems even in the absence of complete data.
- Cognitive reasoning and perception: AI systems can recognize patterns, interpret information, and understand context.
- Knowledge acquisition and application: AI can acquire, store, and apply knowledge across multiple domains.
- Learning from experience: Through iterative feedback loops, AI systems refine their outputs over time.
- Knowledge transfer: Previously acquired knowledge can be applied to new situations or datasets.

- Rapid responsiveness: AI systems can react instantaneously to changes in data or external environments.
- Decision-support functionality: AI assists in administrative, analytical, and strategic decision-making.
- Ambiguity management: AI is capable of operating effectively under conditions of uncertainty or incomplete information.

Collectively, these characteristics illustrate AI's potential to replicate and enhance human capabilities, increasing efficiency and adaptability across fields—including journalism, where these features are redefining news production and dissemination.

3. The Concept of AI Journalism

A variety of terms are used to describe the integration of artificial intelligence technologies within the field of journalism—among them *automated journalism*, *robot journalism*, *algorithmic journalism*, and *AI journalism*. Each of these terms refers to the use of AI-based tools, software, and algorithms to automatically generate journalistic content with minimal or no human intervention, apart from the role of programmers and data scientists who design these algorithms for editorial purposes (Break, 2020, pp. 448–526).

AI journalism can therefore be defined as a form of journalism that relies primarily on artificial intelligence technologies to perform key newsroom operations. Its advantages include enhancing the quality and analytical depth of news content, streamlining research and editing processes, diversifying the range of content available to audiences, improving advertising effectiveness, and increasing the overall productivity and revenues of media organizations (Al-Rashid, 2024).

Another definition views AI journalism as:

“The use of algorithms, robots, applications, websites, and AI-powered tools in the production of journalistic content, whether these technologies are operated directly by journalists or employed by media institutions and platforms for automated reporting” (Abdel Halim, 2024).

This definition encapsulates the multifaceted nature of AI journalism, emphasizing its dual role as both a technological innovation and a professional practice that redefines how information is created, processed, and distributed in the digital ecosystem.

3.1 Advantages of AI Journalism

AI journalism—often referred to as *seventh-generation journalism* relies on advanced digital technologies and intelligent applications capable of reasoning, analyzing, and even making autonomous editorial decisions.

According to Dr. Mohamed Abdel Zaher, the main advantages of this new model of journalism include (Abu Hadb, 2024):

1. **Predictive capabilities:**
AI systems can analyze large datasets to anticipate news events or trends before they occur, allowing for proactive coverage.
2. **Dependence on advanced network technologies:**
AI journalism leverages seventh-generation digital infrastructures to facilitate efficient media production, distribution, and audience interaction.
3. **Transformation of the sender–receiver model:**
The traditional role of the journalist as a singular sender of information is diminishing, replaced by algorithmic systems capable of automated content delivery.
4. **Emergence of anonymous media platforms:**
AI technologies have facilitated the rise of news platforms that produce and disseminate content without clear human authorship.
5. **Dominance of global technology corporations:**
Media production and distribution are increasingly controlled by large technology conglomerates, leading to greater centralization of power in the communication industry.
6. **Widening of the global media gap:**
The unequal access to AI technologies among nations and media institutions has intensified disparities in news production and dissemination capacities.
7. **Privacy concerns:**
The widespread adoption of AI in journalism raises serious ethical issues, including the violation of individual and societal privacy through automated data collection and analysis.

These features illustrate both the potential and the perils of AI journalism. While it promises efficiency, accuracy, and predictive insight, it also introduces new challenges related to transparency, accountability, and media ethics.

3.2 AI-Generated Media Content

Partadiredja, Serrano, and Ljubenkov (2020) define *AI-generated media content* as any type of journalistic material—text, audio, video, or image—produced by an AI-powered system. Such systems rely on intelligent algorithms that execute pre-programmed instructions to perform tasks such as drafting news stories, editing video footage, and formatting content for publication.

Over time, these algorithms have evolved to handle increasingly complex journalistic activities, including:

- **Automated news production** for various media outlets.
- **Narrative text generation** that resembles human writing styles.

- **Summarization of extensive datasets or scientific materials** for accessible reporting.

This process relies heavily on *Natural Language Generation (NLG)*—a subfield of computational linguistics that enables machines to produce written text that closely imitates human authorship.

Consequently, AI has moved beyond being merely an assistive technology for journalists. It has become an autonomous content creator capable of performing many traditional editorial tasks independently (Boumakhila, 2023).

3.3 The Use of Artificial Intelligence in Journalistic Writing

Media experts generally classify the use of AI in journalistic writing into three major stages (Al-Dalou et al., 2022):

1. Story Discovery:

AI systems analyze large datasets and documents to detect emerging patterns, topics, or anomalies, automatically notifying journalists or editors of potential stories. However, the determination of newsworthiness still requires human editorial judgment to evaluate and filter the results.

2. Story Production:

Automated content generation has been widely adopted in data-rich fields such as finance, sports, and meteorology. For instance, in 2014, the Associated Press began automating its corporate earnings reports. Whereas it previously produced around 300 reports per quarter, the adoption of AI increased that number to nearly 3,700 reports in the same timeframe—a number that continues to grow.

3. Story Distribution:

Media organizations employ AI-driven algorithms and bots to track reader preferences and tailor content recommendations. For example, Bloomberg uses AI within its mobile application to generate concise summaries of trending stories. These summaries are continually updated based on user engagement patterns, optimizing distribution according to audience behavior.

Through these applications, AI is becoming deeply embedded within the journalistic workflow—not as a replacement for journalists, but as a powerful tool that enhances efficiency, scalability, and audience personalization. It represents a fundamental shift in the epistemology and practice of news production in the digital age.

4. Manifestations of Change in Journalistic Writing from Electronic Journalism to Artificial Intelligence

4.1 Manifestations of Change in Electronic Journalism

Electronic journalism has fundamentally redefined the media landscape and altered the configuration of mainstream communication. This transformation is evident in the shift of topic selection, agenda-setting, and the prioritization of issues dominating public discourse once they enter the online sphere (Toufiani, 2021).

In traditional journalism, editors faced the constant challenge of selecting which news items to deliver to readers, constrained by space limitations and the varied needs of audiences. Consequently, printed newspapers relied on specific editorial templates and journalistic genres, each with distinct functions and stylistic conventions (Ramadan, 2018).

The emergence of online newspapers, however, introduced profound changes. The most notable of these was the ability to continuously update news and information in real time, making online outlets pioneers in the publication of live, evolving events (Belkheiri, 2014).

Key indicators of this transformation include the following:

- **New temporality:**
Online journalism operates beyond fixed publication cycles. News is updated continuously rather than daily or weekly, marking a break from the periodic rhythms of print media.
- **Interactivity:**
Readers engage more freely with digital content through website searches, comment sections, forums, and social media integration, establishing two-way communication channels.
- **Spaces for public debate:**
Online journalism has expanded the public sphere by creating interactive spaces—such as blogs, chat rooms, and comment threads—where readers can discuss and critique issues of public concern.
- **Multimedia integration:**
Digital platforms combine text, sound, images, and video in unified, interactive formats, transforming the news experience into a multi-sensory process (Hammami, 2006).

The evolution of journalistic performance can thus be summarized through the following transformations:

1. **From periodic release to continuous publication:**
Traditionally, journalism adhered to strict deadlines and publication cycles. With online platforms, the notion of *periodicity* has become obsolete, replaced by constant and instantaneous dissemination of news (Jendoubi, 2010, pp. 61–72).
2. **Multimedia convergence:**
While traditional media relied on a single symbolic system (such as text or audio), digital journalism integrates multiple modes—text, still and moving images, and sound—into one interactive ecosystem (Ramadan, 2018).
3. **Hypertextual writing:**
Online journalism employs hyperlinked keywords and phrases that connect readers to related content, facilitating non-linear navigation and enhancing depth of understanding (Jendoubi, 2010).

4. Interactive relationship with audiences:

Digital journalism emphasizes real-time engagement with readers through emails, feedback mechanisms, and analytics tools that allow editors to measure audience responses and tailor content accordingly (Al-'Iqab, 2013).

These indicators illustrate that electronic journalism represents not merely a shift in medium but a transformation in the very logic of news production—where immediacy, participation, and technological integration redefine the journalistic experience.

4.2 Manifestations of Change in Journalistic Writing through Artificial Intelligence

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into journalistic writing signifies a profound paradigm shift in how news is produced, edited, and disseminated. Unlike electronic journalism—which emphasized interactivity, hypertextuality, and multimedia integration—AI journalism introduces automation, predictive analytics, and algorithmic personalization, reshaping the essence of both content creation and journalistic labor.

The main manifestations of this change can be outlined as follows:

1. Automation of news production:
AI-driven algorithms can generate news articles autonomously using structured data sources such as sports results, financial updates, and weather forecasts. This capability has dramatically expanded both the speed and volume of news production (Al-Dalou et al., 2022).
2. Predictive journalism:
Through advanced data modeling, AI systems can forecast future events or identify trends before they unfold, shifting journalism from reactive reporting to proactive analysis (Abu Hadb, 2024).
3. Personalized content delivery:
AI enables individualized news experiences based on readers' interests, browsing history, and behavioral data. While this enhances engagement, it also raises ethical concerns related to *filter bubbles* and selective exposure (Boumakhila, 2023).
4. Enhanced data analysis and investigative capabilities:
AI systems can process and visualize massive datasets, identifying hidden connections and patterns that might elude human journalists. This has strengthened investigative journalism by adding analytical depth and precision (Hussein et al., 2024).
5. Redefinition of the journalist's role:
The journalist is increasingly shifting from being a sole content creator to becoming a *curator*, *analyst*, and *ethical supervisor* overseeing AI-generated outputs. This transformation raises debates about professionalism, credibility,

and accountability in the era of machine-assisted journalism (Abdel Halim, 2024).

In summary, artificial intelligence has transformed journalistic writing from a predominantly interactive digital practice into a data-driven, predictive, and automated process. This evolution presents both opportunities—such as efficiency and innovation—and challenges, including ethical dilemmas, job displacement, and the preservation of human editorial judgment.

II. Conclusion:

The study concludes that journalistic writing has undergone a significant transformation, evolving from electronic journalism to AI-driven journalism. While electronic journalism is distinguished by features such as hypertextuality, multimedia integration, and interactivity, the emergence of artificial intelligence has introduced more advanced and complex practices, including automation, predictive reporting, algorithmic personalization, and data-based decision-making.

This transition signifies not only a change in technological tools but also a redefinition of the journalist's professional identity. In the age of AI, the journalist is no longer solely a producer of content but rather a curator, supervisor, and ethical gatekeeper responsible for overseeing automated systems.

Based on the study's findings, several recommendations are proposed:

1. Balancing technology and ethics:

Media institutions must ensure that AI adoption in journalism adheres to ethical standards of accuracy, transparency, and accountability.

2. Capacity building:

Journalists should be trained to use AI tools effectively, combining technical competence with critical awareness of their limitations.

3. Privacy protection:

Clear regulatory frameworks should be established to safeguard personal and collective privacy in the context of AI-powered journalism.

4. Hybrid models:

Media organizations should adopt hybrid approaches that combine human creativity and ethical oversight with the efficiency of AI systems.

5. Further research:

Continued academic inquiry is necessary to assess the long-term effects of AI on journalistic integrity, audience trust, and democratic communication.

Ultimately, artificial intelligence should not be viewed as a substitute for human journalism but as a complementary force that—if managed responsibly—can enhance the quality, diversity, and inclusivity of media content in the digital age.

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