



AI presenting information: The rise of AI news anchors in journalism

Notícias apresentadas por IA: A ascensão dos pivôs artificiais no jornalismo mundial

Canavilhas, João

Universidade da Beira Interior (UBI)

jc@ubi.pt



Gonçalves, Adriana

Universidade da Beira Interior (UBI)

adriana.goncalves@ubi.pt



Biolchi, Bárbara

Universidade da Beira Interior (UBI)

barbara.biolchi@ubi.pt



Occhipinti, Gabriela

Universidade Estadual Paulista (UNESP)

gabriela.occhipinti@unesp.br



How to cite:

Canavilhas, J., Gonçalves, A., Biolchi, B., & Occhipinti, G. (2025). Notícias apresentadas por IA: A ascensão dos pivôs artificiais no jornalismo mundial. *RAE-IC, Revista de la Asociación Española de Investigación de la Comunicación*, 12(e), raeic12e02. <https://doi.org/10.24137/raeic.12.e.2>

Abstract:

The use of generative AI in journalism has expanded to include the creation of text, images, and videos, prompting concerns about the role of journalists and the limitations of this technology. This exploratory study proposes mapping the use of AI news anchors in media outlets in different countries, based on a systematic literature review of scientific databases (*Scopus* and *Web of Science*) and the snowball technique. The analysis of the literature reflects the lack of a single concept and highlights the diversity of perspectives on the role and effects of the use of AI news anchor. Based on the 20 cases identified across 14 countries, the study analyses how AI news anchor fit into media innovation strategies, discussing the associated risks, such as transparency issues and potential loss of credibility. Ultimately, this article aims to promote a critical understanding of this innovation and determine whether AI news anchors represent a positive development for journalism or pose a threat to its ethical and professional principles.

Keywords: innovation; journalism; generative AI; Artificial Intelligence; AI news anchor; news; transparency.

Resumo:

A aplicação de IA generativa no jornalismo tem-se estendido à criação de texto, imagem e vídeo, levantando preocupações sobre o papel do jornalista e os limites do uso desta tecnologia. Este trabalho, de âmbito exploratório, propõe um mapeamento do uso de pivôs artificiais - apresentadores de notícias criados por IA - em meios de comunicação de diferentes países, com base na revisão sistemática de literatura nas bases de dados científicas (*Scopus* e *Web of Science*) e na técnica “bola de neve”. A análise da literatura reflete a ausência de um conceito único e evidencia a diversidade de perspetivas sobre

o papel e os efeitos do uso de pivôs artificiais. A partir dos casos identificados (N=20), distribuídos por 14 países, o estudo analisa o modo como o uso de pivôs artificiais se enquadra em estratégias de inovação dos media e discute os riscos associados à adoção desta tecnologia, nomeadamente questões de transparência e a possível perda de credibilidade. Por fim, o artigo procura contribuir para a compreensão crítica desta inovação, se os pivôs artificiais representam uma evolução positiva para o jornalismo ou um risco para os seus princípios éticos e profissionais.

Palavras-chave: inovação; jornalismo; IA generativa; Inteligência Artificial; pivô artificial; telejornal; transparência

1. INTRODUCTION

The increasing use of AI tools in journalism has challenged traditional practices, raising ethical, professional and economic questions. This technology has reformulated various journalists' roles, from gathering information to producing and distributing news on digital platforms. One of the most controversial applications that is still little explored in the literature is the use of AI news anchors developed using generative AI techniques. These AI news anchors have been labelled in various ways, reflecting different perspectives on the technology and its functions. Examples include AI news anchor (Bohacek & Farid, 2024; Fitria, 2024; Xue et al., 2022; Wang & Zhu, 2021), AI virtual anchor (Li, 2025), AI-generated news anchor (Levy-Landesberg & Cao, 2024) and artificial intelligence-generated avatar (Osorio-Andrade et al., 2024), AI news presenter (Fitria, 2024), AI synthetic anchor (Zhang, 2023), AI-driven news presenter (Ndlovu, 2024), and AI-generated newsreader (Ndlovu, 2024).

On the one hand, these terms imply different contexts and viewpoints regarding the degree of autonomy, realism, and integration of these systems within journalistic workflows. On the other hand, they highlight the lack of theoretical discussion and consensus on a univocal concept capable of describing this technological application in journalism. Some of the terms, such as 'avatar' or 'presenter', do not directly refer to news presenters and can be applied to other cases, such as artificial influencers;

therefore, they are too broad. For this reason, we have chosen to call them AI news anchors: the word 'anchor' is used to refer to news presenters, and 'artificial' refers to the use of AI.

Known as realistic avatars (Bohacek & Farid, 2023), these virtual anchors mimic humans in appearance and voice, and are sometimes used to replicate well-known presenters. Media outlets in countries such as China, South Korea, the United Kingdom and Venezuela use AI news anchors to present news programmes or videos distributed on their websites and YouTube channels (Fitria, 2024; Levy-Landesberg & Cao, 2024). However, as these systems become more sophisticated and integrated into newsrooms, it is essential to consider their impact on journalism.

This article uses the 'snowball' technique to map the use cases of AI news anchors and discuss the possible risks of this innovation in journalism. Key concerns include the impact on the credibility of information, transparency in communication with the public, and the potential loss of jobs for journalists whose role is limited to that of anchor. Additionally, the objectivity of AI-generated news and the risks of information manipulation are examined. Through a review of the literature and analysis of the presented cases, the article seeks to determine whether AI news anchors represent a beneficial innovation for the media in overcoming structural and financial crises, or if they pose a threat to the traditional values of the profession.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. THE USE OF GENERATIVE AI IN THE CREATION OF ANCHORS: INNOVATION AND EFFICIENCY

The media have harnessed advances in generative AI to respond to various economic and social challenges brought about by digitalisation. The media are therefore trying to implement innovation strategies that focus on the four stages of the news production process: production, distribution, organisation and marketing (García-Avilés et al., 2019). Innovation strategies always aim to improve something, whether that be processes, channels, content, the business model or the relationship with the audience. The results can include audience growth, increased revenue, greater prestige and

impact, greater audience engagement with content, and greater efficiency in production processes (García-Avilés et al., 2019).

Against the backdrop of the quest for innovation, journalistic initiatives have emerged that utilise generative AI, including the creation of AI news anchors. Although the first experiments took place almost a decade ago, more recent advances in generative AI have made AI news anchors increasingly realistic with more natural movements, to the extent that they are now difficult to distinguish from humans (Zhang, 2023). Hyper-realistic representations have been created using deep learning techniques, advanced voice synthesis, and facial modelling, which are almost indistinguishable from real people (Zhang, 2023). Others adopt a more minimalist and stylised approach to emphasise their artificiality (Osorio-Andrade et al., 2024). Regardless of their visual style, however, these figures are programmed to read texts and convey them with intonation and expression similar to that of a human presenter.

The use of AI news anchors can be considered an innovation in news distribution, as it provides viewers and users with a new way to engage with the news, thereby creating a competitive advantage over other content producers (Li, 2025). This technology enables news to be delivered in a more efficient and personalised way, increasing profits and attracting more viewers, particularly younger ones (Domínguez-Partida & García-Félix, 2025).

However, the concept of AI news anchors is not new. In 2001, the British Network Company launched Ananova, the first virtual presenter. This was followed by similar developments in Japan, the USA, South Korea and China (Baloch & Noor, 2024; Zhang, 2023). However, these early examples were developed using computational resources predating generative AI.

The first AI-generated anchor was not developed until almost two decades later in 2018 by the Chinese news agency Xinhua (Tusa & Tejedor, 2019). To create this virtual presenter, Chinese technology company Sogou used images from Xinhua's broadcasts, as well as natural language models, voice recognition, automated lip reading and facial

expression detection, to develop a system capable of generating videos from textual commands (Levy-Landesberg & Cao, 2024).

In its present state of development, this generative technology has produced at least two types of AI news anchor: realistic ones, based on human presenters that mimic human gestures, expressions and appearance; and fictitious ones, that do not imitate the human image and have stylised or animated visual characteristics (Osorio-Andrade et al., 2024). These presenters are being developed to increase productivity, efficiency and speed because these anchors can work uninterruptedly on a wide range of topics (Ali & Ferrucci, 2025).

In the current scenario, AI systems are assisting with several tasks that were previously performed by journalists, thereby contributing to a transformation in the methods of gathering, processing, producing and disseminating information (Tejedor & Vila, 2021). These changes raise questions about the profession's values and present multiple challenges to journalistic activity.

2.2. ETHICAL AND REGULATORY CHALLENGES IN THE USE OF AI NEWS ANCHORS

The growing use of AI news anchors raises a number of ethical and regulatory issues that have yet to be addressed in journalism. This new frontier of automation extends beyond the technical aspects of innovation to raise deeper questions about transparency, credibility, responsibility, trust, and the essence of journalistic practice (Ali & Ferrucci, 2025).

AI news anchors represent a broader context of automation and generative AI use that has transformed journalistic activity and the entire news ecosystem (Diakopoulos et al., 2024). The integration of AI into news production has been driven by the promise of greater efficiency, scalability, and personalisation. However, concerns have been raised about the opacity of these systems, algorithmic bias, and the difficulty of incorporating journalistic values into such tools (Diakopoulos et al., 2024; Ali & Ferrucci, 2025).

This simulation of the anchor function immediately raises the question analysed in the sample studied in this article: is the audience informed that the information is presented

by an AI news anchor? And is the process of creating the AI news anchor explained to the audience?

Transparency is one of the most significant ethical challenges associated with the use of generative AI in journalism (Canavilhas & Biolchi, 2024). The opacity and lack of clarity surrounding these AI news anchors compromises authenticity and erode audience trust in the media, thereby undermining the credibility of journalism as an institution (Levy-Landesberg & Cao, 2024).

When AI news anchors have a visual appearance and voice that is indistinguishable from humans and their content is not identified as AI-produced, it becomes difficult to uphold the ethical norms of journalism, which are based on principles of truth, transparency and responsibility. In the face of this challenge, Helberger et al. (2022, p. 1620) emphasise that:

Truly responsible use of journalistic AI is less about lists and more about the responsible organization of processes: the processes that result in the identification of relevant values, but also ways to concentrate, contest, formalize, implement, measure and continuously improve the way journalistic AI lives up to these values.

Therefore, there will be required to promote more understandable ways of explaining the technologies used, not just the obligation to indicate that certain content has been developed by AI (Canavilhas & Biolchi, 2024).

Another problem associated with the use of AI news anchors, and relevant to other applications of AI in journalism, concerns the responsibility and accountability that journalists have towards society (Li, 2025). When content written or presented by AI contains errors, who should be held responsible? How is information distributed by AI news anchors verified? Do media outlets that use this technology have a code of standards that addresses such situations?

These are pertinent questions that require us to consider those involved in the news process, including professionals from IT, design and management, as well as other areas.

"These individuals, termed 'techno-actors' (Canavilhas et al., 2016), may originate from either the media sector or the technology companies responsible for providing automation and artificial intelligence systems."

The issue at stake is responsibility and the perception of authorship, which is becoming increasingly diluted between journalists and developers. This makes it difficult to attribute responsibility in the event of an error or piece of misinformation. These systems' human-like appearance and fluent speech (Domínguez-Partida & García-Félix, 2025) can mislead the public into believing they are interacting with journalists, conflicting with the public's values of transparency and trust. Therefore, it is imperative to define ethical limits for the adoption of these systems that include the principles of truthfulness, responsibility, and public service which guide journalistic practice.

Several media institutions have developed standards for the use of generative AI in new application scenarios. In some cases, these standards have been adopted as regulations, while others have incorporated pre-existing style guides (Sánchez-García et al., 2025). These media self-regulation mechanisms generally highlight the role of human journalists in fact-checking, accountability and transparency — values also emphasised by recommendations from organisations such as the OECD and the European Union (Sánchez-García et al., 2025).

The European Commission (EC) has drafted the first AI law (EU AI Act), which classifies AI systems according to the level of risk they pose (minimal, medium, high or unacceptable) and requires transparency, evaluation and human supervision measures. The aim of this legislation is to improve the processes for developing and using this technology, giving it a humanistic focus (Peñafiel-Saiz et al., 2024). However, these regulations only apply to the use of AI in specific contexts, such as media outlets or the EU. Given the rapid pace of AI advancements, the debate on the implications of generative AI for journalism remains urgent.

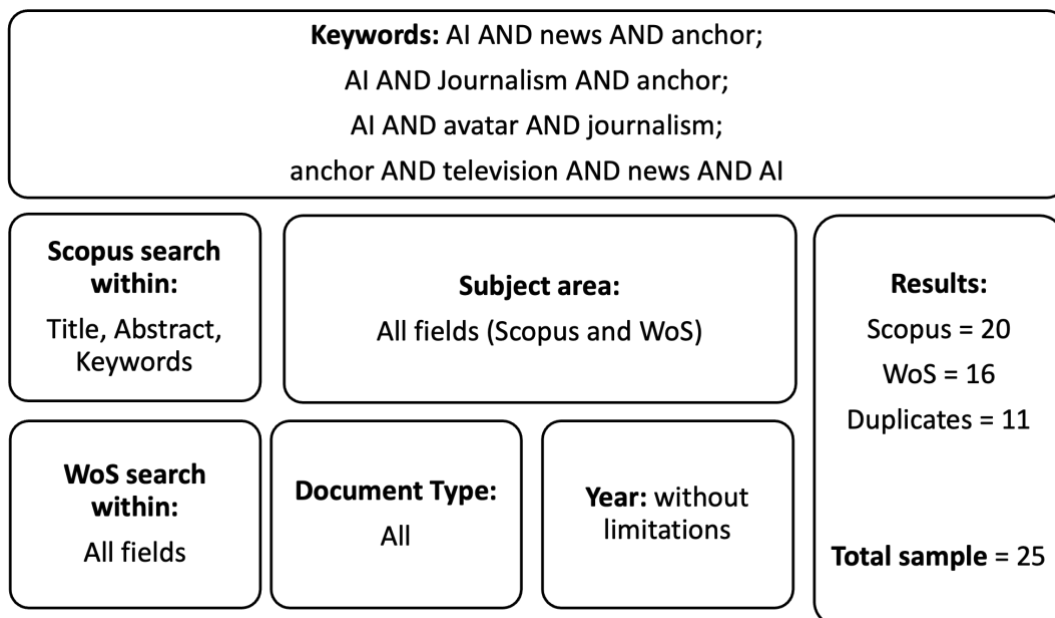
3. METHODOLOGY

This paper follows a qualitative approach, suitable for studying emerging phenomena such as the use of AI news anchors in the media outlets, whether in the traditional

format for television or for digital platforms (websites and Youtube). The research aims to: (1) map the cases of the use of AI news anchors in the presentation of news programmes; (2) discuss the objectives, risks and limits of the use of AI news anchors in journalism.

Firstly, a bibliographic search was carried out in the scientific databases Scopus and Web of Science to survey cases of AI news anchors in the world's media. The database search was conducted on 7 May 2025. Various combinations of keywords were used in three languages: English, Spanish and Portuguese. Searches in Portuguese for combinations such as “âncora AND inteligência AND artificial”, “jornalismo AND automatização AND âncora”, “pivô AND IA AND jornalismo” e “pivô AND notícias AND artificial” yielded no results. However, when the Spanish terms “inteligencia AND artificial AND avatar AND periodismo” and “presentador AND virtual” were used, one scientific article was found in the Scopus database (Tusa & Tejedor, 2019). Searching for keywords in English resulted in 25 publications (Figure 1), bringing the total number of papers in the final sample to 26 (N = 26).

Figure 1. Summary of the systematic review process (english words)



Source: Drawn up by the authors

The abstracts and keywords of the papers found in the two databases were analysed as a means of selection, resulting in a final sample of 26 scientific papers dedicated to this topic. As this was a residual sample, the 'snowball' technique was employed to continue identifying cases, as this is recommended for studies with small, limited and hard-to-find samples (Alloatti, 2014; Sánchez-García et al., 2025). Because this is a relatively recent and poorly systematised topic, the snowballing technique was effective in identifying instances of this technology's use, based on references not included in the aforementioned search engines' results. In several cases, the documented instances were found in media reports that utilise this technology.

After mapping the cases, the collected examples were analysed and described in chronological order. Finally, the main limitations and ethical risks associated with the use of generative AI in news presentation were discussed based on the case analysis.

4. RESULTS: MAPPING THE CASES OF AI NEWS ANCHORS

The methodological strategy enabled the identification of 20 cases (N = 20) spread across 14 countries: China, South Korea, Kuwait, India, Russia, the USA, Indonesia, Zimbabwe, Greece, England, Saudi Arabia, Latvia, Venezuela and Mexico. South Korea had the highest number of cases recorded (4), followed by China, England and Mexico with two cases each. Three cases of AI news anchors were found in Spanish: two in Mexico and one in Venezuela. At the time of writing, no cases of this technology being used in Portuguese-language media had been recorded, only the identification of an experiment by two Brazilian researchers who created an AI news anchor using free AI systems for scientific purposes (Silva & Piccinin, 2024).

4.1. 2018: FIRST AI NEWS ANCHOR IN CHINA

Although numerous examples of virtual anchors created using computer graphics already existed, the first recorded use of AI to create an AI news anchor was in 2018, when the Chinese news agency Xinhua revealed that it had created the world's first AI news anchor in collaboration with the technology company Sogou (Xue et al., 2022). The agency's AI news anchor, who can speak both English and Chinese, were modelled on

its anchors Zhang Zhao and Qiu Hao. They were designed to simulate their voices, lip movements and facial expressions (Wang, 2021; Xue et al., 2022; Li, 2025).

The following year, Xinhua launched a third AI news anchor, this time female, modelled on anchor Qu Meng (Silveira, 2020). As the systems were developed using input from the agency's journalists, the AI-generated videos produced highly natural results (Levy-Landesberg & Cao, 2024; Li, 2025). For the agency, the main advantages of using this technology were reducing production costs, increasing the efficiency of daily news coverage and improving the quality of reporting. It also enabled faster urgent coverage, as it does not tire the robot anchor as it would a human anchor (Silveira, 2020, p. 50).

4.2. 2019: FIRST CASE IN EUROPE

The first experiment to develop an AI news anchor took place in Latvia in 2019. Nicknamed Laura, it was modelled on the voice of a popular regional news presenter (Levy-Landesberg & Cao, 2024). This project emerged from a collaboration between Tilde, Europe's leading language technology company, and DELFI, Latvia's largest media company (Strategeast, 2019).

4.3. 2020: EXPANDING CASES

In 2020, the British news agency Reuters unveiled a prototype for an AI news anchor, developed in collaboration with Synthesia, designed to present sports programmes in real time. Based on the image of a channel presenter, the AI news anchor was created using deepfake techniques to synchronise text and lip movements. According to the company, this initiative aimed to personalise content and was initially implemented for sports coverage only, but with the intention of extending it to other topics in the future (Barbizan, 2021).

Also in 2020, South Korea's MBN channel unveiled an AI version of anchor Kim Ju-ha, recreating her appearance, voice, and gestures using videos of the real anchor as a reference. The aim of applying this technology was to innovate news presentation while maintaining the channel's visual identity. Furthermore, the use of AI news anchors

would enable the rapid and continuous distribution of news in the event of breaking information, according to the company (Fitria, 2024).

4.4. 2023: "BOOM" OF AI NEWS ANCHORS

In 2023, diversification and the global expansion of Artificial Intelligence are the dominant themes. At this stage, AI is not just a means of innovation for some media outlets, such as Channel 1 in the US, but is becoming part of their business strategy. The US company uses AI news anchors to present all content, producing more personalised content. However, it notes that a human review is carried out to guarantee the quality of the information and avoid AI hallucinations (Ali & Ferrucci, 2025).

Also in 2023, Alice was introduced as the first AI anchor on the African continent. Developed by CITE (Centre for Innovation and Technology), a digital media start-up based in Zimbabwe, Alice reads news articles selected by human editors using Flexclip and Synthesia, two AI tools for video editing and text-to-image generation. According to the start-up, Alice's purpose is to innovate and increase the reach of local digital media (Ndlovu, 2024).

In China, People's Daily, the government-run media outlet, continues to use AI news anchors with the launch of Ren Xiaorong (Silva & Piccinin, 2024). Operating 24/7, its interaction with the public is limited to pre-programmed responses to specific queries regarding China's annual "Two Sessions" political conference. Users can select predefined questions, and the anchor provides generic responses that align with the policies of the Chinese Communist Party. Free or personalised questions are not permitted (Silva & Piccinin, 2024). Visually, the anchor is quite realistic, but users have noticed her synthesised voice and lack of expressiveness (Koetse, 2023; Loh, 2023; Cleave, 2023).

In India, the India Today Group introduced the AI news anchor female Sana on the Aaj Tak channel in 2023. With a lifelike appearance and the ability to speak several languages, she provides news updates on various topics several times a day. The technology behind Sana's creation combines natural language processing (NLP),

machine learning, and voice synthesis to produce a figure capable of interacting similarly to humans (Fitria, 2024).

In the same year, TVOne, one of Indonesia's leading private broadcasters, developed three virtual newsreaders called Sasya, Nadira and Bhoomi. Each has distinct visual and cultural characteristics reflecting the diversity of Indonesian audiences. The broadcaster created an Instagram account (@tvOne.ai) for the AI news anchors to present news content in multiple languages and local dialects, such as Javanese and Sundanese, to broaden the channel's reach. According to the company, this integration aims to streamline the news process, expand audiences and provide personalised content for over 300 ethnic groups in the country (Fitria, 2024).

Meanwhile, Fedha is Kuwait's first AI news anchor, launched in August 2023 by Kuwait News, a digital newspaper affiliated with the Kuwait Times. The main objective is for the AI news anchor to read news bulletins on Kuwait News' social networks, but the project is still in the testing phase. Abdullah Bofain, Kuwait News's deputy editor-in-chief, argues that the initiative aims to modernise the presentation of news in the country (Fitria, 2024).

In Russia, the broadcaster Svoje TV has introduced Snezhana Tumanova, an AI news anchor female who presents the weather. The Forecast the Future programme uses neural networks to generate the character and prepare the scripts, as well as creating the graphics, and airs five editions a day. Despite these technological advances, Svoje TV has stated that it does not intend to abandon human meteorologists completely, and will continue to produce the traditional weather forecast (Fitria, 2024).

In South Korea, experiments with AI news anchors appeared on two media channels in 2023: the national broadcaster SBS and the YTN channel. SBS presented Zae-In, an AI news anchor who presented the news for five months. Zae-In was developed by the technology company Pulse9, which used deepfake technology to create a highly realistic face, gestures, voice and body language. The YTN channel presented two AI news anchors during the channel's 30th anniversary celebrations: Y-Go, who has a male appearance, and Y-On, who has a female appearance. These anchors were developed

by the company ESTsoft and created by combining the faces of YTN employees (Seung-hyun, 2024; 'Jeju Introduces Virtual News Presenter', 2024).

Elaph, an Arabic online newspaper based in London and founded by the Saudi journalist Othman Al-Omeir, has introduced an AI news anchor named Hala Al Wardi as part of an innovative strategy to attract a younger and more diverse audience. The initiative aims to expand the publication into other languages, including Hebrew and Kurdish, and reach minority groups such as the Amazigh people in Morocco (Arab News, 2023).

In Europe, the Greek public broadcaster ERT launched the AI news anchor Hermes with the aim of innovating and improving audience engagement with the television channel. In the US, CNN conducted an experiment using AI technology to mimic the image and voice of one of its newsreaders, Anderson Cooper (Bohacek & Farid, 2023). However, this was a one-off for the presentation of a special programme.

4.5. 2024: BROADENING THE CONTEXTS OF USE

In line with the pursuit of innovation and technological experimentation, other media outlets experimented with the use of AI news anchors in 2024, expanding the scope of initiatives and geographical contexts. This year has seen the implementation of AI news anchors in Saudi Arabia through the Asharq News initiative. The news channel has created an AI news anchor that mimics presenter Hadil Eleyan and can present information in several languages (Arab News, 2024).

Another use case of this technology emerged in South Korea in the same year, with J-na, who presents the government programme Weekly Jeju on Jeju Island, demonstrating continuity in the development of AI news anchors in the country and the trend of replicating real presenters (Seung-hyun, 2024).

Meanwhile, on the other side of the world, Mexico has witnessed the first initiatives involving this technology, courtesy of Grupo Formula and the digital newspaper NTV Noticias. Grupo Formula created NAT, Latin America's first AI news anchor, to attract young audiences and encourage the shift from traditional media to digital streaming. Initially presenting general news, NAT then switched to entertainment. The group has

also developed SOFI, a female presenter who covers political news, and MAX, a male avatar who covers sports news. These three anchors are the result of combining various AI technologies, including voice, image, and content generation, with human curation (Domínguez-Partida & García-Félix, 2025). In Mexico, journalist Antonio Tello has also been mimicked by an AI news anchor presenting news on NTV, which is shared on social networks (Domínguez-Partida & García-Félix, 2025).

In Venezuela, Operación Retuit has emerged: a collaborative initiative by Venezuelan media outlets to develop content for social networks, protecting journalists from the country's ongoing repression. AI is used to this end to protect identities and increase the reach of information in the context of current censorship, in the face of growing repression and persecution following the presidential elections on 28 July 2024 (ConnectasOrg, 2024).

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Journalism has been looking for solutions to get out of a fragile situation that has led to the closure of media outlets around the world, having been plunged into an economic crisis for more than two decades.

Throughout this troubled period, new technologies have played a dual role within the media ecosystem. Sometimes they introduce new competitors, such as blogs or social networks, which exacerbates the crisis in the sector. At other times, they have supported the news production and distribution process, making it more efficient and improving quality.

It is in this context that Artificial Intelligence emerges. It is seen as a threat to journalists' jobs and a potential source of disinformation, but also as a tool that will improve the news process in all its phases. This study focuses precisely on this ambiguous subject: AI news anchors.

To understand the scale of the phenomenon, the study began with a literature review on the subject, followed by mapping cases of AI news anchors used in news programme presentations.

The literature review identified 26 scientific papers on the subject of AI news anchors in journalism, 25 of which were in English and one of which was in Spanish. Of these, 20 cases of AI news anchors used in various media were identified across 14 countries. South Korea, China, England and Mexico had the highest incidence of this technology, with four, two and two cases respectively. The remaining countries had only one case each.

The use of generative AI to create AI news anchors was first mentioned in 2018 by a Chinese initiative which, according to its promoters, aimed to reduce costs and enable continuous production. Two years later, in 2020, the technology had progressed to the prototype stage of automation and customisation, with cases being registered in the United Kingdom and South Korea. In 2023, this technological application expanded globally in journalism, a trend that continued in 2024 with new use cases of AI news anchors emerging in risky contexts and repressive political environments as a strategy to protect journalists.

Having identified cases of AI news anchors being used, this paper lists the reasons why the media use this technology and discusses the associated risks and potential limits.

The most frequently cited reasons for the editorial use of this technology are efficiency, personalisation, and innovation in journalism. The aim is to increase productivity, scale up production, and optimise the business model (Herald, 2023; Levy-Landesberg & Cao, 2024).

In the context of the crisis affecting the sector, it is understandable that the media would look to AI news anchors as a means of increasing productivity without hiring humans. Several companies have suggested using this technology for long-form or last-minute coverage, as it enables a presenter to remain on air 24 hours a day.

In its broadest sense, the media refer to the possibility of using AI news anchors to broadcast news in several languages, combining efficiency and personalisation. In this case, the technology not only saves human resources, but also meets the information needs of linguistic and thematic niches. As Jarvis (2010) points out, it is better to serve niches well than to serve the masses badly, so there is great potential to monetise content here.

While it is clear that developing AI news anchors incurs costs for companies, research (Galily, 2018; Manfredi Sanchez & Ufarte Ruiz, 2020) indicates that this investment will be worthwhile in the medium term, as the entire process becomes more efficient while still enabling companies to respond to niche markets.

Another reason for using technology is innovation, which is associated with attracting new audiences, particularly younger ones (Domínguez-Partida & García-Félix, 2025). Increased prestige and a greater impact on the audience are two of the results of media innovation (García-Avilés et al., 2019), so using these technologies could give companies a competitive advantage (Li, 2025).

However, while young consumers are attracted to technological innovation, older consumers find it more difficult to relate to new technologies. In the case of AI news anchors, the problem is not related to traditional technological difficulties, since this type of audiovisual content does not require interaction. Rather, the problem lies in establishing a relationship with a virtual presenter. Although these representations are highly realistic, consumers find it difficult to identify with the presenter because they know it is virtual, and therefore empathy is not generated. This is important for solidifying relationships, gaining credibility and attracting audiences (Brittos & Rùhee, 2007).

While there are physical similarities between the virtual and the real, one must also consider the lack of spontaneity and predictability that are characteristic of algorithms. This creates a barrier between consumers and AI news anchors, which has repercussions for the credibility of the news products they report on.

In addition to the difficulty of engaging with the audience, there are other associated risks with the use of AI news anchors. Firstly, there is the possibility that human journalists will be made redundant or move to other jobs. In the cases studied, this is unlikely to happen because technology is presented as an alternative for situations of overwork or to fill niche roles, rather than as a replacement for human professionals. AI news anchors are presented as a way of adding value to information by diversifying the offering, so they do not seem to threaten human labour.

Finally, the use of virtual anchors could raise ethical issues since distinguishing between humans and machines is already difficult, and technological advances will only make this more challenging. This could undermine trust in the media and the credibility of journalism (Levy-Landesberg & Cao, 2024), which is fundamental to distinguishing journalism from other information-distributing activities.

To address this, each media outlet should publish its own AI usage guide, detailing when, where and how the technology is employed at various stages of the news process (Canavilhas & Biolchi, 2024). In the case of AI news anchors, strategies could include using a constant visual marker or a message at the beginning of each video, or other interactive methods to explain to the audience how that presenter was developed, thus promoting digital literacy.

The ultimate goal of this study was to determine whether AI news anchors represent a positive development or a risk to journalism. While there are arguments to defend both sides of the debate, the potential benefits of AI news anchors in breaking news and in creating programmes for linguistic or thematic niches seem to outweigh the risks, which can be mitigated with human supervision.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors are researchers at LabCom- Laboratory of Communication, a lab financed by national funds through FCT - Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P. (doi.org/10.54499/UIDB/00661/2020).

7. REFERENCES

Ali, M., & Ferrucci, P. (2025). 'Zero Human Emotion': AI Anchors and the Normative Repercussions. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 1–16.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/08838151.2025.2483213>

Alloatti, N. (2014, August 27–29). *Una discusión sobre la técnica de bola de nieve a partir de la experiencia de investigación en migraciones internacionales*. [Paper presentation]. IV Encuentro Latinoamericano de Metodología de las Ciencias Sociales, 2014, Costa Rica. <https://sedici.unlp.edu.ar/handle/10915/108403>

Arab News. (2023, July 13). *Elaph launches AI anchor in first for digital – native Arabic news site*. <https://www.arabnews.com/node/2337091/media>

Arab News. (2024, March 12). *Asharq News debuts AI anchor on air*. <https://www.arabnews.com/node/2475511/media>

Baloch, R. B., & Noor, R. (2024). A semiotic study of visual signifiers depicting female AI news anchors. *World of Media. Journal of Russian Media and Journalism Studies*, 4, 62-82. <https://cutt.ly/nrPv708s>

Barbizan, S. (2021). *Jornalismo em vídeo gerado por inteligência artificial: narrativas e credibilidade*. (Doctoral dissertation, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul). <https://tede2.pucrs.br/tede2/handle/tede/9555>

Bohacek, M., & Farid, H. (2024) The making of an AI news anchor—and its implications. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. U.S.A.*, 121(1), e2315678121. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2315678121>

Brittos, V.C., & Rùhee, P. (2007) A construção dos âncoras nos telejornais nacionais da Globo. In Mattos, S. (Org.), *Comunicação plural* (pp. 51-71). EDUFBA.

Canavilhas, J., & Biolchi, B. (2024). Inteligência Artificial e Transparência no Jornalismo. *Revista Mídia e Cotidiano*, 18(2), 43-64. <https://ubibliorum.ubi.pt/entities/publication/7932be35-edb7-40a5-808d-1baa09e0973e>

Canavilhas, J., Satuf, I., de Luna, D., Torres, V., Baccin, A., & Marques, A. (2016). Jornalistas e tecnoatores: a negociação de culturas profissionais em redações on-line. *Revista FAMECOS*, 23(3). <https://doi.org/10.15448/1980-3729.2016.3.24292>

Cleave, I. (2023, March 17). *Can you see what's wrong with news anchor?*. News. <https://cutt.ly/urPbqO07>

ConnectasOrg. (2024). *Operación Retuit*. <https://www.connectas.org/especiales/operacion-retuit/>

Diakopoulos, N., Cools, H., Helberger, N., Li, C., Kung, E., & Rinehart, A. (2024). Generative AI in journalism: The evolution of newswork and ethics in a generative information ecosystem. <https://hdl.handle.net/11245.1/9a0679dd-7bf8-4e01-9ba0-ba10409afe80>

Domínguez-Partida G. y García-Félix E. M. (2025). Entre la eficiencia y la desinformación: la integración de la inteligencia artificial en el periodismo mexicano. *Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico*, 31(1), 167-177. <https://doi.org/10.5209/emp.99504>

Fitria, T. (2024). Artificial Intelligence (AI) News Anchor: How AI's Performance in Journalistic Sector?. *Indonesia Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (iTELL) Journal*, 1(1), 29-42. <https://itell.or.id/journal/index.php/itelljournal/article/view/4>

Galily, Y. (2018). Artificial intelligence and sports journalism: Is it a sweeping change?. *Technology in Society*, 54, 47-51. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2018.03.001>

García-Avilés, J. A., Carvajal-Prieto, M., Arias, F., & De Lara-González, A. (2019). How journalists innovate in the newsroom. Proposing a model of the diffusion of innovations in media outlets. *The journal of media innovations*, 5(1), 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.5617/jomi.v5i1.3968>

Helberger, N., van Drunen, M., Moeller, J., Vrijenhoek, S., & Eskens, S. (2022). Towards a Normative Perspective on Journalistic AI: Embracing the Messy Reality of Normative Ideals. *Digital Journalism*, 10(10), 1605–1626. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2022.2152195>

Herald, T. G. (2023, May 12). *Greece introduces first Artificial Intelligence news presenter*. The Greek Herald. <https://greekherald.com.au/news/greece-introduces-first-artificial-intelligence-news-presenter/>

Jarvis, J. (2010). *O que faria o Google?* (1nd ed.). Gestãoplus editores.

Koetse, M. (2023, March 12). *Meet Ren Xiaorong, People's Daily AI Virtual News Anchor*. What's on Weibo. <https://www.whatsonweibo.com/meet-ren-xiaorong-peoples-daily-ai-virtual-news-anchor/>

Levy-Landesberg, H., & Cao, X. (2024). Anchoring voices: The news anchor's voice in China from television to AI. *Mídia, Cultura e Sociedade*, 47(2), 229-251. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01634437241270937>

Li, L. (2025). Impact of AI Virtual Anchors on Traditional News Anchors. *International Journal of Knowledge Management*, 21(1), 1-17. <https://www.igi-global.com/article/impact-of-ai-virtual-anchors-on-traditional-news-anchors/362624>

Loh, M. (2023, March 16). China's latest AI news anchor uses Q&A to teach propaganda. *Business Insider*. <https://www.businessinsider.com/china-ai-anchor-teach-propaganda-questions-answers-2023-3>

Manfredi Sánchez, J.L., & Ufarte Ruiz, M.J. (2020). Inteligencia artificial y periodismo: una herramienta contra la desinformación. *Revista CIDOB d'Afers Internacionals*, 124, 49-72. <http://doi.org/10.24241/rcai.2020.124.1.49>

Ndlovu, M. (2024). Audience perceptions of AI-driven news presenters: A case of 'Alice' in Zimbabwe. *Media, Culture & Society*, 46(8), 1692-1706. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01634437241270982>

Osorio-Andrade, C. F., Arango-Espinal, E., & Arango-Pastrana, C. A. (2024). De lo real a lo ficticio: evaluación de la credibilidad de noticias difundidas por humanos y por avatares creados con inteligencia artificial. *Palabra Clave*, 27(3), e2738. <https://doi.org/10.5294/pacla.2024.27.3.8>

Peñafiel-Saiz, C., Peña-Fernández, S., & Larrondo-Ureta, A. (2024). Oportunidades y desafíos de la inteligencia artificial en el marco legal europeo. In *La inteligencia artificial y la transformación del periodismo: narrativas, aplicaciones y herramientas* (pp. 15-40). Comunicación Social Ediciones y Publicaciones.

Sánchez-García, P., Diez-Gracia, A., Mayorga, I. R., & Jerónimo, P. (2025). Media Self-Regulation in the Use of AI: Limitation of Multimodal Generative Content and Ethical Commitments to Transparency and Verification. *Journalism and Media*, 6(1), 29.

<https://doi.org/10.3390/journalmedia6010029>

Seung-hyun, S. (2024, March 13). *Jeju introduces virtual news presenter*. The Korea Herald. <https://www.koreaherald.com/article/3346716>

Silva, E., & Piccinin, F. (2024). Narradores Artificiais Semelhantes Aos Orgânicos: Considerações Sobre Uma Experiência De Telejornal Gerado Por Ia. *Asas Da Palavra*, 21(1), 175-196. <https://revistas.unama.br/index.php/asasdapalavra/article/view/3393>

Silveira, C. (2020). *A falta de emoção dos apresentadores robôs chineses como obstáculo para a construção da credibilidade jornalística*. (Master's thesis, Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul). LUME UFRGS Repositório Digital: <https://bit.ly/3NWGBwv>

Strategeast (2019, March 6). *Latvian Tilde and DELFI introduce Europe's first AI news anchor*. <https://www.strategeast.org/latvian-tilde-and-delfi-introduce-europes-first-ai-news-anchor/>

Tait, A. (2023, October 20). *"Here is the news. You can't stop us": AI anchor Zae-In grants us an interview*. The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2023/oct/20/here-is-the-news-you-cant-stop-us-ai-anchor-zae-in-grants-us-an-interview>

Tejedor, S., & Vila, P. (2021). Exo Journalism: A Conceptual Approach to a Hybrid Formula between Journalism and Artificial Intelligence. *Journalism and Media*, 2(4), 830–840. <https://doi.org/10.3390/journalmedia2040048>

The Straits Times (2024, March 14). *Jeju introduces virtual news presenter*. <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/east-asia/jeju-introduces-virtual-news-presenter>

Tusa, F., & Tejedor, S. (2019). La Inteligencia Artificial en el periodismo: el caso de avatares y presentadores robóticos. Un estudio desde la percepción de los periodistas.

Revista Ibérica De Sistemas e Tecnologias De Informação, 267-279.

<https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/la-inteligencia-artificial-en-el-periodismo-caso/docview/2318538539/se-2>

Wang, Y. (2021). *The application of artificial intelligence in Chinese news media*. [Paper presentation]. 2nd International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Information Systems. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3469213.3470699>

Xue, K., Li, Y., & Jin, H. (2022). What Do You Think of AI? Research on the Influence of AI News Anchor Image on Watching Intention. *Behavioral Sciences*, 12(11), 465. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs12110465>

Zhang, Y. (2023). *The integration of traditional broadcasters with artificial intelligence in television news programmes*. [Paper presentation]. 2nd International Academic Conference on Public Art and Human Development 2022. <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/202315802009>

6. APPENDIX

Table 1. Identification of AI news anchor cases

Identification	Case	Year	Country	Reference
1	Agência Xinhua	2018	China	Fitria, 2024
2	Delfi	2019	Latvia	Levy-Landesberg & Cao, 2024
3	Agência Reuters	2020	England	Barbizan, 2021
4	MBN	2020	South Korea	Fitria, 2024
5	Wion	2023	Kuwait	Fitria, 2024
6	India Today Group	2023	India	Fitria, 2024
7	Svoye TV	2023	Russia	Fitria, 2024
8	Channel 1	2023	USA	Ali & Ferrucci, 2025
9	People's Daily	2023	China	Koetse, 2023; Loh, 2023; Cleave, 2023
10	tVOne	2023	Indonesia	Fitria, 2024
11	CITE	2023	Zimbabwe	Ndlovu, 2024
12	ERT	2023	Greece	Herald, 2023
13	Elaph	2023	England	Arab News, 2023
14	SBS	2023	South Korea	Tait, 2023
15	YTN	2023	South Korea	Seung-hyun, 2024; The Straits Times, 2024
16	Asharq News	2024	Saudi Arabia	Arab News, 2024
17	Weekly Jeju	2024	South Korea	Seung-hyun, 2024
18	Connectas (Operación Retuit)	2024	Venezuela	ConnectasOrg, 2024
19	Grupo Fórmula	2024	Mexico	Domínguez-Partida & García-Félix, 2025
20	NTV Noticias	2024	Mexico	Domínguez-Partida & García-Félix, 2025

Source: Drawn up by the authors