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Introduction

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Generative artificial intelligence (AI) is no longer the elephant in the room, it is omnipresent. This special issue of the JOSSH examines the opportunities, challenges and ethical dilemmas arising from AI's growing influence on media, communication and cultural production. It comprises two parts, the first of which is a focus section featuring four scholarly, peer-reviewed articles addressing one of the most consequential technological transformations of our time.

In the twenty-first century, global technologies have transformed the media landscape, facilitating the circulation of information across geographical boundaries and contributing to the emergence of a global public sphere. Generative AI is now reshaping this ecosystem at an unprecedented pace. From automated news production and personalised content delivery to audio-visual translation and new forms of digital labour, AI is changing how information is produced, distributed, interpreted, and consumed. These developments offer possibilities for greater efficiency, accessibility and cross-cultural communication. Yet they also raise pressing questions about misinformation, synthetic media, cultural representation, editorial accountability, and public trust. Concerns about safety, transparency, and the ethical deployment of increasingly powerful AI systems have become equally urgent.

The tensions surrounding AI innovation were underscored by recent developments in the technology industry. OpenAI's leadership has presented advances in AI as evidence of a new technological era, while media reports about changes to planned model releases have highlighted continuing safety concerns. Such developments illustrate the complex relationship between technological ambition and social responsibility. The promise of more capable systems cannot be separated from questions about their reliability, governance and consequences for individuals and institutions.

At the heart of this discussion lies a fundamental proposition: technology, in itself, does not determine its social consequences. Every technology is inherently neutral; its effects depend substantially on how and by whom it is used. However, AI's integration into media infrastructures also means that its influence extends beyond individual users to the organizational practices, platforms and institutions that shape public communication. Understanding these dynamics therefore requires critical inquiry across disciplines and national contexts.

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The four contributions in this focus section bring together perspectives from China, India, Germany, and Vietnam. Collectively, they explore AI's implications for journalism, audiovisual translation, synthetic media, and audience engagement. By examining these developments in different cultural and institutional settings, the articles move beyond technological optimism or pessimism to investigate the conditions under which AI can serve the public interest.

This focus section invites readers to consider not simply what AI can do, but what its expanding presence means for media credibility, cultural understanding, human agency, and democratic communication. Ultimately, the challenge is to ensure that technological innovation remains accountable to the social values it is expected to serve.

Felix Leyendecker, in his paper, argues that artificial intelligence is not merely an efficiency-enhancing tool but an infrastructural force reshaping media production, distribution, editorial authority, and public communication. While AI offers opportunities for automation, personalisation and cost reduction, it also raises concerns about accountability, transparency, verification and public trust. As AI-mediated systems increasingly shape access to journalistic content, authorship and editorial judgment risk becoming less visible. The concept of AI resilience emphasises integrating technological innovation without compromising journalistic integrity, human judgment, source protection, and democratic responsibility. Ultimately, AI's value depends on robust governance and accountable human oversight.

Nguyen Thi Thuy Hang, Tran Thi Thu Quynh and Doan Duy Anh's study from Vietnam quantitatively examines factors influencing users' acceptance and engagement with AI-generated videos on social media. Findings identify perceived authenticity and attractiveness as the strongest influences on user responses. The study recommends strengthening digital media literacy and improving AI-content transparency to promote informed engagement and enhance users' information reception.

Mohammad Reyaz and Kaifia Ancer Laskar in their paper examine the proliferation of AI-generated deepfakes and synthetic media in India's digital ecosystem, focusing on political misrepresentation, rumours, false attributions, current-affairs manipulation, and gendered digital violence. Their study explores how these technologies exploit platform dynamics and audience responses to amplify disinformation, disrupt public understanding and intensify polarisation. The study highlights the resulting crisis of digital credibility and underscores the need for regulatory, technological and pedagogical interventions.

Taking an example from China, Dianlin Huang, Huiying Wan, and Jiaxiao Ma argue that AI-assisted audio-visual translation does more than improve efficiency; it reshapes how cultural meanings reach international audiences. Examining iQIYI International, the study identifies risks of semantic loss, weakened emotional and narrative coherence and reduced interpretive flexibility. These challenges arise from tensions between technological standardisation and cultural sensitivity. The study maintains that AI's impact depends on interactions between technology, human expertise and organisational practices. It advocates human–AI collaboration, preserving translators' interpretive authority and prioritising cultural context, nuance, and

audience understanding alongside efficiency and linguistic accuracy.

In the second part of the journal, other seven essays are from the open submissions that were written by Vietnamese authors on diverse topics of contemporary relevance.

Nguyen Ngoc Binh and Tran Minh Son, in their article, analyze English quantifiers as determiners and noun phrase heads, comparing them with Vietnamese constructions. Their study highlights syntactic flexibility, classifier requirements, typological differences, and terminological inconsistencies in quantifier classification.

Pham Tien Nam et al evaluate hospital social work services in Vietnam, identifying staffing, funding, coordination, and infrastructure challenges and recommend training, investment, and improved emergency support.

Dinh Thi Thuy Hien analyzes three historical methodology textbooks used in the higher education system in the South under the Republic of Vietnam administration (1954-1975).

In his study Phan Thanh Nham applies Heidegger's philosophy to AI, examining technological enframing, human existence and freedom, while advocating meditative thinking and releasement for meaningful engagement.

Nguyen Anh Cuong's article examines Vietnam's strategic autonomy amid the US–China rivalry, highlighting Ho Chi Minh's diplomatic principles, soft balancing, hedging, and multilateral cooperation.

Vo Nhat Huy et al in their study explores relationships among Vietnamese LGBT+ individuals, advocating for inclusive mental health services and anti-discrimination policies.

Finally, Do Thi Thu Ha's study finds that Vietnamese IT students value digital English learning for accessibility and usefulness, recommending balanced tasks, reflective technology use, and institutional support.

The next issue of JOSSH will be published in April 2027. It will focus on the topic of resilience and explore its various forms and significance.