

Call for Book Chapters

Title: Artificial intelligence and human perception: media discourse and public opinion

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been the subject of academic research for decades. It is a key issue in the fields of Computer Science and Information Technology, while attracting the attention of other fields due to its pervasive nature. Social studies discussed its economic, social, political, military, and geopolitical implications - particularly regarding China's ambition to become an AI leading power. Media scholars questioned the 'intelligence' of machines (Natale, 2021) and the 'novelty' of digital media in general (Balbi, 2022). The humanities have engaged with philosophical, ethical, and legal issues related to AI's development, focusing on both the challenges and benefits that technology could bring to human life (Floridi, 2022).

Since the release of ChatGPT for the public, AI has become one of the most publicly debated topics, raising questions about its effects on labour, warfare, human-machine interaction, sustainability, and human cognition and creativity, to name a few. However, despite the growing impact of AI on every aspect of daily life, what do non-specialists understand about AI, and how do they feel about it?

With a few exceptions (Brennen et al. 2018; Cave et al., 2018; Chuan et al., 2022; Maas, 2023; Mao/Shi-Kupfer, 2021; Robertson/Maccarone, 2023; Zeng et al., 2022), discursive aspects of the phenomenon are still vastly unexplored – especially in a contrastive perspective. Institutional and media narratives play a crucial role in shaping public perception of political and social phenomena. Arguably, their influence is even more significant when specialised subjects are concerned, that are difficult to grasp for non-experts. Rhetorical devices such as metaphors, frames, and argumentative structures are therefore used to simplify complex issues and make them more accessible to the public. However, the use of such devices can also influence the public's emotional response to the topic being discussed.

For example, a news article about a new AI technology may use metaphors such as 'the rise of the machines' to create a sense of fear or anxiety among the public, or frame AI as a 'threat to jobs', creating a negative perception of the technology. Conversely, utopian narratives can present the era of Artificial intelligence as one rich with opportunities, where humans save time and resources by letting the machines work for them, and where AI applications solve social and individual problems. Understanding the impact of media narratives on public perception of AI is crucial for developing effective communication strategies and promoting a nuanced understanding of the technology.

Given the extensive media attention that AI has received in recent years, this book aims to explore the impact that institutional and media narratives can have on the public perception of this phenomenon in different national contexts. To this end, the volume aims at establishing an interdisciplinary dialogue between discourse analysis and other social sciences, with specific regard to studies that take into consideration the measurement of public perception of Artificial intelligence, for example through opinion polls, questionnaires, content analysis etc. Therefore, contributions from different perspectives and scientific fields in the humanities and social sciences are welcome.

Proposals that reflect on (but are not limited to) the following topics are encouraged:

- Media discourse on AI
- Political and institutional discourse on AI
- Ethics of AI and the public sphere

- Measuring public perception of AI (opinion polls, content analysis, social media analysis, sentiment analysis)
 - The discourse on the impact of AI on creativity/literature/pedagogy
 - The discourse on human-machine relations
 - Contrastive analysis on AI narratives

Researchers are invited to submit a **chapter proposal of 1,000 words** (plus references) in English to Paolo Orrù (paolo.orrù@unica.it) and Emma Lupano (emma.lupano@unica.it). The volume will be published in **open access** in the series *Methods and perspectives. Studies in Linguistics, Philology and Literature*, FrancoAngeli (<http://francoangeli.it>)

Timeline

- **Submission of proposals: 9 June 2024**
- Notification of acceptance: 24 June 2024
- **Submission of accepted chapters: 15 September 2024**
- Peer reviews: 15 October 2024
- **Submission of final chapters (after revision): 10 November 2024**
- Volume publication: 30 March 2024

References

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