



The Hague International Model United Nations

Forum: Special Conference on Artificial Intelligence Sub-Commission 2

Issue: The question of AI regarding misinformation and disinformation

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Introduction

The popularity of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has grown significantly over the past few years. After the release of ChatGPT in 2022 (“ChatGPT” - Wikipedia), AI has been used as a tool to assist people with different tasks. Many turn to the use of AI because of its precision and fast responses (“AI Through Time: From Unknown to Ubiquitous”). In more recent years, the development and use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI) has risen tremendously. In 2023, 75% of generative AI users were looking to automate tasks at work and use them for work communications (“Top Generative AI Statistics for 2023”). Even though AI and Generative AI have many strengths, such as helping us with reviewing data from different perspectives, helping with organisation, and optimisation for workplaces, it still has its flaws. The biggest weakness that Generative AI has is its power to generate information that looks factual but is incorrect. A term for information like this is often referred to as AI hallucinations (“Strengths and Weaknesses of Gen AI”). As an example, incorrect information generated by ChatGPT can look and sound legitimate without prior knowledge.

According to the Global Risks Report 2024, manipulated and falsified information is now the world's most severe short-term risk. In 2024, over 100 countries will be voting in elections around the world (“List of Elections in 2024” - Wikipedia). Misinformation and disinformation generated by Gen AI during election periods can pose a huge threat to candidates. Some may deliberately try to sabotage the elections by spreading “synthetic content”, which can range from AI-generated videos, voice cloning, and counterfeit websites filled with disinformation (“These are the 3 biggest emerging risks the world is facing”).

Generative AI is the first technology to venture into an area that only humans were capable of

before. Gen AI has the power to produce content in many forms, such as photos, text, and video. The more AI is used, the more it begins to learn and advance itself. Because of this, AI-generated content is becoming harder to distinguish from human-produced content (“Generative AI is the Ultimate Disinformation Amplifier”).

Definition of Key Terms

Misinformation

False information that is spread, regardless of whether there is intent to mislead (“Meanings & Definitions of English Words”).

Disinformation

Misleading and false information that is spread on purpose, for example, the manipulation of facts and narratives. Disinformation is used a lot as a result of biased opinions (“Meanings & Definitions of English Words”).

Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI)

A type of artificial intelligence that is used in the creation of new content based on models of text, visual, and audio data in response to prompts. Gen AI differs from regular AI because it does not need pre-existing data and patterns to perform tasks, making the content unique (“What is Generative AI in Simple Terms?”).

AI hallucinations

Data generated by AI that contains misleading or false information, is made to look like a fact. The term has a loose analogy with human psychology, where hallucinations often involve false percepts, making the reader believe it is factual information (“Hallucination (artificial intelligence)” - Wikipedia).

Content Moderation

The process of detecting and removing harmful or misleading content from online platforms. These can include warnings about misinformation and disinformation. The moderation process is often assisted by AI itself (“Content Moderation” - Wikipedia).

Synthetic Media

Also known as AI-generated media, synthetic media (images, audio, or video) is content created

using AI, which can often be impossible to distinguish from authentic media. Synthetic media can be used to spread misinformation (“Synthetic Media” - Wikipedia).

Background Information

Ever since the release of OpenAI’s ChatGPT, generative AI has taken over the media. AI has the power to produce human-like text, images, and videos. AI can be used as a tool to help with tasks, but the release of GPT-3 in 2020 showcased the possibilities that AI can also be used for. This version of gen AI could create realistic text on demand, which raised concerns about its potential misuse (“Artificial Intelligence-Powered Disinformation and Conflict”).

Uses of Gen AI in recent years

There are many types of media produced by Gen AI that have emerged in recent years, and spread widely through the internet, such as deepfakes. Deepfakes can be considered as an emerging threat, which falls under the umbrella of synthetic media. They utilize machine learning and AI to create pictures, videos, and audio of events that never happened. Even though so far most uses of Deepfakes have been only for innocent entertainment purposes, they still carry heavy risks, since their threat does not originate from the technology itself, but rather from the users, and the general public’s natural inclination to believe what they see (“Increasing threats of Deepfake Identities.”)

Another form of synthetic media that has become more common, specifically by spreading mostly through social media for entertainment purposes is voice cloning. Voice cloning should not be mistaken for voice synthesis, which has been around for decades, with the most famous examples being Steven Hawking’s synthesized voice and the voice of Siri. Voice cloning differs from voice synthesis by replicating an already existing voice by analyzing existing recordings. The resulting product can be indistinguishable from real voice recordings. Even though voice cloning has been used so far for mostly entertainment purposes, it carries huge risks since it can be used for fraudulent purposes, like extortions and to spread misinformation, for example with the voice of a public figure or a celebrity (“Preventing the Harms of AI-enabled Voice Cloning”).

Developments to filter real and fake content

Gen AI and its use have become commonplace, meaning the spread and generation of misinformation has also grown worldwide. Developments have been made in many fields such as AI development, and social media management to reduce the amount of misinformation. For example, companies hire professional fact checkers to check all the data used to train the AI model early in the diffusion process to detect misinformation. This process has proved effective in filtering and reducing the amount of misinformation that is generated (“AI and Misinformation”).

Unfiltered content created by Gen AI could have a massive and catastrophic impact on the general public due to the scale of the information. The concerns of leading AI researchers from recent scientific papers, news articles, and social media can be divided into four categories.

- 1. Increased quantity of misinformation. The increased quantity of misinformation that is easily created by ill-intended people at little to no cost in an attempt to drown out factual information.
- 2. Increased quality of misinformation. The increased quality of information will lead to Gen AI creating more plausible content, harder to verify, and harder to separate from factual information.
- 3. Increased personalization of misinformation. Due to their technical capabilities and ease of use, Gen AIs can be used to create high-quality, personalized content.
- 4. Involuntary generation of plausible but false information. Gen AI can generate plausible-looking information that is entirely inaccurate but appears to be factual due to the AI generating plausible-looking explanations that are misinformation (“Misinformation reloaded? Fears about the impact of generative AI on misinformation are overblown”).

How Gen AI will affect the future

Ever since Gen AI became widely open to the public, it has been a matter of when rather than if Gen AI will be used to affect elections. With AI-deepfakes, information about politicians and other public figures can be distorted and falsified, which could erode or even destroy the public’s trust in what they see and hear.

In an attempt to lessen the risk of spreading disinformation, The European Union mandated a special labeling of AI-deepfakes. For the same reason, the world’s biggest tech companies voluntarily signed a pact to prevent Gen AI from disrupting elections. For example, Meta stated that it would start labeling deepfakes that appear on its social media platforms (“Election Disinformation Takes a Big Leap with AI Being Used to Deceive Worldwide”).

The use of Gen AI during Slovakia’s elections to spread disinformation in 2023

Two days before Slovakia’s elections in 2023, an audio recording that was created using Gen AI was released on the internet. The recording portrayed a discussion between the leader of The Liberal Progressive Slovakia Party Michal Šimečka and the daily newspaper Denník N. In the audio recording, the two were discussing how to rig the elections, partly by buying votes. The false audio recording was released during a 48-hour moratorium before the opening of the polls, during which politicians and media outlets are supposed to stay silent.

Since the post was only an audio recording and not a video, it managed to bypass Meta’s manipulated media policy. The policy in question only dictates faked videos, where a person has been

edited to say words they never actually said, meaning that technically it does not go against its rules (“Slovakia’s Election Deepfakes Show AI Is a Danger to Democracy”).

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

UN and International Involvement

The United Nations has implemented several measures to reduce the spread of misinformation and disinformation through the recently launched United Nations Global Principles for Information Integrity. The aim of this is to empower people to demand their rights. United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has stated that the principles lay out a clear path forward, being firmly rooted in human rights, and the inclusion of the rights to freedom of expression and opinion. Some of the UN proposals include governments, tech companies, advertisers, and media organizations to avoid promoting disinformation and hate speech, enhance online safety features, and increase access to factual information during elections and crises, and for AI developers and stakeholders to ensure that AI technology is used responsibly and ethically (“UN Launches Recommendations for Urgent Action to Curb Harm from Spread of Mis and Disinformation and Hate Speech.”).

UNESCO has also issued guidelines to ensure that AI technologies are developed ethically and transparently to combat the misuse of AI in spreading disinformation. The UN Secretary-General has also proposed a digital cooperation roadmap, which includes measures to address digital misinformation by improving global collaboration on internet governance (“Closing Session, Information Committee Approves Text Stressing Global Communications Department’s Key Role in Fighting Misinformation in Era of Artificial Intelligence.”).

- Countering disinformation for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, 10 January 2022 (**A/RES/76/227**)
- Enhancing International Cooperation on Capacity-Building of Artificial Intelligence, 1 July 2024 (**A/RES/78/311**)

United States of America

The United States of America secretary of state announced the release of the Global AI Research Agenda (GAIRA) and the release of the AI in Global Development Playbook. These two documents serve as guides on future AI research, as well as advancing progress in meeting the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These documents fulfill two actions mandated by former

president Joe Biden in 2023 in his AI Executive Order (E.O. 14110), by promoting collaboration across government agencies and research institutions in the U.S as well as globally (“Artificial Intelligence (AI)” - United States Department of State).

People’s Republic of China

The People’s Republic of China emphasizes bridging the gap between AI and digital divides to help developing countries. China suggests that the United Nations take the lead in global cooperation on the development of AI, including the full implementation of the U.N General Assembly Resolution on Enhancing International Cooperation on Capacity-Building of Artificial Intelligence (A/RES/78/311), and promoting the implementation of the U.N 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. (“AI Capacity-Building Action Plan for Good and for All”)

European Union

The European Union has implemented a strategy to address the problem of misinformation and disinformation, which it considers a significant threat to democracy and societal trust. This strategy includes the EU Code of Practice on Disinformation, which was originally established in 2018 and strengthened in 2022. This updated version of the code involves co-regulation under the Digital Services Act expanding on parts such as demonetizing disinformation, increasing transparency of political advertising, and providing tools to empower users and fact-checkers (“The 2022 Code of Practice on Disinformation”).

International fact-checking network (IFCN)

The International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) acknowledges that Gen AI has both potential benefits and challenges that Gen AI presents to fact-checkers. It has been recommended that Gen AI should be used for tasks such as drafting headlines or translating stories, rather than knowledge-based tasks that involve answering questions based on AI training data. The IFCN stresses the importance of human oversight and the careful consideration of ethical deployment of Gen AI technologies (“The Impact and Opportunities of Generative AI in Fact-Checking”).

Partnership on AI (PAI)

Partnership on AI (PAI) promotes transparency, ethical use of AI, and disclosure. PAI states that developers should highlight the capabilities of AI, and its limitations, as well as enforce policies that restrict it. Creators on social media platforms should disclose the use of synthetic content, and address ethical concerns. Publishers are urged to label AI-generated synthetic media and address any harmful content (“Partnership on AI Publishes Framework for Responsible Generative AI Practices”).

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
1950s-1960s	This was the period of foundational AI research. Alan Turing published “Computing Machinery and Intelligence,” which paved the way for modern-day AI. During this period, the development of algorithms and problem-solving began.
1980s-1990s	Advances were made to teach AI how to process and generate text, which created the potential for automated misinformation. Chatbots were emerging, mainly used within customer service. The chatbots of this period demonstrated the possibilities of AI mimicking human communication.
2000s	AI technologies like machine learning became important in analyzing and predicting user behavior on social media. AI was used for targeted content, which could often be misinformation.
2010-2014	This was the era of fake news and content manipulation. AI tools for image and video editing started to gain traction, which made the possibilities of realistic media manipulation possible. As an example, during the Arab Spring, lots of fake news generated by AI was spread.
2016	AI-generated disinformation was being used within elections, such as the U.S. presidential election and the Brexit referendum.
2017-2018	Deepfake technology became publicly accessible, which allowed the possibility of realistic videos of public figures to be created. Trust in media was raising concern (“The History of Artificial Intelligence: Complete AI timeline.”).
2019-2020	This was the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Misinformation on vaccine safety and treatments was starting to go viral. One of the most controversial pieces of misinformation was that the government was injecting microchips into people (“Five Covid-19 Vaccine False Theories - Debunked”).
2021-future	OpenAI released ChatGPT to the public on November 30th, 2022. In 2023, the announcement of GPT-4, which could process both text and image prompts. With this technology available to the public, the production of convincing fake articles, social media posts, and other forms of disinformation was at an all-time rise. During the same year, AI-driven misinformation detection tools were being developed. At present, different forms of Gen AI are rapidly advancing. There are ongoing efforts to combat the spread of misinformation using AI itself (“Where is AI Heading?”).

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

Code of Practice on Disinformation (2022)

This voluntary initiative engages large tech platforms such as Google, Meta, and X to combat disinformation by improving transparency and supporting fact-checking. It incorporates AI governance principles to address algorithm-driven disinformation (“The 2022 Code of Practice on Disinformation”). The initiative has increased awareness and created fact-checking mechanisms, but because it is voluntary, it limits enforceability.

Meta's Deepfake Detection Challenge (2019)

This was an initiative where global researchers were encouraged to develop different ways to tackle the detection of AI-generated videos. There were over 100,000 videos as part of this challenge. Experts came together to share their versions of deepfake detection models and develop new approaches ("Deepfake Detection Challenge Dataset."). This challenge had strong potential for detecting Deepfakes, since a large amount of video sources were used, and experts sharing ideas with each other. However, it faced criticism for its narrow focus on video content. If this challenge had also been on AI-generated text, it could have been far more beneficial.

Microsoft's Video Authenticator Tool (2020)

This is a tool developed by Microsoft to identify Deepfake videos and images, utilizing AI to prove their authenticity. The aim was to empower journalists, governments, and organizations with tools to verify the factual information of the content ("Microsoft Launches Video Authenticator to Detect Deepfake Media."). This also had strong potential for detecting AI-generated content, but there were accessibility concerns and relied on technical expertise, which limited its use more broadly.

Possible Solutions

There are many possible solutions to tackle the misuse of AI in the spread of misinformation and disinformation. There are possibilities to strengthen solutions that are already in use, such as warnings about misinformation on social media and news platforms, using AI itself to detect Gen AI-generated images and text, and the possibilities to establish UN-funded organizations that are exclusively focused on the filtration of misinformation and disinformation.

International Network for AI Transparency and Content Accuracy (INATCA)

The establishment of organizations that are specifically focused on promoting transparency in AI could be a vital part of keeping the internet clear of misinformation and disinformation. An example of an international company like this could be called the International Network for AI Transparency and Content Accuracy (INATCA). INATCA's mission would be to utilize the power of AI in the filtration of incorrect information. An organization like this, if established, could be extremely beneficial in the future of AI. Instagram utilizes independent fact-checkers, but what about the possibility of AI software that is exclusively trained to do this?

If INATCA were to be established, it could be a vital part of the future of AI safety. INATCA empathizes on AI transparency, collaboration, and promotes the correct use of AI. INATCA members could also educate people on the dangers of misinformation generated by AI, and how to check if it is correct or not. INATCA's work could complement already existing frameworks, such as the EU's Digital Services Act or the UN's Global Principles for Information Integrity, which would promote an international

approach to the issue.

INATCA could also develop a crowdsourced fact-checking app or a web browser, where users can vote on suspicious content, which would feed into their verification systems. A system like this which is not reliant on AI, could also be a great way to identify misinformation. With this system, users can also check how accurately the information was checked. The accuracy score could be boosted if a certified professional has checked the information as well.

Using AI for the greater good

With all of AI's potential, it can be utilized to combat itself. Establishing a new type of AI, for example by the name of ClarityAI, could be AI software specifically programmed to fact-check information extensively. ClarityAI can be implemented on different social media sites and other platforms where anyone can share information. Wikipedia is a good example, as it is a website where anyone can publish text. ClarityAI can check the published information and let readers know about its origins and if it is accurate information.

The ultimate goal would be to implement ClarityAI into all websites and social media platforms that utilize user-published text. These include popular question-and-answer websites, where users can reply to questions sent by other users. Due to some of these websites allowing users to be anonymous, misinformation can spread more easily. This is why the implementation of an AI fact-checker would be crucial so that no one has to fall victim to false information.

Teaching media literacy in schools

According to a national survey, most U.S. adults have not been taught about media literacy in high school. Only 42% of respondents to this survey reported that they had learned how to analyze science news in high school (“National Survey Finds Most U.S. Adults Have Not Had Media Literacy Education in High School.”). All students should be thoroughly taught about media literacy, starting at a young age. Detecting fake news is a valuable skill for the future, and all schools should take the initiative to add it to their curriculums.

The implementation of media literacy in schools can empower students to think critically about the content they come across online, which helps them distinguish credible sources from misinformation. Media literacy can also stop the spread of misinformation, since students have been educated on the dangers of it, and stray away from sharing it themselves. It encourages students to use the internet responsibly and safely. By giving students the tools to evaluate what they see online, schools can help create a more educated society.

Developing pre-existing solutions

There are already many solutions actively protecting the internet from AI-generated

misinformation. These include independent fact-checkers employed by social media platforms, PolitiFact, which is a website designed to rate the accuracy of claims made by elected officials, and many others. These pre-existing solutions have already created an excellent base to improve from.

Some ideas would be to advance deepfake detection, which would include watermarking AI-generated content, which would be in place for authenticity checks. Browser plugins that automatically detect manipulated videos or images could also be developed in the future. Campaigns addressing the issue could be expanded on, creating public awareness of the spread of misinformation.

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Appendix or Appendices

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