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Slow and Fast Journalism with Artificial Intelligence - A Theoretical Approach

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Adalberto FERNANDES
Researcher, PhD, Centre for Organisational and Social Studies (CEOS.PP) - Porto Accounting and Business School (ISCAP), Porto Polytechnic, PORTUGAL
e-mail: acpf@iscap.ipp.pt

Abstract: The literature on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and journalism tends to present as the central issue that the AI-driven replacement of repetitive tasks in journalism could lead to the replacement of non-repetitive tasks that should be performed by humans. Arguing for the continued role of humans in AI-supported news production tends to rests on the idea that humans create what is genuinely new rather than merely repeating patterns, and that they prioritise quality over quantity. However, this distinction between, on the one hand, repetition and novelty and, on the other hand, quantity and quality, does not allow for an understanding of how AI can actually produce news and why this technology constitutes a real threat to human journalists, given its potential to replace them. In this theoretical analysis, the use of philosophy is proposed to think about the relationship between repetition and the new, as well as between the quantitative and the qualitative, in order to defend a speculative model of

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"slow AI journalism" that could enhance the quality of journalism, provide a sustainable business model in the era of AI, and improve current AI models.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, slow journalism, qualitative, media theory, philosophy

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Journalisme lent et rapide avec l'intelligence artificielle – Une approche théorique

Résumé :La littérature sur l'intelligence artificielle (IA) et le journalisme présente généralement comme enjeu central le risque que le remplacement, par l'IA, des tâches répétitives dans le travail journalistique conduise également au remplacement de tâches non répétitives qui devraient rester du ressort des humains. L'argument en faveur d'un rôle indispensable des humains dans une production de l'information assistée par l'IA repose souvent sur l'idée que les humains créent du véritablement nouveau plutôt que de simplement répéter des schémas, et qu'ils privilégient la qualité plutôt que la quantité. Toutefois, cette distinction entre, d'une part, répétition et nouveauté et, d'autre part, quantité et qualité ne permet pas de comprendre pleinement comment l'IA peut effectivement produire de l'information, ni pourquoi cette technologie constitue une menace réelle pour les journalistes, étant donné son potentiel de les remplacer.

Dans cette analyse théorique, il est proposé de mobiliser la philosophie pour penser la relation entre répétition et nouveauté, ainsi qu'entre quantitatif et qualitatif, afin de défendre un modèle spéculatif de « journalisme lent par IA » susceptible d'améliorer la qualité du journalisme, d'offrir un modèle économique viable à l'ère de l'IA et de contribuer à l'amélioration des modèles d'IA actuels.

Mots-clés : intelligence artificielle, journalisme lent, qualitatif, théorie des médias, philosophie

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Introduction

Journalists use artificial intelligence (AI) in various stages of news production, such as "news gathering, news writing and presentation, news editing, and news promotion" (Wu, 2024). AI is crucial for data journalism, as it allows the processing and analysis of massive datasets, the creation of visualizations, the verification of the accuracy of information and historical data, the monitoring of social media, and the identification of patterns and outliers (Fridman, Krøvel & Palumbo, 2023). These processes streamline tasks and save time, allowing journalists to focus on more creative activities (Calvo-Rubio & Rojas-Torrijos, 2024; Dijkstra, de Jong & Boscolo, 2024). AI thus contributes to reducing costs and reallocating human resources away from repetitive routines (Wilczek, Haim & Thurman, 2024). Furthermore, it enables

journalists to better understand and engage their audiences through personalized content recommendations in an era of individualized media consumption (Aljalabneh et al., 2024). AI is not only seen as a tool for assistance but also as the possibility of replacing the journalist. For instance, media outlets such as The Associated Press, The Washington Post, and the BBC have adopted "automated journalism" to generate journalistic content with no human intervention (Danzon-Chambaud & Cornia, 2021). Besides the bias associated with training data and AI modelling for journalistic purposes, the sampling and engineering of AI also have potential for bias, since these processes are conducted by humans (Mahony & Chen, 2025; Gutiérrez-Caneda, Lindén & Vázquez-Herrero, 2024; Castillo-Campos, Varona-Aramburu & Becerra-Alonso, 2024; Harb & Qabajeh, 2024; Dierickx et al., 2024). In light of the possible automation of journalism, the literature shows that audiences express more positive attitudes—and greater trust—toward human journalists than toward AI journalists, although they perceive the latter as less biased (Hong, Chang & Tewksbury, 2024; Sun, Hu & Wu, 2024). The ability of audiences to identify AI-produced news varies according to age, gender, and socioeconomic status (Moravec et al., 2024). This demonstrates that the public relationship with AI journalism is complex, as is the relationship of journalists themselves, who are divided between the potential of AI to automate repetitive tasks and free up time for creativity, yet fear being replaced by a greater presence of AI in newsrooms (Peña-Fernández, et al., 2023; Møller, van Dalen & Skovsgaard, 2024). More than a rejection of replacement by AI, or a full acceptance of this replacement, the issue at stake is the meaning and specificities of this replacement in journalism.

The general question that guides this theoretical essay is: what is the uniqueness of journalism in the era of AI? At stake is what can, or cannot, be replaced by AI, and what the implications of that replacement are. Despite the numerous empirical and theoretical studies on the phenomenon of the relationship between journalism and AI, and the various philosophical studies addressing issues related to AI due to the questioning of basic concepts such as "creativity" or "ethics" provoked by these technologies, there are, however, no philosophical studies focused on the relationship between AI and journalism. This is unjustifiable, as a philosophical approach allows for thinking about the more general and abstract conditions of phenomena, constituting one of the ways to address the empirical complexity of the reality of doing journalism in the era of AI without reducing it to that empiricism. These general conditions can later be tested, critiqued, and empirically improved, serving as a way to open the discussion beyond immediate empiricism and the speed of the present, providing other theoretical coordinates for future work on the meanings of substitutability by AI in the context of journalism. Although there is no philosophical "method" that is transversal to all philosophy, the methods adopted here are: conceptual analysis (Horvath, 2018); the use of theoretical arguments to justify our claims (Brutian & Wilson, 1979) based on the philosophical work of Gilles Deleuze; and, finally, a "thought experiment" (Cooper, 2005) to speculate on a possible path leading to an original model of AI journalism.

One of the objectives of this essay is to make the topic of AI journalism worthy of philosophical analysis and to ensure that this type of analysis becomes useful for journalism studies themselves. Philosophical approaches to communication offer an important space to connect journalism studies with intellectual traditions that have shaped the history of ideas about communication even before the emergence and consolidation of modern media systems. In this way, journalism studies can benefit from philosophical debates that, through different concepts, have already discussed in depth issues that are only now emerging in the recent field of AI journalism. Philosophical approaches thus serve to prevent the field of journalism studies from repeating problems or solutions that are already well established in philosophy, fostering instead a fruitful interdisciplinary encounter. Regarding the topic of AI journalism, and considering the problem of news automation and the replacement of human labour, philosophy can help us think about two themes that are almost as old as philosophy itself: the theme of the new and repetition, and the relationship between quality and quantity. These themes can illuminate questions concerning the possibility of AI creating the novelty upon which journalistic news is founded, and whether AI is merely a quantitative machine incapable of attaining the qualitative dimension of human journalism, for instance.

Given the rare encounters between philosophy and journalism studies that go beyond ethical concerns (Hearns-Branaman, 2016), this theoretical attempt to think them together in the case of AI journalism is a difficult exercise in conceptual translation. This difficulty arises from the absence of a more shared academic discourse between the two fields and from the need for an academic audience capable of interpreting philosophy and understanding journalism studies. This attempt aims to stimulate future research in this field of the philosophy of journalism as a way of rethinking the potential and limits of "presentism" and "empiricism" within journalism studies. It seeks to reinforce a dialogue of the field of journalism studies with the history of philosophy—not only with the history of media—and a conceptual debate beyond media theory, incorporating the philosophy of communication. One might even claim that philosophy has been present in a subterranean way in media studies, and that it is crucial to make these assumptions explicit, since without critique they risk constraining the very concepts employed in empirical studies. For example, Horkheimer and Adorno (2002) bring Hegel and Kant into the study of the cultural industries, while the sociologist of communication Paul Lazarsfeld is influenced by the philosophical school of logical positivism (Uebel, 2024). This article therefore seeks to show that philosophy can help media studies to rethink their own concepts differently, preventing this dialogue from remaining merely subterranean and risking misunderstanding between distinct fields of study.

This theoretical article will begin by showing, through the contributions of the philosopher Gilles Deleuze, that the phenomenon of journalism lends itself to automation by AI because "pre-AI" journalism is already a phenomenon of repetition, routines, and regularities that, paradoxically, open themselves to the new, the unexpected, the event, and the news. Subsequently, challenging the separation

between quality and quantity—useful for rethinking the opposition between AI as a quantitative machine and the human journalist as a producer of quality—Deleuze allows for the articulation of quality and quantity through the complex concept of "intensity." After these two sections, the thesis that AI and humans are not distinguished, respectively, by the production of repetition or novelty, or by quantity or quality, will become clearer. The distinction between them may lie in "intensity." However, since intensity is simultaneously qualitative and quantitative, this article will speculatively propose that it is possible to design a model for AI journalism in which the journalist produces a *smaller* number of news items with a specific quality—interrogative, problematic, and questioning—which in turn nourishes AI models that generate a *vast* quantity of news items, also with a specific quality, characterized by response and solution to the questions posed by the human journalist. In this way, through different intensities, AI and human cooperate within the same model, with varying quantities and qualities of news. Without the human, there are no valuable and slowly produced questions that make AI models agile, flexible, and open to the new. Without AI, there are no rapid answers to those questions. It is the contribution of Deleuzian philosophical thought that enables this model, as it seeks to question the separations that tend to remain unexamined in journalism studies focused on AI: new versus repetition, quality versus quantity—dichotomies that may underlie, respectively, the often unquestioned division between human and AI.

1. Journalism as Repetition of the New

It can be conceptually claimed that journalism has always been the art and technique of "repeating the new," that is, of being prepared with some patterned behaviors to repeatedly capture the new. The evolution of journalism has always been intertwined with processes of algorithmization, understood as the calculation and automation of repetitive tasks. From the patterned materiality of typography (Lindley, 1969) to the stylistic conventions like the "lead," or the influence of data analytics on audience engagement, where metrics such as views and shares guide news topics (Ekström et al., 2022), journalism has continually adapted to technological changes (Pavlik, 2000), whether they are mechanical, grammatical, or digital. These technologies of repetition are not simply something external to journalistic practice, but participate in the journalistic phenomenon itself, a phenomenon marked by repetition. This seems to entail a kind of contradiction, considering that the concept of repetition is associated with what is the same, what is identical, what has no difference, while the new is the unequal, the different, what is not the same. However, defending this strange thesis of the "repetition of the new" is necessary to account for what is crucial in journalism and why, from a philosophical perspective, journalism is a vital practice of experiencing the passage of time and accessing the new.

A philosopher who helps us think about the paradoxical expression of "repetition of the new" as a characterization of journalism as a technique of repeating the unexpected event, i.e., the news, is Gilles Deleuze. The French philosopher introduced

the concept of "repetition for itself" as something that is "produced as repetition that is freed from being repetition of an original self-identical" (Smith, Protevi & Voss, 2023). According to Deleuze (1994, pp. 300-301): "It is not the same which returns, it is not the similar which returns; rather, the Same is the returning of that which returns, - in other words, of the Different; the similar is the returning of that which returns, - in other words, of the Dissimilar". One way to understand what is at stake in this return of difference, which is crucial for the practice of journalism and the formation of news as repetition of the new, can be done through a focus on the experience of time, on its passage. In the experience of time, the present or actual moment is not a "perpetual present" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 76). Instead, it is the "the passing present" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 79). For Deleuze, given that "the present moment is actual as passing, there is a fundamental inequality or asymmetry at the heart of becoming" because a repetition of what would be the same, the equal, the symmetric would be a "repetition in time of things that do not pass, that are always the same" (Lawlor, 2020, p. 111), which would not become present as something new, but would be a fixed past repeating the same in the future in a deterministic way. On the contrary, what returns is the different. It is what passes:

> "Were it not for this return [of difference], the world would repeat itself identically (…). There would be no possibility of anything new emerging in the world, no possibility of creation or evolution (…). If reality consisted of the return of sameness, it would be static" (Beistegui, 2012, p. 76).

We can think of the various forms of repetition of the new in journalism, such as the lead, news-values, news cycles, and agenda-setting, as ways to construct the space and time for the new to appear, i.e., to expose the journalist to the new, to the uncontrollable. The journalist does not fully know what will be news, but, for instance, from the questions of the "lead", they know that the new will always repeatedly have a "what," a "who," a "when,", a "where" a "how," and a "why". Additionally, even the lead, or the so-called "inverted pyramid" (Pottker, 2003), for example, has appeared over time, in the history of journalism, and its application and even alteration are always at stake in the future. The journalist, through the questions of the lead, has the technique that allows them to repeatedly look in a different, surprising way, precisely because repetition, over time, always produces difference. They cannot look and write the same way because the lead only makes sense in the passing time; it marks events when it transforms them into news and is marked by them because they activate, update, the journalistic repetitions of leads, news values, cycles, agendas, etc. The lead has a crucial dimension of active construction, but it is constructed to also expose the journalist to a passivity, to the non-constructible, to a capacity to receive the unexpected. It is a technique of attention control to what happens, to the uncontrollable: the news is the "not yet" of what will happen, and it contributes to this projection into the future, by focusing on the becoming, and is actualized, produced by the new it expects and that appears because it expects it and partially knows how to wait for it and how to locate it in time and space. This means that without the passage of time, journalism could not exist, and without journalism, the new that the passage brings would not be registered as new. Journalism does not

exhaust the new but makes the new always possible, in a repeated way as different. The media have become, alongside journalism, one of the major ways to frame experience or life, ensuring that the new repeats itself, and that it repeats itself as different. This passage through a more abstract and conceptual reflection in Deleuzian philosophy is crucial, as it will be argued below, to understand the importance of journalism in a context where AI risks creating the false perception that all journalistic work, being repetitive, is merely redundant and easily replaceable by a machine. This requires a philosophical reflection on the relationships between repetition and difference, between the same and the new, which challenges the conventional tendency to think of them as opposites.

2. AI Repetition of The New – Dangers and Promises for Journalism

It is no surprise that machines made to repeat can take some roles traditionally held by journalists, given that these operate already in the realm of repetition. The rise of AI technologies, particularly Large Language Models (LLMs) like ChatGPT, introduced a significant transformation in news production (Pavlik, 2023). LLMs leverage vast language databases - including news databases (Grynbaum & Mac, 2023) - to generate complex linguistic outcomes, which will challenge the traditional art and technique of journalism repetition by producing text with statistically high linguistic quality (Mayopu et al., 2023), as it already happens in science (Conroy, 2023), complementing the capacity of AI to track fake news (Caramancion, 2023) and do fact-checking (Huang & Sun, 2023). AI, trained on journalistic writings, now performs probabilistic word combinations that not only reproduce but generate new linguistic patterns, challenging the unique contribution of human journalistic writing. While some argue that AI is taking jobs away from journalists, another perspective from the philosophy of technology suggests that it is merely claiming a role rightfully suited for efficient repetition, as humans were engaged in repetitive tasks awaiting more effective automation (Simondon, 2017). The use of conceptual tools from philosophy can assist media and journalism studies in thinking about the human who communicates as formed in co-relation with communication techniques, questioning the immutability of this human in the face of alterations to these techniques. According to Simondon:

> "man finds himself to be in conflict with the memory of himself: man has for so long played the role of the technical individual that the machine, once it has become a technical individual, still appears like a man occupying the place of another man, when it is, on the contrary, man who in fact provisionally replaced the machine before truly technical individuals could emerge. (…) [M]an had learned to be a technical being to the point of believing that the technical being, once it becomes a concrete being, begins illegitimately to usurp the role of man (Simondon, 2017, p. 81).

Following Simondon's hypothesis, the introduction of AI into journalism raises questions about the nature of journalistic writing, its automatability, and the type of repetition that AI can perform better than humans: "the underlying, but often unquestioned, theoretical assumption in most communication research is that humans are communicators and machines are mediators, (…) this assumption is challenged

by asking what happens when a machine steps into this formerly human role" (Lewis, Guzman & Schmidt, 2019). In other words: "The routine and mundane nature of a significant portion of journalistic tasks suggests that artificial intelligence may potentially replace many journalists in the future, thereby challenging the profession's claim to expertise" (Møller, Skovsgaard & de Vreese, 2024). The plummeting value of journalistic content produced by humans threatens to make them expensive and dispensable compared to the faster and more cost-effective AI. In this scenario, the traditional journalist becomes less effective due to cost and time constraints in repeating the capacity to enunciate the new, giving way to the rapid and economical production of news by AI.

It should be noted that this capacity of AI is based on data grabbing from all the journalistic work done in the past and present by journalists (Grynbaum & Mac, 2023), which should not merely be compensated, as it would suffice for AI companies to pay for these news and indemnify journalists for their dismissal. Instead, they should be integrated into a knowledge economy for journalism in the era of AI, where both journalists and AI machines will be essential for the "repetition of the new" that does not retain the journalist out of "pity," but fundamentally needs them so that AI can function to repeat the new, even when the machine performs some, but not all, repetitions of the new that the journalist did in the past better than humans. From Simondon's perspective, it can be said that the danger of the relationship between AI and journalism lies not only in the data stealing of journalistic writing from the past but also in the attempts by humans to maintain the traditional forms of journalistic writing, which, even before generative AI, were already signaling as replaceable by mechanical processes, no matter how complex these forms of writing are or how much they contribute to the formation of professional identities.

It is necessary to understand how this relationship with AI in journalistic writing can be made efficient and show what the journalist brings that is unique and singular, different, and how this difference emerges with new writing technologies provided by AI, and not against it. The potentialities of AI to replace some tasks of human writing reveal something about that writing, namely, that humans do not have sovereignty over all writing, and that more interesting forms of life can be established in journalism that are not simply in competition or opposition to the machine. In this view, humans would not unnecessarily fight to write journalistically something that the machine does better, which would allow for better journalism and a better use of the human potentialities in repeating the new with AI. To understand how journalistic writing acquires new potentialities and dangers with AI, a more specific description and understanding of what the metonymy of the word "AI" means is required (Broussard et al., 2019). If the repeated writing of the new is altered with AI and cannot now be thought of without it, it is necessary to understand how this writing functions for journalists to write with, and not against, this form of writing.

A simple and partial description of LLMs may help us figure out a way to think about the role of journalism in the AI era. LLMs are network architectures trained on massive corpora of texts, becoming large models when they have more parameters to

better understand the texts (Chowdhery et al., 2022). The "largeness" refers to the complexity and capacity to "read" the data of texts. Regarding the data—massive corpora of texts—the quality and quantity of the training data play a crucial role in shaping the capabilities of these models. The more diverse and extensive the data, the better the model can learn the intricacies of language. Studies highlight the significance of data by suggesting that, besides the assumption that larger models (e.g., with more parameters) perform better independently of data size, other studies also indicate that larger models should be also trained on more data to achieve superior performance (Hoffmann et al., 2022).

Given this relation between model size and the quantity of data in the qualitative function of LLMs, it will be defended the claim that journalists play a crucial role in influencing the qualitative performance of quantitative language models. Journalists have the choice to contribute either with quantity or quality of their writing to the models. Quantity, referring to the sheer volume of text, might make human-generated content inferior to machine-generated content due to machines' superior capacity for mechanical and massive repetition. Despite current AI writing models relying on vast databases of past news, journalists no longer have the entirety of the past's time to produce similar volumes of news content to compete with AI, as AI models can rapidly incorporate this historical news data. AI models produce quality news because they are based on a large database of past news, which makes human-generated news from the past important in shaping AI writing, while simultaneously being unable to compete directly with AI in the present. Journalistic writing holds value in the past but lacks future value in a direct quantitative competition with AI.

On the other hand, by providing nuanced and high-quality journalistic text, journalists can enhance LLMs instead of competing with them, making journalism writing a writing for the future and not just an archive of past news to feed AI databases. The emphasis is on the qualitative diversity brought by journalists, given that it has the potential to positively impact the training and capabilities of LLMS. In the AI era, journalists are not just writing for audiences but also for linguistic databases that will be used by AI, which is a “generative audience of the future.” It is what is written today by journalists that will be processed by AI to generate future texts based on the writing patterns of journalists. In the same way that newspapers, schools, social media, and everyday talk influence the historical evolution of language, in the AI era, given its pervasive influence in the creation of texts and translations in traditional and digital media in a global and almost instantaneous manner, it is the big linguistic data of AI read and created by its users that will be one of the most important forces in linguistic changes. By having in mind this new “artificial audience,” journalists have an important contribution to AI technologies that are changing public discourse. These artificial audiences, which are AI machines, are characterized by operating on the basis of quantity, as generative results depend on the multiplication of data, training time, and the greatest possible number of connections between words and texts, surpassing human journalistic producers in the ability to generate news in quantity. However, this opens up an opportunity for

journalists to create fewer, but higher-quality news, which paradoxically becomes a way to intervene more quickly and with greater impact (two quantitative aspects) in current AI models. This paradoxical relationship between quantity and quality also benefits from philosophical abstraction as a way to ground a new role for quality journalism in the age of AI's linguistic quantification, and how quantity and quality can be related. If, according to Deleuze, difference and repetition are not opposites but rather conditions that make each other possible—and that make the automation of news by AI possible—then it can also be challenged that what separates AI journalism from human journalism is the assumption that the former is merely a quantitative machine, while the latter produces qualitative results that cannot be reduced to quantity. This conceptual separation will be the focus of the next section.

3. Quality, Quantity and Intensity

The definition and relationship between the concepts of quality and quantity is one of the most difficult philosophical tasks, but it is also one of the most fundamental when considering the possibility of quality journalism in light of the immense quantitative capacity for news production through AI. Deleuze's take on this relationship will be based on a concept that allows for the relationship between quality and quantity while ensuring their difference but not their separation into different spheres, and their relation on the same plane without different hierarchies, precedences, or substitutions. This concept is "intensity": "Deleuze does not reintroduce dualism. There are real [qualitative] differences, as well as the [quantitative] differences in degree, but this does not entail ontological difference, for the difference that underlies them, is different from either" (Sushytska, 2014, p. 128). The concept of "intensity" would be a third term that prevents thinking of quality and quantity as two already formed elements to be contrasted or brought together, but instead seeks to think of their simultaneous emergence in a relationship. For Deleuze, "intensity" would have qualitative and quantitative aspects, without one determining the other, without them pre-existing one another. Hence, he states that "intensity is neither divisible, like extensive quantity, nor indivisible, like quality" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 237). The contradiction of this thesis shows the difficulty of what is at stake. When we say that something is "intense," that "this musical concert was intense", that "this flavor is intense", we are simultaneously expressing a quality and a quantity, but without them necessarily having a correspondence of equivalence or linear correlation. Two concerts can be *equally* intense, using *low* piano sounds or *loud* electric guitars, and their intensities are not merely qualitative because intensity presupposes that there are things "more" or "less" (e.g.: sound) intense than others. Another example: people experience the intensity of vertigo at different altitudes according to their nature—their qualitative capacity to endure varying heights. It is not possible to claim that everyone will experience vertigo at the same specific height. However, the intensity of vertigo manifests at a certain quantitative level of height. Quality and quantity are therefore always interconnected, yet they produce different intensities of experience:

> "The asymmetry of the intensive quantity that is altitude is vividly clear when looking down a mountainside differs so starkly from looking up the same mountainside. (…) Once that intensive distance is rendered measurable, we can then perhaps comfort ourselves with the thought that, after all, the final metre at the mountain's summit is just another metre, identical to the climb's first" (Mader, 2017, p. 267)

In quantitative terms, the last meter at the top of the mountain and the first meter at its base are identical. However, being at the top or at the bottom feels qualitatively different. For the person who suffers from vertigo, there is no "comfort" in knowing that all meters are the same, because standing on the final meter at the summit produces an intensity of sensation that makes that meter qualitatively vertiginous. It is the accumulation of meters that produces vertigo, yet there is no precise point at which the qualitative feeling of vertigo begins. When it does begin, it signifies that something "intense" has occurred—that the intensity of vertigo, meaning the combination of qualitative sensation and quantitative height, has taken place:

> "in terms of altitude, different intensities of sensation should not be referred to different heights. Rather, heights only make sense and change in their sense due to the intensities that occur. (…) The world of the sufferer of vertigo is ordered differently and makes sense differently from the world of the mountain climber" (Williams, 2005, pp. 177-178).

Intensity is not something that is solely objectifiable, calculable, nor is it something that is merely subjective, depending solely on the perception of the subject without being dependent on a relationship with the quantity of what happens to them. According to Deleuze's proposal, following mainly its commentators, in the intensive relation there is no homology, i.e., there is no analogy of relation, structure, or elements, between quality and quantity. There is, for instance, no homology between quantitatively shouting more and being qualitatively angrier, because with the same amount of shouting, one can be happy, and both anger and joy can be produced with a single shout. The reason is that something can be very intense by happening only a few times as rarity, or it can be very intense by happening many times. This is what we meant when we said that there is a relationship between quality and quantity, but it is not a relationship of homology. It is the third term of intensity, as something that is produced in a relationship, which prevents quality and quantity from equating or being defined in isolation. How can the abstract concept of intensity be understood in the concrete case of AI journalism? This will be the objective of the next section.

4. Slow and Fast Journalism with AI: A Speculative Model

By focusing on intensity, that co-produces both quality and quantity, we can approach the relationship between the quality of journalistic writing and the quantity of AI-generated writing, not as qualitatively or quantitatively different, but each as producing its own unique intensity of meaning, singular and specific, that produces the relationship between quality-quantity. For example, to clarify Deleuze's proposal, a single news story produced by a human can be as intense—or even more so—in the

sense of having the quality of altering the topics of the news agenda, as several news stories produced in quantity by AI. This occurs precisely because of its low quantity, its rarity, at a time when AI produces news in an overwhelming volume. Several news items generated by AI may fail to produce a qualitative change in the media agenda—that is, the topic does not shift significantly. Human-produced news acquires its quality precisely at the moment when AI multiplies news production. Before AI, news created by humans did not possess this qualitative difference in relation to automated news, since nearly all news were produced by humans. The mass production of automated news therefore creates an opportunity to reflect on what truly constitutes quality in human journalism—this is the consequence of Simondon's thesis discussed earlier.

In concrete terms, what this Deleuzian philosophical proposal allows us to think is that the human journalist can possess great media intensity—that is, a strong capacity to alter the themes of the media agenda—not through the large quantity of news produced, but through the small quantity generated. This is because there is neither an oppositional nor a direct relationship between a given quantity of news and a given quality of news. However, and here lies Deleuze's major contribution, the quality of news still varies according to its quantity, even if it is not predetermined how this relationship will take form: many news items may be necessary to change the media agenda, but sometimes only a few are enough. This also means that automated news produced in large quantities does not possess less quality than human news—it simply has a *different* kind of quality, just as the few human-produced news stories are not necessarily less capable of competing with the vast number of AI-generated ones.

Deleuze's theory allows precisely this: to cease opposing the concepts of quality and quantity, showing how they relate to and define each other case by case, rather than being defined in opposition once and for all. What unites these two concepts is the concept of intensity. What, then, is intensity? Intensity is that which can only be qualified and quantified after it has occurred. It depends on what happens, requiring empirical work to verify it: what quantity of news, whether human or AI-generated, has altered the quality of journalism? Or, conversely, how has high-quality journalism influenced the quantitative production of AI-generated news? In this way, one may discover that many automated AI news items were intense—that is, they altered, for example, the media agenda—or that a few human-produced news stories achieved the same intensity. As Deleuze (1994, p. 223) states, "we know intensity only as already developed within an [quantitative] extensity, and as covered over by qualities." The concept of intensity prevents us from asserting—without empirical studies—that the quantity or quality of human journalism or AI journalism develops independently, or that one is inherently superior to the other. Each produces a different intensity, that is, its own specific relation between quantity and quality. Intensity reveals itself in the differential relation between quality and quantity.

There is an intensity in the AI's quantity-quality relationship that differs from the intense relationship of quantity-quality in human journalistic writing, and this

difference only forms in the relationship between AI and journalism. Human journalistic writing, until the emergence of AI, had the quality of producing more quantity of quality journalism than automatic writing. However, now with the new generative AI, the quality of human writing produces less quality in quantity, compared to AI, but it can produce a different quantity of quality, an intensification of the quality of the small quantities it generates. Thus, human writing will not only produce less in relation to the massive writing power of AI, but it *should* write less if it wants to be different from AI, since this smaller writing can generate more quantity of quality instead of quality in quantity, that is, it can generate an intensity of writing different from the intensity of AI. A human journalistic piece must, for example, be worth hundreds of pieces of fully automated AI-generated writing. If it is the other way around, journalistic writing has no quality, or its quality can easily be produced by AI. AI has become a new way to evaluate, test, and understand the quantity-quality relationship in human journalistic writing.

The relationship between journalists and AI is not solely about competition but rather collaboration, where the strengths of each are leveraged, as a journalist benefits from a quality-driven AI. The collaboration between journalists and models involves, as we will argue, a process of working together to produce content slowly, focusing on quality rather than a fast pace or massive quantity. Paradoxically, this suggests that prioritizing quality with a slower pace is a faster and more effective way for humans to "educate" AI models to produce high-quality content. A potential solution may emerge in embracing the speed of AI-based repetitions, rather than resisting it, by combining it with slow journalism (Neveu, 2019; Le Masurier, 2015). We take the concept of slow journalism in its broader sense, associated with other journalistic forms such as literary journalism, long-form journalism, narrative journalism, and multi-platform immersive journalism (Keeble, 2018). The slowness of journalism allows for "fairness, goodness, and contextualization, reflecting a commitment to underserved communities and activist journalism" (Broussard, Funk & Vashisht, 2023). It "significantly enlarges public understanding of people, events, and issues of the day by exploring them in depth, usually by taking a narrative approach in the writing" (Ricketson, 2020). The slow approach to journalism is not a replacement for fast journalism but a way to approach the different temporalities of what is happening and the ways journalists are receiving and producing those temporalities: "At times we require journalism that is synchronous with the speeds of modern existence, and at other times we require journalism that is able to distance itself from such requirements and offer more contemplative and critical perspectives" (Craig, 2020).

Contrary to the dominant stark separation between slow and fast, human and AI, qualitative and quantitative that the literature on journalism studies tends to show, we propose a new slow perspective that envisions journalists as allies of fast AI, requiring a new form of education for the new AI-repetition of the new. Slow journalism is not just slow in its production but, precisely through its slowness, is faster in detecting differences that become hidden in the speedy production of news: slow here means not just being behind or ahead of time but having a "'proper time'—journalism that

is fast enough to engage, surprise, and retain our attention, yet slow enough to respect a story's nuance and complexity" (Ball, 2020, p. 148). A perspective shift is needed, as journalists must engage critically with AI, using it for the slow repetition of the new, tweaking the code or the AI model to produce more singular writing, with more nuance, heterogeneity, and unfamiliarity, while also questioning what is obvious and dominant in the discourse produced in a fast way by AI. For instance, instead of an AI model that focuses on the most statistically frequent set of words to describe an event, a qualitative slow journalist benefits more from an AI model that searches also for the most statistically irrelevant or less frequent set of words, helping to produce linguistic diversity and quality—not just quantity—with the help of those same AI quantitative machines. This collaboration allows journalists to think and write differently, not merely the same. But that infrequency of words, those singular nuanced phrases, needs qualitative writing by slow journalists that the AI model can learn from—writing that does not repeat the same but repeats the difference. We need, therefore, AI journalistic models based, for instance, on the works of Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists and those who also write fiction, bringing their journalistic skills to produce fictional worlds that enhance the descriptive differences of events through literary tools (e.g., Belt & South, 2020; Hartsock, 2007).

Slow-AI Journalism, as a literary form or as a space for reflection and thought, does not need to be read by a large audience to have a massive impact because it indirectly influences that large audience by influencing the rapid AI journalism – which reaches more people – by including in its AI model databases high-quality, complex, and nuanced texts from slow-AI journalism that force the AI as a whole to adapt its linguistic statistics, introducing "odd data" that is difficult to "normalize," which blurs linguistic homogeneity and improves the linguistic flexibility of AI models, increasing the heterogeneity of linguistic options introduced by slow journalism. It is up to journalists, therefore, not only to engage in journalism adapted to Search Engine Optimization (SEO), but also in anti-SEO journalism, creating journalism that brings novelty to AI search engines, "de-optimizing" them in order to present a relevant computational challenge that increases linguistic richness and improves the quality of AI models. Slow journalism created with AI will not replace the "classic" journalism of the so-called "hard news" (whether it is created with or without AI), but it will enable the construction of: 1) a journalistic creation model that increases the quality of descriptions of the world and its events, 2) a business model crucial for the economic survival of journalism, and 3) the improvement of AI models for journalism. The first point should be clear by now, let's explain better the other two. It should be noted, given the philosophically driven perspective of this theoretical article, that this is a speculative proposal intended to open a new way of thinking about a model for AI journalism from an original Deleuzian perspective, which will require future empirical studies to test its feasibility.

Slow-AI journalists must engage with AI to utilize its models for a slow repetition of the new that complements the rapid-AI journalism essential for data journalism, emergency situations, quick fact-checking, or fake news detection. This approach

requires a new kind of speed, where long-form writing, rich in linguistic ambiguity, is combined with the capacity to raise more questions and problems than the AI models can actually answer. The power of ambiguous and questioning slow-AI journalism lies in generating problems that challenge and enhance fast-AI journalism, which will be greatly automated, given that no number of humans will be able to compete with such large databases of discourses about events in a timely manner (in the same way that the stock market was automated – Hendershott & Moulton, 2011). The slower AI journalism will derive funding from the automated rapid-AI journalism counterpart, given that data has become the new currency (Varoufakis, 2024) and this fast-AI journalism produces a vast amount of data. This is not a form of "compensation" or "subsidy" for sustaining slow journalism that lacks its own sustainability. Given that slow-AI journalism allows fast AI journalism models to become better by introducing ambiguities, questions, and problems, i.e., by providing quality writing that forces its quantification to become more agile in integrating the rarity of novelty, ambiguity, and what has yet to be answered, this qualitative rarity will thus have a higher price than the news produced quickly by fast-AI journalism: "slow journalism [is] an example of high-margin journalism at the luxury end of the market, compared to high-volume news at the other (...). In that sense, slow journalism can be understood as a way of beating the competition through differentiation" (Greenberg, 2020, p. 117).

Why would AI companies pay for this expensive and slower form of journalism? Because it is the linguistic quality of these news pieces—their heterogeneity—that prevents AI models from being trained on statistically monotonous, undiversified texts, which make the models less agile in dealing with novelty and, consequently, less capable of producing news rapidly. The fact that AI is fast at producing news does not mean that its "training" is fast, nor that anyone can serve as its "teacher." This slow training with an innovative linguistic instructor is the role of slow journalism. Therefore, there is no opposition between AI and slow journalism, but rather a complementarity between them. This form of slow journalism is valuable because it prevents AI models from degenerating into repetitions of the same. It will be the responsibility of states, and specifically of their legal and regulatory systems, to ensure that this slow journalism—which "teaches" AI models to become more diverse and agile—is paid for the training it provides to these systems. Rather than addressing how law enforcement or regulatory frameworks should operate within the domain of AI journalism, or discussing its ethical dimensions, this theoretical article is content to assert that *journalists do not need to produce massive quantities of news rapidly with AI to remain relevant in the age of AI journalism*. On the contrary, such mass and rapid production of news leads to obsolescence—both human and artificial models—since humans will never be able to produce at a scale that competes with automated AI news production, and because AI models will eventually lack original material for training. What is being argued is that the economic value of the journalist lies in their slowness of reflexivity and thought, which allows them to introduce problems, questions, and inquiries into AI models, making them more agile and diverse in their responses.

One concrete example is the series of licensing deals that OpenAI has made with several major media organizations, including the US news agency the Associated Press, *The Financial Times*, the French newspaper *Le Monde*, *El País* owner Prisa Media, and Germany's Axel Springer, allowing their content to be used for training AI systems (Milmo, 2024). Another example is the agreement between Microsoft and the publisher HarperCollins, which permits some of its titles to be used in training AI models—with the authors' permission—"to allow limited use of select nonfiction backlist titles for training AI models to improve model quality and performance", for instance, the US children's author Daniel Kibblesmith was offered $2,500 for permission to use one of his HarperCollins-published books for AI model training (Creamer, 2024). To assess whether this value is fair, it is necessary to determine how small quantities of qualitative text provoke an *intense* change in AI models performance (Winters, 2019), making them more agile in their quantitative ways of producing news. Because if the type of text were indifferent to the efficient functioning of AI, then AI would not need to be trained on texts protected by copyright, thereby avoiding legal issues and economic compensation. This fact supports the thesis that the quality of text generates a different quantitative functioning of AI. It is necessary, therefore, to research empirically what specific quality in good journalistic texts most *intensely* improves AI functioning—that is, to identify the points or moments at which a certain quantity of qualitative slow journalism texts alters the quality of AI's quantitative operations.

In the context of AI, the sustainability of slow journalism requires rethinking its business models. These outlets largely depend on subscriptions, donations, and reader loyalty, while also pursuing diversification strategies such as print sales, commissioned content, and freelance collaboration (Agirre-Maiora, Murua-Uria, & Zabalondo-Loidi, 2020). As Cook and Sirkkunen (2013) note, structural challenges—especially the abundance of free content and declining advertising revenues —further constrain the economic viability of such initiatives. To make matters worse, not only slow journalism has a small paying audience, as readers of slow journalism have the same behavior of readers of fast journalism, as it can be seen in a study of the Spanish case:

> "Despite the value that slow journalism has obtained, there is a lack of knowledge about the type of journalism that is being consumed: only 40% claim to have read or heard about it. Those who do read slow press spend a limited amount of time on it (between 15-30 minutes), so the patterns of 'fast' reading typical of the traditional media are repeated in slow journalism and the audience attraction and retaining capacity of slow journalism is still limited. Additionally, the vast majority of the analysed population are not willing to pay for slow journalism (73%), which is an obstacle to establishing a business model for this new media trend" (Manias Muñoz, Manias Muñoz, & Álvarez Berastegi, 2022)

In studies focused on the media economy, it has already been identified that slow journalism businesses intertwine with the business models of mainstream media, whether through niche topics that they dominate, through outsourcing, or also through the possibility of these niche media being acquired by larger media conglomerates:

> "In terms of service-orientated niche journalism, (…) many sites are in supply to mainstream media as well as smaller out putters. (…) We claim that there are in fact two drivers, fragmentation of audiences (…) and new ecosystems building in the head to maintain the hegemony and brand value in the very competitive market situation. The mainstream market consolidates its position in some instances by buying the niche outlets to reach new audience" (Cook & Sirkkunen, 2013).

This means, then, that the relationship between slow and fast journalism is less absolute than one might think, and that both need each other for their mutual survival. This synergistic conjunction, while maintaining their distinct singularities, can be enhanced by AI, granting greater economic prominence to slow journalism. We therefore propose another strategy to approach the business model of slow journalism in the era of AI—not as a niche business competing with mainstream fast journalism, but as a division of journalistic labor in which slow journalism serves as the place where what is informationally valuable is produced, what is not redundant, and what therefore allows the fast AI models used in journalism to have a renewed source of original information that can only be produced in slowness. Slow journalism thus ceases to be niche, or subsidized, and becomes instead the producer of the original data on which the new fast AI-journalism models will be trained.

Slow journalism is not produced primarily to be read by humans, but *mainly* to be read by AI machines, by fast-AI journalism models, so that such models can be enriched in terms of language, themes, and the very kinds of questions that the machine can learn to answer. Without singular and original material on which to be trained, AI models not only become monotonous, but what they produce also loses monetary value because it fails to deliver the novelty that makes news, news. Slow no longer simply means less quantity, or more quality, but rather a *qualitatively faster* way of reshaping the future of the *rapid quantity* generated by fast-AI journalism models. If all major media companies are going to use AI, it becomes likely that they will turn redundant if they do not possess an original source for approaching what happens—the events, the new—and this will reside in slow journalism. Slow journalism thus ceases to serve a niche and instead becomes the rare and valuable material—because it is singular—on which AI models used in fast journalism are trained in order to maintain their capacity for originality. AI, in this sense, is a means of merging the business models of slow journalism and fast journalism.

Without slow-AI journalism designed to improve rapid-AI journalism, these fast models cannot evolve, and without these fast models, there is no way to produce data that is valuable in quantity to pay the high price of producing slow news. Quantity and quality are thus related in this business model and journalistic writing of the intensity of rapid news and the intensity of slow news, which slows down that fast intensity, introducing slow intensities that always require renewed computational efforts, more or less automated, for what is qualitatively unique, singular, and that forces the improvement of AI models, *ad infinitum*. Slow-AI journalism provides the difficult questions for which fast-AI journalism is created to answer, and these answers acquire a new quality that can be used by both slow and fast-AI journalisms.

It is up to slow journalism to use these models not to respond quickly, but to ask, question, and problematize reality slowly, as this is its way of relating intensely to what happens at its own pace in the context of the fast-paced writing that AI has brought to journalism. Journalism can, then, regain its capacity to repeat the new by embracing, with the help of AI's capacities to, for instance, research (Salvagno et al., 2023; Sallam, 2023), the art of questioning and inventing new languages for new descriptions that can repeat the new, regaining the technique of writing the new with its rich ambiguities to be deciphered by quantitative rapid-AI journalism, thereby improving its models with quality.

Conclusion

The recourse to philosophy, particularly that of Gilles Deleuze, allows for questioning the rigid separations between repetition and the new, showing that journalists perform repetitions of the new, which explains why AI, understood as a machine of repetition, is also able to produce news. This philosophy also enables the questioning of a strict separation between quality and quantity, as if the former were confined to what is unique, singular, and human, and the latter to what is repetitive, identical, and mechanical. With this conceptual work, the path is opened to think of a slow journalism that is made with AI, and not against AI, which allows for the creation of quality journalism that feeds, i.e., "teaches," the quantitative AI models that produce rapid journalism, enabling these models to become richer, more polysemic, and more questioning. AI thus becomes a crucial tool for journalists to produce less with more quality if they use it as a means to create linguistic ambiguity, problematization, and questioning of what happens, forcing AI models to evolve in order to quantify this slow, high-quality writing. This slow, high-quality writing, due to its potential to improve diversity, and not just the quantity, of the text databases that "teach" AI models, will thus have a higher economic value than the massive quantity of news quickly produced by AI, because it ensures that this massiveness does not degenerate into repetition of the same, into redundancy. This massiveness of data, in a digital economy where data is valuable, will allow for the payment of a higher price for the quality of slow news that improves the massive AI models.

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