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POTENTIAL ROLE OF AI IN PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND SHAPING NARRATIVES IN THE INFORMATION SPACE

The scope of the study is determined by the goal of improving Ukraine's image, proactive participation in the information war in the context of the comprehensive development of AI. The article does not address the issue of ethics, but in this study, the responsible and ethical use of artificial intelligence, which requires careful supervision, reliable governance structures and international cooperation to mitigate the risks of abuse, manipulation and destabilization, is a priori determined as the starting point for working with AI.

The writing of this article was prompted by the repeated receipt of false information when working with AI. It is especially important that in times of war, the information generated by AI when asked about the "situation in Ukraine" often relates to ideological Russian narratives. This has led to reflections on the need to understand the role of AI and proactive public diplomacy or even state information policy for the purposeful and coordinated dissemination of pro-Ukrainian narratives on the Internet.

The contemporary international landscape is characterized by an unprecedented flow of information, driven by the proliferation of digital technologies and the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI). This digital revolution has profoundly reshaped the practice of public diplomacy, the strategic communication efforts undertaken by nation-states to influence foreign audiences and build positive international relations. Traditionally, public diplomacy relied on targeted messaging disseminated through controlled channels like media broadcasts and cultural exchanges. However, the emergence of AI necessitates a reevaluation of these methods.

As nations seek for control of the global narrative and seek to influence public opinion, the symbiotic relationship between AI and public diplomacy emerges as a critical determinant of geopolitical power and influence.

It is argued that proactive public diplomacy strategies are essential for countries to effectively manage their image and shape the global narrative in an environment where AI plays an increasingly central role in information gathering and analysis. By neglecting their public diplomacy efforts, countries risk allowing the information space to be dominated by negative narratives or biased content, potentially leading to a skewed perception by AI systems. This, in turn, can have significant ramifications for global partnerships, trade agreements, and international relations.

The advent of the internet and social media has transformed the landscape of public diplomacy, with digital platforms now serving as the primary channels for nations to engage with foreign publics. Traditional modes of public diplomacy involving cultural exchanges, broadcasting, and in-person outreach initiatives have been supplanted by digital diplomacy efforts (Konovalova, 2023). New technologies have often helped to manage the complexities of communicating in public diplomacy, both when gathering and sharing information (Di Martino & Ford, 2024).

Countries are leveraging digital tools like social media, online campaigns, and virtual engagements to shape narratives and improve their nation's image abroad. As Corneliu Bjola and Marcus Holmes articulate in their book «Social media have become the core infrastructure for public diplomacy» (Bjola, 2015).

That is, effective public diplomacy today should be considered in the context of effective networking, considering the potential for access to different target groups.

AI systems like large language models are trained on vast amounts of data from the internet and other digital sources. The information and narratives they are exposed to during training can certainly influence the knowledge and perspectives they develop.

Generative AI produces new and increasingly accurate products and services, answering complex questions based on access to diverse sources, operating not in a vacuum but by following set patterns learned from data libraries (Manfredi-Sánchez & Morales, 2024).

None of the top AI development companies (Google, Microsoft, OpenAI) discloses details about the data used to train the AI. But it seems that such companies use data collected by search bots for search engines such as Google search, Microsoft Bing, as well as data uploaded by users to other services (Google books, Youtube). Or the LLaMa AI model presented by Meta (Facebook) can use data from posts and comments on the social network for training. Such possible actions are evidenced by recent lawsuits against the creators of Stability AI (Reuters, 2023) or open source instructions for developers that include a dataset of more than 1 million tweets (Schleiss, 2022).

The rise of AI underscores the importance of the modern information environment and the need for credible, fact-based narratives and messaging from all parties involved in public discourse.

That is, the formation of a dataset from social networks and web pages of various resources forms the basis for AI training. Accordingly, when planning, implementing and analyzing public diplomacy campaigns as a type of strategic communication aimed at foreign societies in order to achieve national interests, it is necessary to take into account AI as an object of work in the long term. Training AI models on relevant information is of similar importance as media, literature (scientific, educational, popular), music, art, video games, and other content that has an educational, often propagandistic purpose for generations to come. Governments and state actors have a vested interest in promoting favorable narratives and national messaging through the content they produce and disseminate online. This content then gets ingested by AI systems during training.

If one country or group of actors dominates the online information space with their narratives, AI could become biased towards adopting those viewpoints. This is why it's important for all countries to actively participate in public diplomacy efforts online.

In this aspect, the regulation of databases for AI training in China seems interesting. China's strategy is shaped by government policy. The Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC) believes that AI should adhere to the "core values of

socialism with Chinese characteristics" (Manfredi-Sánchez, 2024). These regulations seek to control the AI industry by identifying legitimate sources, preventing the free use of unauthorized data, platforms, or algorithms, particularly for companies offering services to public institutions (CAC, 2023). The regulations mandate transparency and accountability, including deleting content deemed harmful to China's political system or strategic interests, updating algorithms, labeling generated content, and identifying creators. Major Chinese companies like Alibaba, Baidu, and Tencent have joined this process, collaborating with national security actors to fight disinformation.

Of course, it is difficult to introduce this type of censorship in democratic countries, but the trends highlighted by the work of the Cyberspace Administration of China give reason to take into account the current and potential capabilities of AI to build the image of the country, government, and ideology

The implications of this idea for public diplomacy include the need for AI literacy among public diplomacy practitioners. AI literacy is recognized as a set of competencies that allow people to critically evaluate AI technologies. In particular, scholars identify the need for public diplomacy practitioners to critically interpret data, as well as the ability to «recognize and describe how computers reason and make decisions» (Long & Brian, 2020). It is also important to understand the algorithms of AI and the training of AI models to implement proactive public diplomacy, disseminate state narratives, coordinate the work of information and communication departments, and educate a network of public diplomats such as public figures, diaspora, media personalities, bloggers, etc.

In summary, the role public diplomacy messaging could play in shaping AI's knowledgebase. Countries should be actively engaged, but should also be mindful of letting AI remain as objective as possible rather than overtly trying to align it with particular ideological stances. Ethical public diplomacy and transparent, truthful information sharing will be increasingly vital in the AI era. Public diplomacy is vital for shaping the perception of a state on the global stage. In the age of AI, where information is abundant and constantly analyzed, the messages a country puts out play a significant role in influencing public opinion, both domestically and internationally.

If a country does not actively engage in shaping its narrative, other nations or actors may fill the void, potentially distorting the country's image. AI, being a tool that sifts through vast amounts of data, can inadvertently absorb and propagate these narratives, affecting perceptions worldwide. Therefore, effective public diplomacy is essential for a country to control its narrative and ensure its image accurately reflects its values, policies, and objectives.

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