

Algorithmic Silences: Postcolonial Blind Spots in Dutch AI Media Discourse

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Abstract

The Kingdom of the Netherlands comprises four countries: the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao, and Sint Maarten, as well as three public entities located on the islands of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius, and Saba. All these regions are former Dutch colonies and are located in the Global South. News coverage from former colonisers toward their former colonies is shaped by historical frameworks, political interests, evolving global power dynamics, and unequal news creation. This study specifically focuses on AI coverage in European-Dutch and Caribbean-Dutch newspapers, analysing 128 articles published between 2015 and 2025. By using a structured approach to analyse AI positioning, agency attribution, political-geographical framing, and epistemic visibility, this study develops a framework for examining and understanding how news media construct narratives along colonial lines. The analysis uncovers a structural imbalance: European-Dutch media rarely engage with AI developments in the Dutch Caribbean, producing what de Sousa Santos (2015) calls a “sociology of absences,” while Caribbean outlets frequently report on European-Dutch contexts and cite Dutch policymakers, institutions, and technologies. Across both media systems, AI is predominantly described as an externally produced technology, reinforcing Northern epistemic authority and positioning the Caribbean as a recipient rather than a co-producer of AI futures. These patterns reflect structural postcolonial inequalities within the Kingdom’s media ecosystem. The study highlights the need for more inclusive and locally informed reporting on AI to ensure that technological developments and societal implications in the Dutch Caribbean are part of the wider public debate.

Keywords

Artificial Intelligence; coloniality; Dutch Caribbean; epistemic visibility; Global North–South relations; journalism

1. Introduction

In January 2018, the European-Dutch newspaper *De Telegraaf* reported on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the tourism industry, including a robot bartender at a resort on Curaçao (Eldering, 2018). The article relied exclusively on sources from the Dutch travel industry and omitted perspectives from Caribbean actors. Such selective sourcing reflects broader critiques of journalism's reliance on elite sources (Carlson & Lewis, 2019) and blind spots of "gender, race, intersectional concerns, and settler colonialism" (Callison & Young, 2020, p. 200). As this article will argue, it exemplifies a broader pattern: European-Dutch news outlets typically pay minimal attention to technological developments, local knowledge, and actors in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom.

Despite being part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the six islands (and former colonies) in the Dutch Caribbean—Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten, Bonaire, Sint Eustatius, and Saba—occupy an unequal position within the broader political and media landscape of the Kingdom. Earlier studies have demonstrated persistent disparities in policy implementation and visibility between the European and Caribbean parts of the Kingdom (Council for the Environment and Infrastructure, 2025; Oostindie & Veenendaal, 2022). These disparities extend into technology domains where strategic governmental technological visions of the Netherlands remain disproportionately oriented toward European-Dutch interests (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate, 2019; Sheikh et al., 2023). A similar pattern can be seen in news coverage. Francisco and Terburg (2026) argue that Dutch news media based in the European Netherlands often overlook the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom, writing:

Although Caribbean journalists provide solid coverage of current events and question local administrators about their policies, this local journalistic expertise receives little attention in European-Dutch media....European-Dutch journalists who currently report on and about the islands often do so on their own initiative. (p. 23)

Research on global AI news coverage shows systematic differences between how journalists in the Global North (Chuan et al., 2019; De Cooker, 2025; Nguyen & Hekman, 2024; Vergeer, 2020) and Global South (Brokensha & Conradie, 2021; Ittefaq et al., 2025) frame and interpret AI. However, little is known about how former colonial powers portray AI developments in their former colonies, or how these portrayals reproduce existing postcolonial power relations. Furthermore, there has not yet been sufficient research into the narratives surrounding AI circulating in these former colonies and how these developments are interpreted from their own perspective. This study aims to bridge that gap by using a postcolonial and development lens in analysing which narratives dominate, whose expertise is foregrounded or omitted, and how AI is positioned within broader postcolonial relationships inside the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

2. Theoretical Framework

By covering AI, journalists shape their audience's perception of the technology and impact how society approaches and understands this technology (Broussard et al., 2019; Sartori & Theodorou, 2022). Previous research on reporting of AI mainly focused on historical representations (Bory, 2019; Natale & Ballatore, 2020) and North American and European media coverage (Bunz & Braghieri, 2022; Chuan et al., 2019; Nguyen & Hekman, 2024; Sun et al., 2020). In the Dutch context, news coverage of AI increased

significantly from 2014 onwards, from topics such as robots and robot football to developments in big tech, with the content often relying heavily on American media (Magalhães & Smit, 2026; Vergeer, 2020).

2.1. Narratives of AI

Despite growing scholarship, Chubb et al. (2024) state that there is an AI story crisis, in which narratives from non-Anglophone and Global South contexts remain underrepresented, while historical, sociocultural, political, and literary AI narratives from the Global North dominate critical discourse on AI (Eke & Ogoh, 2022; Ittefaq et al., 2025; Thussu, 2022). From a sociological perspective, narratives are defined as “organising visions” for society (Dourish & Bell, 2011, p. 1) and function as devices to give meaning to social and cultural changes (Sartori & Theodorou, 2022). AI narratives are embedded in broader sociotechnical imaginaries, defined as “collectively held and institutionally stabilised visions of desirable futures” supported by developments in science and technology (Jasanoff & Kim, 2015, p. 4). These sociotechnical imaginaries serve as powerful “infrastructures of imagining” that blur the boundaries between real and imagined worlds, thereby co-producing the social orders they envision (Sismondo, 2020, p. 505). These imaginaries shape how AI is interpreted, legitimised, and circulated across media, policy, and public discourse. Imaginaries about intelligent machines long predate contemporary AI research (Cave et al., 2020). In modern contexts, narratives often take the form of what Marx (2000) and Nye (1994, 2004) call the technological sublime: narratives that celebrate technological progress while obscuring its contradictions, risks, or social tensions. Nye (2004) highlights that “the most successful of these little narratives are those that present an innovation as not just desirable, but inevitable” (p. 160). It is this inevitability, according to Bareis and Katzenbach (2022), that can be used as a rhetorical device that strips away human agency and forces society to adapt to a new technology such as AI. Duarte et al. (2025) delineate that societies can tackle this inevitability by resisting, refusing, reclaiming, and reimagining AI narratives and innovations, but did not operationalise this in a news media context.

More recent academic work shifts attention to how these narratives are created and reproduced through news media. Studies demonstrate that journalistic storytelling frequently relies on binary and polarised narratives, using myths (such as Prometheus, Pandora’s box, and Icarus), archetypes, or simplified tropes such as the “scary robot” (Cave et al., 2019; De Masi et al., 2025; Sartori & Bocca, 2023). Cave et al. (2019) offer a more delineated typology (see Table 1) that identifies eight widely existing AI narratives divided

Table 1. The hopeful and fearful AI narratives.

Immortality	AI might revolutionise medicine, treatment, and drugs so that we could live forever
Inhumanity	AI might enhance our bodies so much that we become more machine than human
Ease	AI might make our day-to-day lives easier because we could ask computers to do more tasks for us
Obsolescence	AI might mean we become over-reliant on machines and replace the need for humans in jobs, relationships, and socialising
Gratification	AI might become the perfect friend, there to listen whenever we need and ready to meet our every desire
Alienation	AI might cater to all our desires so well that we prefer AI interaction to human interaction
Dominance	AI might help strengthen our military power because it could provide smarter weapons
Uprising	AI might enable computers to become more powerful than us

into hopeful and fearful narratives, spread among four dichotomies: (a) immortality–inhumanity; (b) ease–obsolescence; (c) gratification–alienation; and (d) dominance–uprising. Their study showed that these narrative structures help simplify complex AI phenomena and make them publicly understandable and identifiable.

2.2. Postcolonial Asymmetries and Proximity

To analyse how AI is represented across the former coloniser–colonised divide, this study draws on the concept of coloniality and on insights from cultural and postcolonial studies. Both the European-Dutch and the Caribbean-Dutch parts of the Dutch Kingdom have been through a period of decolonisation, which is referred to by Ashcroft et al. (2024) as the intellectual, political, economic, and societal work concerned with the restoration of land and life following the end of historical colonial periods. Coloniality refers to the persistence of hierarchical power structures and knowledge regimes that endure beyond formal decolonisation and continue to shape whose experiences, expertise, and worldviews are recognised as legitimate by “the historical processes of dispossession, enslavement, appropriation and extraction central to the emergence of the modern world” (Bhabra & de Sousa Santos, 2017, p. 9).

Quijano’s (2007) colonial matrix of power offers a useful framework here: It identifies four interlinked domains of control—economy, authority, gender/sexuality, and subjectivity/knowledge—through which colonial hierarchies persist. The epistemologies of technology are influenced by the colonial matrix of power as in this line of thought, local technologies are viewed as primitive and traditional (Muldoon & Wu, 2023). For this study, the domain of knowledge and subjectivity is particularly relevant, as it highlights how news media narratives privilege certain epistemic authorities while marginalising others. This relates directly to epistemic injustice, which describes how individuals or groups are denied credibility or are excluded as legitimate knowers based on structural prejudice (Byskov, 2021). In a postcolonial media context, this manifests as uneven epistemic visibility and especially the stakeholder condition within this concept: Actors from the Global North often appear as experts, while Caribbean voices remain peripheral or absent. Such omissions reproduce the knowledge hierarchy within the colonial matrix of power. These dynamics manifest strongly in news media systems: Journalism plays a central role in constructing meaning, reproducing dominant discourses, and determining whose knowledge is rendered visible or invisible. This is discernible in Okolo et al.’s (2022) observation that historical inequalities in access to technology and development have led societies in the Global South to be cautious about AI. Furthermore, in the Global North, technology is often a specialised “news beat,” with reporters receiving special training to cover AI news, while in the Global South, specialised technology editorial teams are often lacking. Instead, reporting on AI is usually done by general economic or political editors (Kamboh et al., 2024). These inequalities are reinforced through development framing, in which technologies such as AI are depicted as originating in powerful centres of the Global North and arriving in the Caribbean as ready-made solutions. This narrative positions Northern institutions as the architects of technological progress and Caribbean actors as passive recipients, mirroring historical patterns of dependency.

Journalism itself is an inherently ideological and value-laden profession (Deuze, 2005). One of its core selection logics is proximity, which determines newsworthiness based on geographical, cultural, or emotional closeness between journalists and events (Shoemaker et al., 2007). In the Caribbean, proximity to the US influences media norms and reporting conventions (Rotmeijer, 2019). The geographic distance between the European

Netherlands and Dutch Caribbean could help explain the low degree of media attention from European-Dutch news organisations for news events in the Dutch Caribbean (Oostindie & Veenendaal, 2022).

These patterns reflect the power geometries described by Massey (1991, 1993). Massey argues that regions are unequally positioned within global flows of information, resources, and infrastructures and rely on historically differentiated relationships between the Global North and Global South (Chang, 1998; Ricaurte, 2022), and relationships between colonisers and colonised (Birhane, 2023). Natale et al. (2025, p. 1061) state that understanding AI in the context of power geometries “helps consider not just positions but also the relationships between different actors.” The European Netherlands functions as a metropole with greater access to and control over technological narratives, while Caribbean regions occupy a constrained position within these flows. Together, the concepts of coloniality, the colonial matrix of power, epistemic visibility, development framing, and power geometries provide a lens for understanding how postcolonial hierarchies shape whose technological futures and imaginaries are visible or remain absent in AI reporting across the Kingdom.

2.3. The Dutch Caribbean

The Dutch Caribbean consists of six islands: Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten, Bonaire, Sint Eustatius, and Saba. These islands share a colonial history as part of the former Dutch Empire. Until 1954, the islands, with currently around 330,000 inhabitants, were governed as colonies, and between 1954 and 2010, the islands were united as the Netherlands Antilles. Although their constitutional status changed in 2010, long-standing asymmetries between the European Netherlands and the islands continue to shape political, economic, and informational relations (Oostindie, 2012). Research by Oostindie and Klinkers (2003) shows that the Netherlands did not play an active political role in its overseas territories until the 1990s, a stance they refer to as “careless colonialism” (p. 57).

The news media landscape on the Dutch Caribbean islands is strongly influenced by broader Caribbean media and communication cultures, which have been shaped by the small scale of the multilingual island communities and deep-rooted oral traditions within the region (Rotmeijer, 2019; Storr, 2016). These characteristics, combined with the strong administrative position of local governments, often constrain critical journalism and limit the development of robust watchdog functions (Oostindie & Veenendaal, 2022; Storr, 2016). Local media organisations also operate with restricted financial and professional resources, which reduces their capacity for independent reporting and investigative work and results in news articles frequently relying on press releases and external sources such as other news media or press agencies (Abraham et al., 2023; Veenendaal, 2017).

The Curaçaoan press operates as the region’s most influential media hub with the *Antiliaans Dagblad* as its main newspaper (Rotmeijer, 2019). Other outlets such as the local newspaper *The Daily Herald* and the NTR’s multilingual Caribisch Netwerk demonstrate extensive inter-island and Kingdom-wide interconnections. Concurrently, the Caribbean media landscape is heavily influenced by North American and European narratives: Representations originating from the US and Europe significantly shape how Caribbean people understand their own region (Pertierra & Horst, 2009). By contrast, when European-Dutch media depict events in the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom, they tend to emphasise crises such as hurricanes, corruption, or crime, which contributes to a structural knowledge gap among European Dutch audiences (Oostindie & Veenendaal, 2022).

While taking into account the global relationships and interactions that influence news narratives about AI and its creation, circulation, and use (Jobin et al., 2019), this study follows up on Amrute et al.'s (2022) claim that AI cannot be addressed as a global phenomenon without carefully investigating its embeddedness in local contexts and interplay with global and local dimensions of AI in a news context. The following key research questions will be answered:

RQ1: What are the dominant news narratives on AI in Caribbean Dutch news media and in European Dutch news media covering Caribbean Dutch contexts between 2015 and 2025?

RQ2: To what extent do the narratives of AI development in the Dutch Caribbean reflect postcolonial power relations in terms of agency, development, and epistemic visibility?

3. Methodology

This study employs narrative analysis, based on a novel operationalisation of AI news coverage grounded in theory from science and technology studies and developmental studies, and draws upon a dataset of news articles from three Caribbean-Dutch and three European-Dutch-based newspapers ($N = 128$).

3.1. Source Selection

Articles from three European-Dutch newspapers (*De Telegraaf*, *NRC*, and *De Volkskrant*) were retrieved from the NexisUni database using the Dutch search terms “*kunstmatige intelligentie*” OR “*artificiële intelligentie*” (both meaning “artificial intelligence” in Dutch) and collected for the period from January 2015 to December 2025. These three newspapers were selected because of their high national reach and their distinct journalistic profiles. The island-based newspapers (*Antilliaans Dagblad*, *24Ora*, and *The Daily Herald*) were selected on their geographical spread in both selecting media from the windward and leeward islands as well as their diverse sets of audiences. The Caribbean-Dutch articles were gathered through the archives of *Antilliaans Dagblad*, *24Ora*, and *The Daily Herald*, using equivalent Dutch and English search terms in the media's own archives and Google News.

A two-step inclusion procedure for the European-Dutch and Caribbean-Dutch articles was applied. First, opinion pieces, advertorials, and articles unrelated to AI applications or societal implications were excluded. Second, European-Dutch articles were only retained if they referenced Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten, Bonaire, Sint Eustatius, or Saba, identified using a regex filter for the island names. From an initial corpus of 2,365 European-Dutch AI-related articles, this approach returned four relevant articles. Caribbean-Dutch articles were included if they discussed AI, regardless of geographical reference. Combined, this resulted in a final dataset of 128 news articles (see Table 2, and Appendix C in the Supplementary File for a list of all analysed articles), the vast majority of which originated from the Caribbean-Dutch sample. The first author conducted the primary screening with assistance from a research aide; the second author reviewed a subset of 120 articles for consistency. This resulted in a Krippendorff's alpha for the inclusion process of 1.000 for the Caribbean-Netherlands inclusion and 0.7952 for the AI-related inclusion. Given the region-specific focus of this project, this tentative alpha was deemed sufficient.

Table 2. Final corpus.

Outlet	Article count
24Ora	8
Antilliaans Dagblad	100
The Daily Herald	16
NRC	2
De Telegraaf	1
De Volkskrant	1

3.2. Narrative Analysis

The narrative analysis combined deductive and inductive coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006) within a narrative-analytic framework that builds methodically on the work of Cave et al. (2019), with a novel framework for the identification of local narratives. To answer RQ1, the eight narrative scenarios proposed by Cave et al. (2019)—four hope-driven and four fear-driven narratives—were deductively identified within the corpus. Inductive coding was additionally used to foreground knowledge- and climate-related narratives. Inductive coding was additionally used to foreground sustainability- and knowledge-related narratives, whose definitions are presented in Appendix B in the Supplementary File.

To answer RQ2, four novel analytical steps were operationalised based on Nye's (1994) theoretical concept of the technological sublime combined with literature from colonial studies, including Byskov's concept of epistemic injustice.

Recent studies have taken the first steps towards analysing AI narratives in a Global South context (Eke & Ogoh, 2022; Farias Mota, 2026; Nkoala et al., 2026). Nkoala et al. (2026) examined the African context, focusing on article placement, authorship, and the use of buzzwords, and highlighted a limited presence of local journalists covering AI and local perspectives that perpetuate the notion that AI is primarily a Western-driven phenomenon. Whilst this offers valuable insights into how AI coverage reproduces colonial patterns, an analysis of power dynamics requires a closer examination of agency and inevitability. This was operationalised in four novel analytical steps:

1. Positioning AI as a product: Is AI framed as an external, off-the-shelf product entering the region, as a locally rooted initiative that meets local needs, or both?
2. Agency attribution: What scope for action are local actors given? Are they portrayed as active actors or recipients of the technology?
3. Political-geographical: Within what geographical framework is the technological narrative situated? Is it linked to the Global North, the Global South, or an EU or Dutch context?
4. Epistemic visibility: Who is permitted to speak with authority? Does the expertise of external powers take centre stage, or is there scope for local claims to knowledge and co-production?

By identifying these local narratives and contrasting them against narratives of the Global North, the article seeks to follow the call to de-westernise communication research, specifically on research on AI narratives (Waisbord, 2022). Atlas.TI was used during the narrative analysis process. The full codebook is provided in Appendix A.

3.3. Intercoder Agreement, Positionality, and Limitations

To test the codebook, a subset of five articles was jointly coded by the first and second authors. Before settling on a sufficient intercoder reliability, the authors then coded the 123 remaining articles independently, each coding a shared subset ($n = 61$), leading to a Krippendorff's alpha rating of 0.91. The third author reviewed 15% of all articles. These articles were selected at random. All coding discrepancies were discussed and resolved by group consensus.

The authors come from the Global North, self-identify as white, and are located in the Netherlands. Although we have published research on topics such as AI and inclusion of perspectives from less visible groups in media discourse (De Cooker et al., 2026; van Wijk et al., 2025), we acknowledge our homogeneous setup. Throughout the research process, we held four informal discussions over the three-month research period with multiple media professionals and/or with AI expertise with origins in the Dutch Caribbean to inform and refine our research process. These conversations informed decisions regarding data selection and interpretation; notably, they contributed to the inclusion of *The Daily Herald* to ensure adequate representation of the Windward Islands.

As European-based researchers, our capacity to fully comprehend and represent the Dutch Caribbean context is inherently constrained. While expert consultations supported contextual understanding, they cannot replace lived experience, and our interpretations may reflect a predominantly European-Dutch perspective.

4. Analysis and Findings

References to newspaper headlines throughout this section refer to articles included in the studied corpus. Complete metadata (title, newspaper, and publication date) are provided in Appendix C.

4.1. Coverage Gap

News interest in AI developments in the Caribbean-Dutch region rapidly increases from 2022 to 2025 (Figure 1). News articles from the European-Dutch newspapers *NRC*, *De Telegraaf*, and *De Volkskrant* about AI in the Caribbean area of the Netherlands only make up a small fraction of all articles. This Dutch sample was drawn from an initial corpus of 2,365 AI-related articles, to which a regex-based filter for references to the Dutch-Caribbean islands was applied.

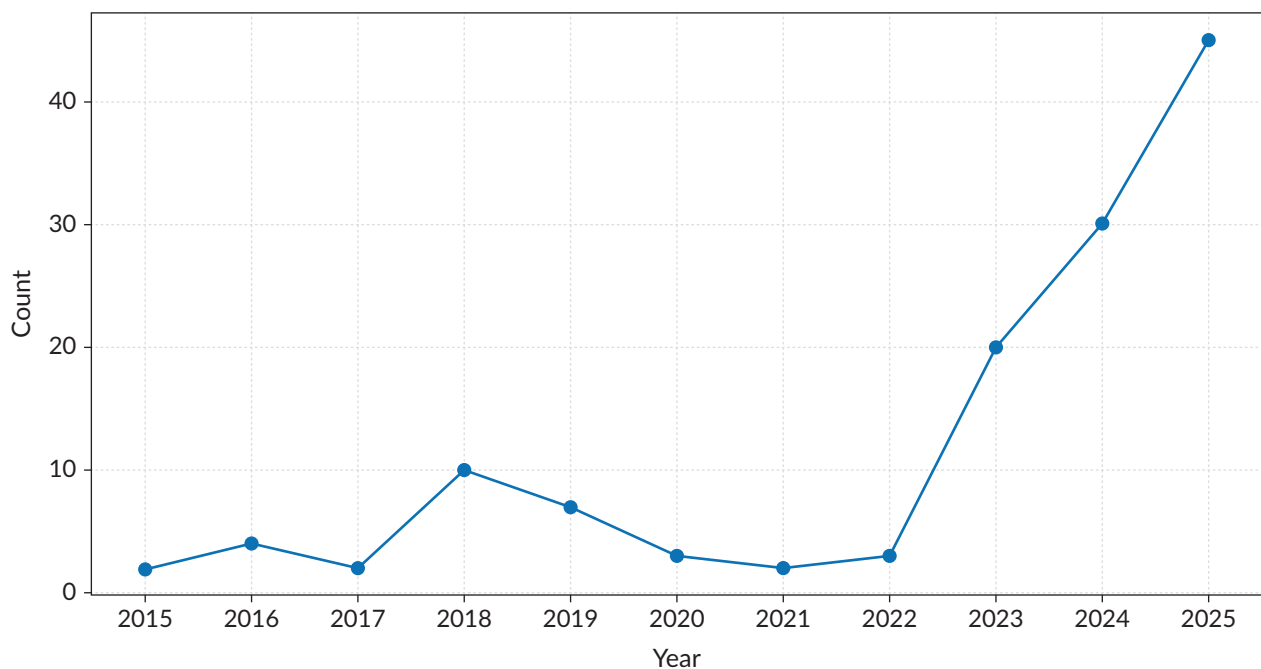


Figure 1. Volume of AI articles over time.

Only four news articles, accounting for less than 0.2% of the whole European-Dutch corpus, indicate a weak integration of the Dutch-Caribbean region within AI-related news coverage (Table 3). A qualitative reading of these four European-Dutch articles confirms this pattern. When the Caribbean islands are mentioned, they appear only as background locations rather than as sites of AI development. For example, in a report on the increase in AI-controlled autopilots in aviation, Curaçao is only mentioned as a flight destination. The lack of reporting on AI innovation in the Dutch Caribbean and the almost complete absence of local actors in Dutch-European reporting indicates very limited visibility of the Caribbean part of the Kingdom within the Dutch-European news agenda. The European-Dutch context is strongly represented in the Caribbean newspapers analysed. In 27% of the Caribbean-based articles, journalists refer to European-Dutch locations, actors, or stakeholders. *Antilliaans Dagblad* features 31 articles that reference this European-Dutch context, followed by *24Ora* (three articles). Examples include an article on European-Dutch university projects on AI and plastics in the seas, an article on cabinet conflicts concerning funding for AI in healthcare, and an article on European-Dutch researchers visiting the Caribbean-Dutch islands to conduct AI-related workshops. *The Daily Herald* does not feature these references.

Table 3. AI-related articles published in European-Dutch newspapers (2015–2025).

Newspaper	Included articles	Articles involving AI in the Dutch Caribbean
<i>NRC</i>	841	2
<i>De Telegraaf</i>	781	1
<i>De Volkskrant</i>	743	1
Total	2,365	4

4.2. AI Narratives in European-Dutch and Caribbean-Dutch News Media

Figure 2 shows the distribution of narratives per narrative domain among AI coverage of European-Dutch and Caribbean-Dutch newspaper media. There is an emphasis on the ease that AI-related technologies such as AI-powered chatbots can bring (“AHATA biedt een seminar,” 2024; “Maak kennis met Stati,” 2025), which already results in a lower workload and a shorter work week (“Vierdaagse werkweek voor AFAS,” 2024). Also, there is a narrative focus on the perceived impact of generative AI technologies and the perception of these technologies as entities that copy and spread “huge amounts of copyrighted material” (“AI-bedrijf aangeklaagd,” 2023) as well as distributing “conspiracy theories, infringes our privacy, flouts intellectual property rights and guzzles an enormous amount of energy” (“EU-parlement stemt in,” 2023) with “huge” potential (“Curaçao mee,” 2025).

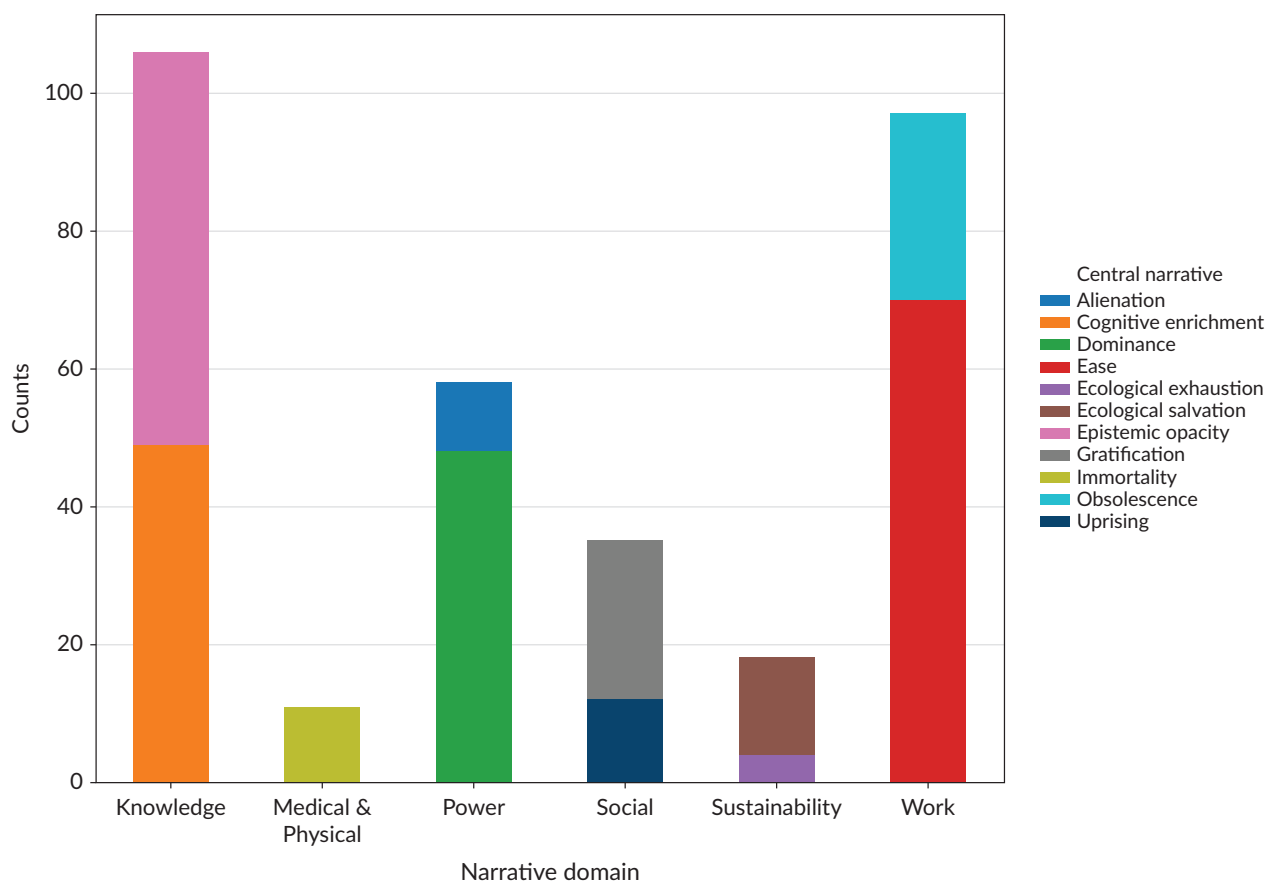


Figure 2. AI narratives per narrative domain in European-Dutch and Caribbean-Dutch newspapers.

This is encapsulated in the high identification of knowledge- and work-related narratives. Further references are made to the Dutch benefits scandal, in which the European-Dutch government deployed algorithms to detect fraudulent claims for benefits as a token example in which algorithmic opacity is depicted as a mechanism through which state institutions can perpetuate social harm, particularly against racialised or socio-economically marginalised groups. Another noticeable narrative is that of power, where the coverage goes beyond merely the military power discussed by Cave et al. (2019), moreover to the extent to which a country’s survival is discussed in relation to AI development. AI development is narrated in terms of performative necessity, predominantly in coverage of the AI trade war between the US and China, but also

in a European-Dutch context focusing on recommendations of the European Commission, where it is noted that “investments in areas such as artificial intelligence are crucial to maintaining the Netherlands’ position” (“Nederland in EU,” 2022). Also in the Caribbean context, especially on Curaçao, the focus is on strategically “talking AI into being” (Bareis & Katzenbach, 2022, p. 863) in the region as a pioneer in adoption, when it positions itself as “leader in adoption in the Caribbean” whereby “action speaks louder than words” is required to “keep pace with these developments” (“Curaçao leider,” 2025). For small island jurisdictions such as Curaçao, adopting the rhetoric of global AI competition can be understood as a strategy to position themselves within broader technological imaginaries and claim relevance in global digital developments. Curaçao, as a local actor, adopts the powerful rhetoric of global superpowers in order to gain legitimacy and assert its own regional sovereignty within the global digital order. This normalises AI as an indispensable technological solution for national economic modernisation, whereby the urgency of actions over words often pushes critical reflection on the technology itself into the background. An article in the *Antilliaans Dagblad* quotes Curaçao’s Minister for Economic Development Ruisandro Cijntje on this point: “Curaçao must unite with other countries to remain at the forefront of AI developments” (Curaçao AI-strategie, 2024).

When looking at the proportion of coverage of these narratives by the analysed Dutch-Caribbean newspapers, Figure 3 shows a predominant emphasis on work-related narratives and less focus on knowledge-related narratives within coverage of 24Ora. Headlines such as “ATA takes a step towards the future with its AI colleague Jonas” (24Ora, 2025) and “AHRA emphasises humanity in the future of work with AI” (24Ora, 2025), and coverage of AI use in healthcare facilities in the Dutch Caribbean illustrate this:

Furthermore, artificial intelligence is considered a revolution in all areas of life. Nowadays, certain types of scans are easier and cheaper to perform and can be processed using a standard mobile phone. This

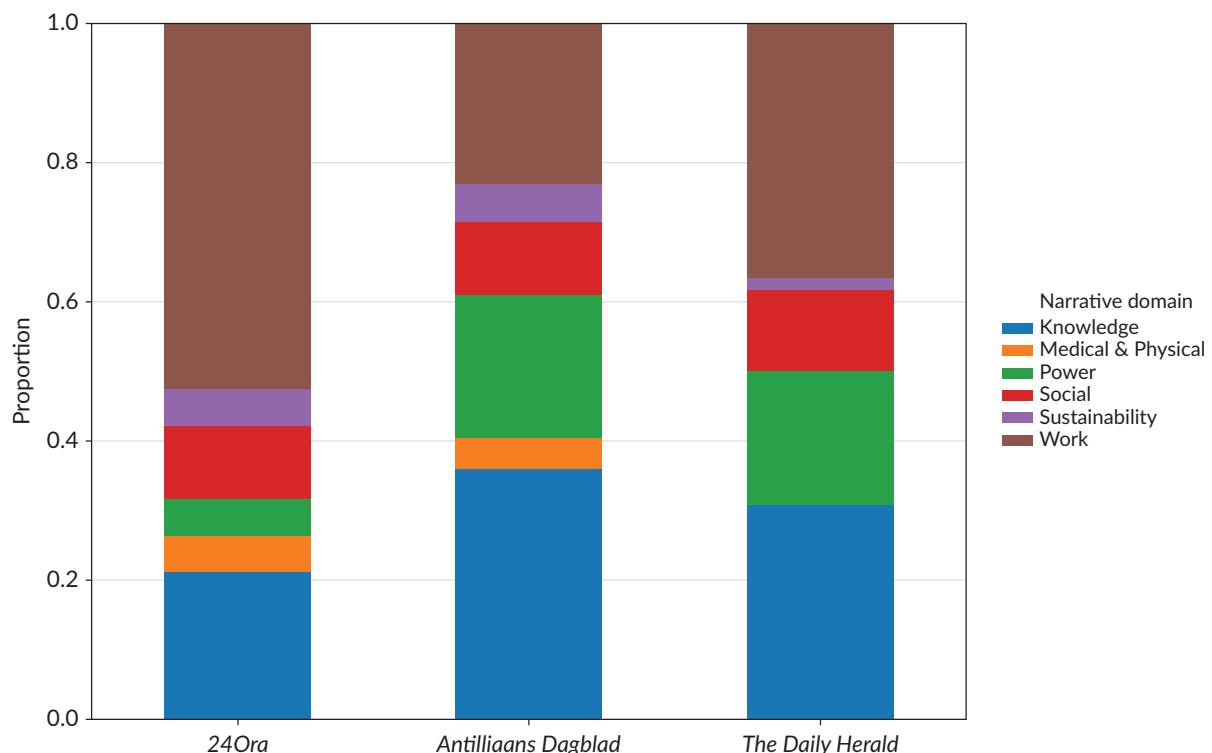


Figure 3. Narratives per Caribbean-Dutch newspaper in percentages.

makes it easier for people to monitor their health, which means that many more people can be checked in less time. (“Jacco Vroegop (HOH),” 2024)

4.3. AI Development Narratives

The analysis of the identified development narratives shows that the Dutch Caribbean is consistently positioned as a recipient within externally defined AI futures. Figure 4 shows the distribution of development narratives and highlights that, in addition to the previously mentioned European-Dutch focus, the Caribbean-Dutch AI coverage is mainly oriented towards dominant technological trends in Western societies in the Global North, such as the US and Europe, or by multinational technology companies. AI technology is mostly externally created, which is highlighted by the identification of 78 narratives covering ready-made AI products such as ChatGPT (“Zorgen over nieuwsgebruik,” 2023) or MidJourney (“AI: volwassen gezichten,” 2023). When local AI tools feature in the coverage, like the chatbot Stati by the local Bureau of Statistics (“Maak kennis met ‘Stati,’” 2025), these are usually adaptations of externally made tools rather than home-grown products, explicitly designed to align with local traditions, values, and specific societal needs.

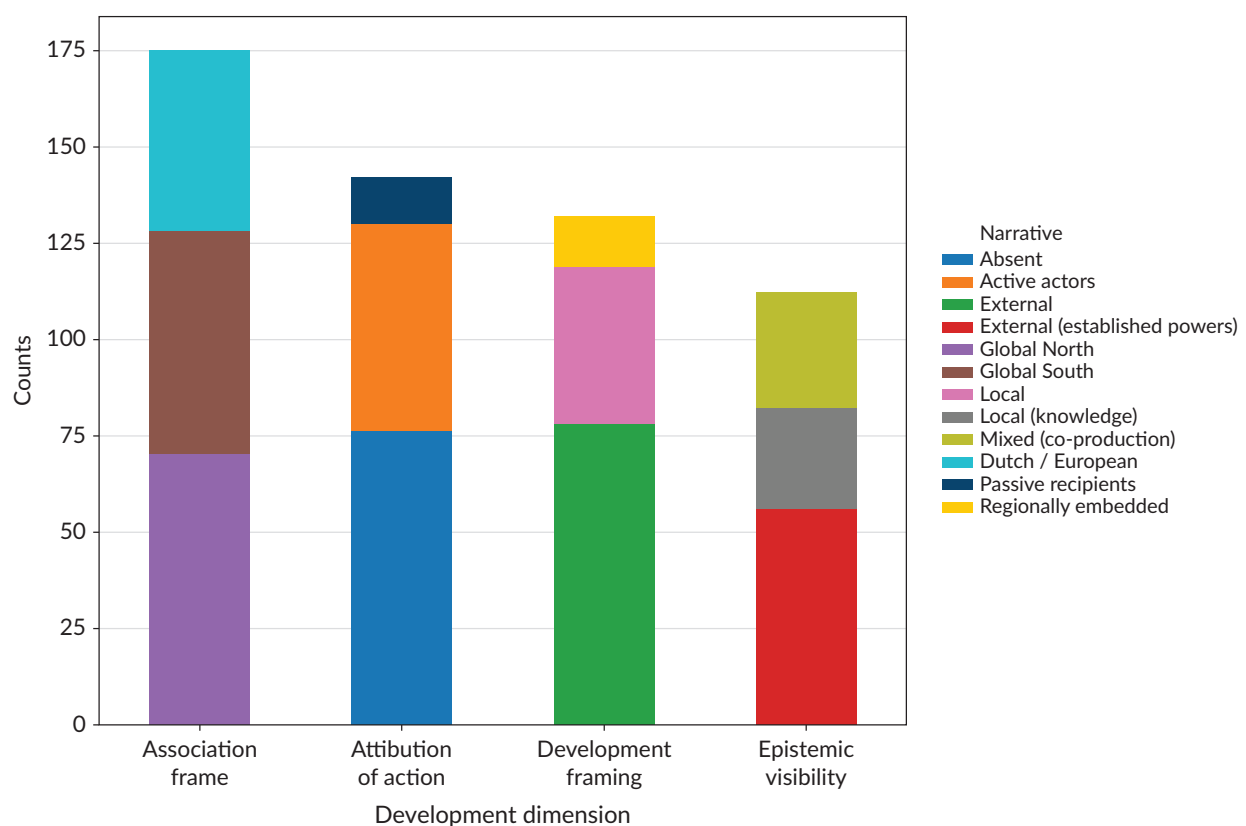


Figure 4. Development narratives per narrative.

This external development narrative positions the Global North as the locus of innovation and expertise. Caribbean media often reproduce this narrative positioning, which is evident, for example, when the *Antilliaans Dagblad* (Figure 5) reports on stock market developments involving AI companies, in which the technological future is validated almost exclusively through the lens of US financial markets and the

activities of major US-based technology firms. In such accounts, the technological future is interpreted through the performance and strategic positioning of companies such as Amazon, Alphabet, Meta, Nvidia, Microsoft, and Google, positioning the Caribbean primarily as a site of technological adoption.

Van onze redactie

New York - Alphabet, het moederbedrijf van Google, kreeg gisteren een fors koersverlies voor de kiezen op Wall Street. Dat gebeurde na een tegenvallende presentatie van een nieuw AI-programma, genaamd Bard. Het bedrijf wil kunstmatige intelligentie inzetten om zijn zoekmachine te verbeteren. Maar tijdens de presentatie ging het mis: het programma gaf een verkeerd antwoord over een ruimtetelescoop. Dat zorgde voor twijfels bij beleggers over

Alphabet hard onderuit op negatief Wall Street

de toekomst van de zoekmachine. Aandelen Alphabet werden bijna 8 procent lager gezet. Een dag eerder onthulde concurrent Microsoft een nieuwe versie van zijn zoekmachine Bing. Daarvoor maakt Microsoft gebruik van kunstmatige intelligentie van het bedrijf OpenAI. Deze plannen werden na de onthulling juist wel met enthousiasme

ontvangen bij beleggers. Gisteren moest Microsoft (min 0,3 procent) een deel van de koerswinst weer inleveren. Manchester United, met een beursnotering in New York, maakte een koerssprong van 9 procent. Beleggers reageerden verheugd op een bericht van de Britse krant Daily Mail dat investeerders uit Qatar in de komende dagen een bod willen uitbrengen op de Engelse voetbalclub van de Nederlandse trainer Erik ten Hag. Vorig jaar november schoot het aandeel ManUnited ook al omhoog nadat de Amerikaanse eigenaren, de familie Glazer, bevestigden te kijken naar een mogelijke verkoop van de club. Ook aandelen Uber (plus 5,3 procent) waren gewild. De taxi- en bezorgdienst boekte afgelopen kwartaal meer omzet en winst dan kenners hadden verwacht. Topman Dara Khosrowshahi sprak van het sterkste kwartaal van het bedrijf ooit. De algehele stemming op Wall Street was gisteren negatief, na de opmars een dag eerder die volgde op uitslatingen van

Powell. De Fed-baas zei onder meer dat de inflatie begint af te koelen. Wel waarschuwde hij dat er mogelijk meer renteverhogingen nodig zijn om die onder controle te krijgen. De toonaangevende Dow-Jonesindex sloot met een verlies van 0,6 procent op 33.949,01 punten. De S&P 500 verloor 1,1 procent op 4117,86 punten en de Nasdaq ging 1,7 procent omlaag tot 11.910,52 punten. Internetbedrijf eBay ging 2 procent omlaag. Het bedrijf ontslaat ongeveer 4 procent van al het personeel, waarmee zo'n vijfhonderd banen verloren gaan. Het onlineplatform voor shoppen en veilingen heeft last van teruglopende uitgaven van klanten en profiteert niet langer van coronalockdowns.



Advertentie

WISSELKOERSEN			
Officiële koersen geldig op: 8 februari 2023			
Centrale Bank van Curaçao en Sint Maarten, Simon Bolívar Plein 1, Willemstad, Curaçao. Tel. (599 9) 434-5500 Website: centralebank.cw			
Aankoop van			
Valuta	Bankpapier	Wissels, Cheques Reischeques en Overboekingen	Verkoop aan Publiek
USD-Amerikaanse Dollar	1,77	1,78	1,82
JPY-Japanse Yen per JPY.10.000	135,58	136,44	138,62
GBP-Engelse Pound Sterling	2,08	2,13	2,22
CHF-Zwitserse Franc per CHF.100	193,52	194,24	196,99
CAD-Canadese Dollar	1,31	1,33	1,36
EUR-EURO per EUR.100	189,52	191,25	195,10
AWG-Arubaanse Florin per AWG.100	98,00	100,00	1=101,20*
			2=101,00*

Ingevolge Artikel 9 lid 8 van het Centrale Bank-Statuut voor Curaçao en Sint Maarten stelt de Centrale Bank van Curaçao en Sint Maarten de koersen vast voor het deviezenverkeer.

*1 = voor bankpapier *2 = voor overboekingen en bankcheques



Figure 5. Example of a stock market-driven news article. Note: The headline translates as “Alphabet suffers heavy losses as Wall Street turns negative.” Source: “Alphabet hard onderuit” (2023).

Such patterns resemble a colonial supply chain (Quijano, 2007) in which technological authority, legitimacy, and knowledge production flow unidirectionally from centre to periphery, without reciprocal dialogue. The Global North functions as the epistemic and material origin of AI, while Caribbean contexts are relegated to downstream positions of consumption and implementation. The emphasis on global metrics and corporate success—such as claims that Meta’s Llama 2 model has been “downloaded 170 billion times” (“Nieuw AI-model Meta,” 2024)—further abstracts AI from local contexts, rarely specifying how such technologies are adapted, applied, or contested within Caribbean societies. In this sense, AI operates as a floating signifier that is mobilised through global financial and technological narratives to stabilise existing geopolitical hierarchies (Ryazanov et al., 2024).

4.3.1. Absent Agency

The coverage also shows a second dominant pattern regarding the attribution of agency. Table 4 shows the distribution of development narratives across the corpus at article level. The human agency of local Caribbean actors is absent in 54.7% of all articles, resulting in AI being framed as an autonomous entity that shapes society without local subjects exerting any influence over it. Foreign persons or organisations were actors in these articles.

Table 4. Distribution of development dimensions and sub-narratives.

Narrative domain	Narrative	n articles	% of articles
Development Framing	External	74	57.8
	Local	34	26.6
	Regionally embedded	13	10.2
Attribution of action	Active actors	48	37.5
	Passive recipients	11	8.6
	Absent	70	54.7
Association frame	Dutch/European	44	34.4
	Global North	65	50.8
	Global South	54	42.2
Epistemic Visibility	External (established powers)	55	43
	Local (knowledge)	29	22.7
	Mixed (co-production)	23	18

For example, this is evident in an article on the rise of robotic animals, which quotes a European-Dutch marine biologist living on Saba; although he uses AI in a Caribbean context, he does not speak from a local Caribbean perspective on technology (“Opmars van de robotdieren,” 2018). This pattern is further reinforced by the relatively limited presence of local AI development infrastructures on the islands, where innovation ecosystems are small and often dependent on external partnerships and imported technologies. The high degree of absence of Caribbean actors suggests that they are not recognised as full stakeholders. Also, the systematic absence of citizens’ voices within these narratives points to an imbalance in the local knowledge base and a failure to recognise the stakeholder condition (Byskov, 2021); after all, those directly affected by technological transitions are not given a say in shaping them. When human agency is explicitly highlighted in media reports, it is frequently externalised and attributed to Global North sources such as the former Dutch State Secretary Alexandra van Huffelen (“Van Huffelen deelt zorgen,” 2023). Her celebratory response to the European AI Act positions the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom as passive recipients of an external normative order, reaffirming a Northern gaze that dictates the boundaries of trustworthy AI, while local Caribbean perspectives remain unheard. This absence of agency also reflects broader journalistic practices, in which reliance on official sources and institutional actors is particularly pronounced in small media ecosystems like the Dutch Caribbean (Abraham et al., 2023; Oostindie & Veenendaal, 2022; Veenendaal, 2016).

This process in media coverage can create what Foucault (1978/2012) describes as docile bodies: subjugated citizens who merely undergo technological transitions without any scope for their own expectations or protest. This potentially provides a basis for a fundamental form of epistemic injustice, rooted in the disregard of the rights of local actors as architects of their own AI development. In de Sousa Santos’s (2015, p. 271) terms, this results in a “sociology of absences.” Excluding these local development narratives, traditions, and needs from the global AI discourse is a form of unjust discrimination against the expertise of people from the Global South (Eke & Ogoh, 2022).

4.3.2. Epistemic (In)Visibility

The distribution of epistemic visibility confirms that the expertise and claims to knowledge of external, established powers are cited as legitimate considerably more often than the unique contextual knowledge of Caribbean sources. This would suggest that, based on the newspaper coverage, local knowledge is actively presented as not yet fully heard. Although the presence of mixed knowledge co-production points to a tentative move towards an ecology of knowledges, the fundamental power dynamics within the Kingdom regarding AI reporting remain asymmetrical. However, recent articles show that there is a growing need for locally rooted narratives; an example of this emerging regional agency being a speech by the Barbadian Prime Minister Mia Mottley to Caricom, a regional organisation (“Caricom opgeroepen,” 2025). By placing AI-related threats such as fake news and public safety directly on the regional agenda, she is advocating a form of epistemic subsidiarity (Jasanoff, 2012, 2013, 2015). Furthermore, the scarcity of regionally embedded narratives emphasises that information flows continue to run primarily from the Netherlands to the islands, meaning that Caribbean developments and other regional collaborations between parties in the Caribbean—and primarily with parties in South America—do not come to the fore.

5. Conclusion and Discussion

Certain perspectives are missing when it comes to AI coverage in the Dutch Caribbean. This study argues that AI narratives in Dutch-European and Dutch-Caribbean newspapers are not merely descriptive accounts of technological development, but function as sites where asymmetries in power, knowledge production, and agency are reproduced, stabilised, and manifested (Massey, 1991, 1993). Three patterns stand out. First, AI is consistently portrayed as an externally produced technology, originating in dominant centres of innovation in the Global North and entering the Caribbean as a ready-made solution, reinforcing technological dependency (Eke & Ogoh, 2022; Thussu, 2022). Second, local agency is not fully appreciated, with Caribbean actors rarely positioned as decision-makers, reflecting narratives of inevitability that obscure local human influence and underlining how narratives may contribute to depoliticising technology by masking underlying power relations (Natale et al., 2025; Ricaurte, 2022). Third, epistemic visibility is uneven, as external experts dominate while local knowledge remains marginalised, echoing forms of epistemic injustice and sociologies of absences (Byskov, 2021; de Sousa Santos, 2015).

5.1. Discussion: Beyond the Data-Universalism Debate

These interrelated mechanisms structure how AI is narrated in newspaper coverage through uneven coverage, focus on external development of AI, absent local agency, and limited epistemic visibility. The marginal presence of Dutch-Caribbean contexts in European-Dutch newspapers reveals broader structural dynamics within the media system, in which geographic distance, limited correspondent networks, and a strong orientation towards domestic and Global North developments reduce perceived newsworthiness. At the same time, the inverse pattern—where Caribbean-Dutch newspapers report more extensively on European-Dutch developments—highlights an asymmetrical flow of information, demonstrating that proximity is not merely geographic.

At the epistemic level, these omissions reflect Quijano’s (2007) colonial matrix of power in which control over knowledge and representation persists beyond formal decolonisation and in which the metropole

continues to dominate the production and circulation of knowledge, while the Caribbean occupies a structurally peripheral position. This dynamic can be further understood through de Sousa Santos's (2015) notion of abyssal thinking, which maintains divisions between metropolitan and colonial spaces by rendering certain forms of knowledge visible while excluding others. This "sociology of absences" (de Sousa Santos, 2015, p. 271) ensures that Caribbean perspectives are systematically filtered out of the collective consciousness of the whole Dutch Kingdom. Although instances of regional agency—such as coverage of Caricom initiatives—indicate emerging efforts to assert locally grounded perspectives, these remain relatively scarce.

This study builds on existing analyses of AI news coverage in the Global South. Several scholars have addressed the postcolonial context, where technological narratives often emphasise transformative potentials while obscuring local conditions and needs, predominantly in African contexts (Eke & Ogoh, 2022; Farias Mota, 2026; Nkoala et al., 2026). Alzouma (2005, p. 340) addressed this technological utopianism when arguing that "since the end of colonialism, nearly every decade has been marked by the celebration of a new technology as a means for overcoming the long-lasting problems faced by developing countries." By integrating technological positioning, agency attribution within postcolonial contexts, and epistemic visibility, this study advances a framework for analysing AI narratives. This framework offers a structured approach to understanding how technological narratives contribute to the construction of asymmetrical technological futures and reveals how AI narratives are embedded in existing power relations. This distinguishes the proposed framework from previous approaches that focus primarily on publication placement, authorship, and the use of buzzwords in AI news coverage (Nkoala et al., 2026). The dimensions developed in this particular study—positioning AI as a product, agency attribution, political-geographical framing, and epistemic visibility—allow for a more fine-grained examination of how technological narratives are structured and how power relations are embedded within them. In doing so, the study adds to existing research on AI narratives in postcolonial contexts by providing a systemic lens through which to capture these macro-level dynamics and the organisation of AI narratives. It makes it possible to account for how AI narratives are systematically shaped by—and contribute to—the reproduction of postcolonial asymmetries between centre and periphery.

The framework and findings place the process of knowledge production by journalists at the centre of the colonial question. This reflects what Chan (2013) and Milan and Treré (2019) describe as the concept of data universalism: the tendency to assimilate the cultural diversity of technological developments in the Global South to the principles of Silicon Valley.

5.2. Limitations and Future Research

A limitation of this research concerns the operationalisation of epistemic visibility. While the analysis captures whose perspectives are discursively foregrounded within AI narratives, it does not include a systematic source analysis of journalistic sourcing practices. This could be a pathway for future research.

The findings further highlight a need for more inclusive and context-sensitive forms of journalistic AI storytelling and narrative-creation. Current reporting risks reinforcing what de Sousa Santos (2015) describes as epistemicide, where Caribbean ways of knowing are rendered invisible and technological progress is framed as "imported magic" intended to modernise a supposedly left-behind periphery (Medina

et al., 2014, p. 2). Addressing and exposing these dynamics requires a shift towards participatory and locally grounded narratives that recognise other actors—particularly citizens—as contributors to technological narratives, rather than just tech companies. Future research should therefore explore how alternative storytelling practices can reshape these dynamics, creating dialogue, an approach addressed by Mutsvairo (2023), between stakeholders within the Dutch Caribbean and the European-Dutch context to explore what is required to achieve this.

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Conflict of Interests

One of the two editors of this thematic issue (Bruce Mutsvairo), in his capacity as a full professor and chair of media, politics and the Global South at Utrecht University, is the supervisor of the PhD project of the first author of this article. He was not actively involved in the production of this research article.

Data Availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

LLMs Disclosure

LanguageTool was used for proofreading and language editing. No text was generated, and no substantive content or conclusions were produced by an LLM.

Supplementary Material

Supplementary material for this article is available online in the format provided by the author (unedited).

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