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Рябкова Е.С., Киреева Н.С. Автоматический журнализм: враг или помощник?

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Robot-journalism: a threat or right hand?

В статье подробно рассматривается вопрос автоматического журнализма. Приводится подробное описание того, что в ближайшем будущем компьютеры будут занимать лидирующее положение в журналистике. Приведены примеры автоматического журнализма

Ключевые слова: автоматический журнализм, компьютер, журналист, блогосфера, медиа, издательство

The article deals with the problem of robot journalism. It gives details on how computers will take over in the near future. Examples of robot journalism are also given in the article

Key words: robot journalism, computer, journalist, blogosphere, media, edition

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Millions of people inform each other about everything through the Internet. Unfortunately, internet is full of useless information, but we consume information, carefully selected by our interests. Content on the network is filtered not before being published but only after – in the course of propagation, due to viral editor. Internet threatens to the traditional media in two ways: a transition from paper to digital and the involvement of the audience in the authorship. Another threat to traditional journalism – the corporate media and other content marketing. Corporations, also, had an opportunity to authorship. This means that they need less traditional media as a mediator.

And if among the "improved" amateur content creators through collaboration (viral editor), the Corporation improve their modality because of the competition for the public's attention. In the race media arms are lured from media professionals to

innovate and, most importantly, moving away from direct advertising to socially important topics. After all, brands need an audience and the content is able to collect it. Although the general public, these processes are not very noticeable, but the development of media corporations does no less damage than the blogosphere to traditional media.

More recently, the theme of robot journalism had been foreign for Russians. And those who are familiar with the life of Russian editions, it is difficult to imagine the news algorithms in their everyday life. But in 2015 "Yandex" has announced that creates information agency where news will be written by the robots [5]. Among the editors, emaciated by struggle with the Internet and material losses, this topic has caused a new bout of vague anxiety, and, of course, rejection. Robots are already writing about the weather, sports and finance, what's more important they're doing it in staggering amounts. Nowadays they are capable of more. There are a few examples of the robot journalists:

Quakebot algorithm, written by Ken Schwenke, connected to the belt of the American geomonitoring service. From this service Quakebot immediately takes the source data – location, time, amplitude – compares these data with previous earthquakes in the area, and automatically determining the historical significance of the event [4]. This information is placed in the appropriate template, and the note is ready. The robot loads it into the publishing system and sends a notice to the editor. In the same Los Angeles Times the robot leads other category – criminal chronicle Homicide Report (since 2007). As soon as the police coroner post in the special base public report on someone's violent death, the robot takes all the data, puts them on the map, categorized it by race, sex, cause of death, the participation of police and etc., and publishes a note with simple little formulaic statement. Further, if the event is worth, the journalist gets the information and appends detailed criminal note. Previously, only the journalists wrote about potential resonance killings, the robot informs completely about all the killings. Accounting for all statistics, rather than elected cases, it allows you to see on the map the "density" of murders in different areas, both in general and by categories (gender, race, etc.). This visualized statistic generates secondary content that overlooked by ordinary journalist. It remains to add that this robot covers its criminal chronicle of the territory with a population of 10 million people – about as many lives in Sweden or Portugal. Of course, bio-journalist simply could not do instant statistical comparisons on such a scale.

Wordsmith algorithm published in 2014 in the Associated Press 3000 financial notes for the quarter. This is about 10 times more than their own journalists have ever written. The robot picked up the texture of the report, made necessary comparison of the market and the dynamics, after that generated a very detailed and well-turned text.

The main argument against the future dominance of robots-journalists associated with the inability of the machine to work. In fact, it splits into two arguments: the robot cannot think up like a person, the robot cannot write like a man [1].

1) The robot cannot think up like a person. Indeed, serendipity – a person's ability to make an accidental discovery (apple fell on his head) looks like random flashes of a chain of excited neurons. A similar phenomenon – Eureka, sudden insight, logically nondeductible. Therefore, say the skeptics, the robot will not be able, for example, to

see a sensation in the series of similar events, how does a human editor. But what if the robot is able to something else, which a person is not able to? First of all, it is a cross-analysis of any size and databases accusatory correlations. For example, a cross-analysis of consumer and political preferences suddenly reveal that the owners of the red Lada regularly vote for Bush. Man would be cut down immediately, because it is necessary to find a causal explanation. The robot has the ability to find fantastic, sometimes fantastically powerful marketing, politics or journalism correlation that permeated our world, but we do not see them.

And what if the algorithm's ability to identify correlations compensate or even replace any serendipity human abilities such as intuition, inspiration or even a sense of humor? Texture extracted from Big Data, may be no less interesting and irrational than human creative experiments.

2) The robot has no sense of style. That's right, the robot is not goal-setting to make beautiful, and if it were, what is – "beautiful"? If you cannot shortchange beauty, then we can shortchange people's reaction to the "beauty." Imagine that the robot memory uploaded all the texts and all the people's reactions to them: likes, reposts, comments, shares. Robots today are able to calculate the attractiveness of headlines, topics, hashtags, keyword and etc. Editor guesses – the robot knows. Now imagine that using biometrics (eye tracking already allows), the robot will analyze the response to specific idioms, adjectives, syntactic constructions, visual images. Such technology become more affordable, the only question is the amount of data and processing speed.

The system will automatically start to make more and more attractive headings and texts. Of course, there will be other problems: a) the attractiveness becomes commonness; b) the pursuit of the reaction of the reader make generative journalist degenerative. But the transition period is important: the analysis of human reactions with sufficient data files will replace robot's lack of flair.

Based on what we already know about robots-journalists we can approximately imagine how they will take over the world. Or for start a profession. Here are the key pieces of the future robot-journalism mechanism.

1. Large data. The ability of the algorithm to work with large data, obviously, will only grow. The ability to detect correlations in some way replaces human creativity to robots. The best minds and the best investors are working on it. Instead of preserving journalism.

2. The body of texts and analysis of audit accumulated reactions. Monitor in the network or accumulating in its own database all the journalistic texts, the algorithm can easily calculate which texts – with all of their performance characteristics – collect the most likes, reads, repost, comments.

3. Biometrics. With access to the unexpressed reactions of the body language, the robot will be able to take into account not only the old reactions to old texts, and instant response to the here-and-now seen content.

In conclusion we can say that the co-founder and chief scientific adviser of Narrative Science, Christian Hammond considers that computers will write 90% of the news in 2030. Hammond also believes that in 2017 the computer will write the material which will deserve the Pulitzer Prize [2].

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