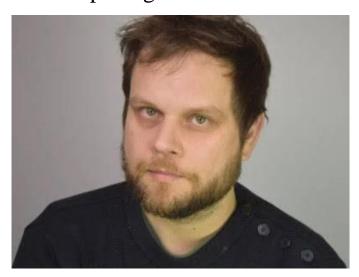# By delegating writing to AI, we run the risk of impeding our reflection.

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Writing not only allows us to communicate, but also helps us organize our ideas. Resorting to AI-based text generators is therefore tantamount to letting Silicon Valley billionaires do our thinking for us.

How tall is the Eiffel Tower? What can you cook with semolina and a handful of pickles? Is a hippopotamus stronger than an elephant? Ten words, a question mark, and there's ChatGPT, which, thanks to its spectacular training corpus and its almost magical ability to guess, after one word, which is most likely to be the next, offers a credible, and sometimes even truthful, answer.

Already in high demand for responding to a wide variety of questions, artificial intelligence text generators are increasingly being used as substitutes for writing: according to a study published by OpenAI, 10.6% of requests to ChatGPT involve asking it to edit or critique a text, and 1.4% involve writing a fictional text.

Even more astonishing: in 8% of cases, those who use ChatGPT ask it to write a text or personal communication on their behalf. The author of these lines can attest to this: he has seen a teenager answer a journalist's questions by clearly passing his answer through ChatGPT, and has heard the story of young lovers who maintain a correspondence by letting the chatbot whisper the answers to them, thus repeating Cyrano's words. It is a way of delegating the task of putting their thoughts into words to a text generator, just as we have often delegated the task of correcting our mistakes to spell checkers.

Delegate thinking

But writing is not just about communicating, it is also about thinking. In a recent interview in Usbek & Rica magazine, philosopher Eric Sadin laments that "a billion individuals" find in these technologies "an opportunity to no longer exercise their fundamental faculties, notably those of speaking and writing in the first person." He continues: "Do we understand that a life deprived of the expression of our faculties and active links with our fellow human beings can only be a breeding ground for sadness, resentment, and madness?"

"A writer doesn't just write words," adds Ed Zitron (an American author specializing in artificial intelligence, in his Indictment Against Generative AI); "he brings together ideas, ideals, emotions, reflections, facts, and feelings (...) Good writing is a tension (...) a process permeated by emotion... an emotion that AI would not know how to respond to."

The benefit to the reader of a text written by a human being is obvious. But the benefit to the author is not insignificant. A Massachusetts Institute of Technology study of 54 students showed that 83% of those who had written a dissertation using ChatGPT were unable to remember a single sentence of what they had written.

More generally, putting order into a text means putting order into your thoughts. Often, the university student who signs a paper, the reviewer who critiques an album, or the lover who expresses their emotions in words are not just writing what they think: they are writing to find out what they think. However, the June editorial in Nature Reviews Bioengineering magazine questioned whether writing is thinking, and whether a text written with the help of ChatGPT reflects the thoughts of the text generator rather than our own.

Of the supposedly new content

And what does ChatGPT think about? Fortunately, nothing: as already mentioned, the program is content to regurgitate the texts that appear in its training corpus, developing variants according to a probabilistic model. Text generators produce sentences like mountain torrents, without being aware of where they are going or what they are carrying. Not even that they exist.

Industry observers, on the other hand, know where they come from, how they were created, what biases they have, and what their limitations are. Researchers Emily Bender and Alex Hanna, in The IA Con, explore the racist and sexist biases of text generators at length. And they highlight who is pulling the strings. The executives of companies such as OpenAI, xAI, and others that are at the forefront of the industry sometimes have a clear political agenda (such as Elon Musk with his far-right positions), while others are more nebulous, but never contrary to the broad guidelines set by the current occupant of the White House.

Above all, most of them have been steeped in the same cultural magma, that is, transhumanist literature, long-term delusions, and dreams of immortality. They can only conceive of humanity fused with robots and civilization relocated to space. These are megalomaniacal dreams, necessarily financed by ever-increasing fortunes, the kind that accumulate by hoarding, ideally, all the wealth in the world.

Thus, the models to which all texts, images, and videos available online aspire feed programs designed to repeat content that is supposedly new but is actually just repackaged. This is how they promise investors far-fetched economic prospects, leading them to believe that technology will replace almost all skilled human workers.

"In this paradigm, human beings are transformed more than ever into raw material, from which the greatest profit must be extracted," summarized journalist Thibault Prévost in The Prophets of AI, and ChatGPT, "the technical facade of a effectively classic company of privatization and capitalization of wealth." Attacking writing and, ultimately, thought, is to attack the last task, the most intimate of all, which was believed impossible to privatize.