

Stochastic Parrots, Storytelling and Behavioural Complexification: Throw Away After Use!

Development in speech technology is effectively interconnecting language information elements for text, spoken word and imagery. This is made possible because big data, stochastic algorithms, calculative speeds and its use for Natural Language Processing (NLP) have become part of the public domain. Connecting these worlds of information, seems advantageous as they originate from different context and modalities. It may consolidate different views for the same information. Besides, it would support those who have difficulty using either visual or aural sources for information. These so-called AI systems will rehash content keeping regenerated relational implications intact. In the same way, rendered AI images show very convincing 'novel' pictures based on database 'originals' containing descriptive information for content and style. As such, rather convincing AI storytellers are created to inform us. Storytelling also is our natural way to share memory. Whether it be Lascaux cave images, psalms, pop music, family events, or this text, we all tell stories to remind and educate ourselves. In short, we're storytellers or 'Homo fabulans'.

Computers are able to render story like communication without human intervention, but these systems have no real knowledge of their renderings interpretation. A passive 'bias' is created as a result of information recreated, based on conjecture. As such, content bearing on aggression, discrimination and human depreciation, will be put forward without taking into account semantic sensitivities. Companies jumping on this AI bandwagon, trying to meet public curiosity for the 'storytelling magic' involved, will see themselves manually deleting bias factors or add semantic metadata. The latter will reduce senselessness, but would also result in need for larger databases and calculation power. As for storytelling, there's still no actual dialogue, only a cleansed AI storyteller.

(Bender and Gebru et al, 2021, p. 616) coined the term 'Stochastic Parrot'. A very apt description for AI storytelling. Humans share each other stories based on input they gather in their life, having similar quality. The question is, what makes us different from these language rendering systems? Well, we don't remember everything verbatim and we don't actually rehash on language. We formulate on understanding, interest, associations and feelings. As such, we add contextual information about what we think we individually represent at that time, relating to the situation we're in. Human dialogue is shaped as intersectional communication, differences meeting each other, staying different. They are building mutual rapport and trust, but don't average.

AI storytelling represents a behavioural simulant, adding to human stories without actual human dialogue. Effectively, this devaluation of meaning is a bias too. It will make our behavioural world more complex by increasing misunderstanding, by cumulating apparent meaningful information sources. Thus, a behaviourally complexifying informational load created by AI contaminates human storytelling, as humans hardly recognise the difference. My suggestion would be: 'Throw away AI storytelling products after use.' Besides, AI storytelling also risks auto-contamination, using its own products, as put forward by (Bender and Gebru et al, 2021, p. 619).

Bender E.M., Gebru T., McMillan-Major A., & Shmitchell, S. (2021, March 3-10). On the Dangers of Stochastic Parrots: Can Language Models Be Too Big? *Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency (FAccT '21)*, Virtual Event, Canada, 610 - 623. doi.org/10.1145/3442188.3445922