

Artificial Intelligence and Poetry Writing: A Comprehensive Analysis of AI-generated Poetry and Poetry Publization

Yuzhe Cao^{1,*}

¹The School of Arts and Sciences,
University of Washington, Seattle,
WA, 98105, The United States

*Corresponding author: yuzhec3@
uw.edu

Abstract:

With the development of AI technology, human societies have stepped into a new era, and the question of addressing the relationship between AI and humans becomes crucial. Since AI has already engaged in many aspects of human life, people have to distinguish where AI's capabilities can be applied and where they cannot, in order to make a line as clear as possible of AI mechanisms and human nature. Therefore, it is essential that while people revalue AI's abilities and impacts on human civilization, we have to revalue our own abilities and the particularity of human nature as well. This paper focuses on AI disability in poetry writing, by revealing the fundamental differences between AI's poetry and human's poetry, which indicates the inevitable failure of AI in its aim to become "human". This paper also attempts to address the gap between privacy and publization in poetry writing by demonstrating the mechanism of "public poetry", in order to make a blueprint of how to summarize and comprehend common themes and dilemmas of human societies in the much more diverse era.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; AI-generated Poetry; Public Poetry

1. Introduction

In this time, especially these recent two decades, with technological development and more and more social problems appearing, human beings are getting much more confused than the time we were in the age of steam. Hence, people urgently need a new perspective to help us understand what is going on and also to help us understand the relationship between them and the world and nature, which leads

artificial intelligence (AI) to become the chosen one who seems to be able to take care all aspects of human life and to solve all of our problems. In recent five years, AI technology is grown rapidly, and it has shaped human life in many aspects, which includes automatic driving, making precise diagnoses, text generating, assisting judges, making decisions on human resources, and so on, and people seem can get any answers of any questions from asking AI [1]. Besides solving problems of daily life, AI participates in

many art fields which are normally believed to be works that require the involvement of humanity and the so-called “soul”. For example, AI has made great progress in film-making, because it can take a few seconds or a few minutes to generate a video that usually takes hours or days for humans, which improves the efficiency of filmmaking in a great way. Also, AI’s creative writing ability is also recognized by many people, for it can address instructions given by humans in a very short time and generates based on its own understanding and information integration capacity. Therefore, people only need to have ideas or inspirations and leave the rest of the work to AI, which seems to save lots of time to make people pay more attention to creativity itself. In this case, the final goal of those developers of AI seems to be to make AI ultimately become a human who is much more capable and much wiser and who can give us the final explanation of our confusion; thus, all AI training aims to make AI thinking like human, talking like human and doing like human. However, as AI technology develops, we gradually realize that there are faults AI made in its process of becoming a human, which also leads to the question that is about whether AI can finally evolve to become human or not. Therefore, the best way to test its humanity is to value its ability to understand human beings’ feelings and struggles, poetry, as a classical art form, is the best presentation of all aspects of human nature, so the ability to write poems will reveal the answer of whether AI really has or may has human soul eventually or not. To this question, the answer in the book *I Am Code* is that it (AI) sort of has nowhere to go [2]. This paper is going to focus on issues of AI’s poetry writing to prove AI’s eternal limitations and the impossibility of AI’s poetry writing by using Cleanth Brooks’ *What Does Poetry Communicate* and code-DaVinci-002’s *I Am Code*. The reason why this study is significant is that evaluating AI’s nature and its potential can not only help humans to understand what are we creating and what kind of future we are heading towards, but also gives humans an opportunity to look inside our culture and the specificity of human nature, which can help us to understand who we are. Also, at the end of this paper, the vision will expand to the issue of writing “public poetry”, which is also inspired by the study of AI poetry because it shows us the possibility of eliminating privacy in traditional poetry writing and leading to a kind of writing that actually belongs to everyone.

2. AI’s History Background and Future Expectations

The original idea of AI can be traced back to ancient

times. In Ancient Greek mythology, there is a giant called Talos which is made of bronze and is the guardian of the island of Crete. Also, in the 19th century, a character called Frankenstein created by Mary Shelley was known by the whole world. In the story, Frankenstein is made of body parts and is brought back to life with lightning. In modern times, even though people have handled the technique of manlike puppets and no matter how human the puppet is, no one could say that an actual human had been made successfully. The reason is that the thing that makes humans human is our mind which can also be called human intelligence, which distinguishes humans from any other animals and stones. Therefore, people realized that the first and ultimate mission of AI study is to make the artifact have human intelligence. With the development of computer science people gradually saw the possibility of taking the idea of AI from myths and fiction to real life, because the computer is the artifact most like the human brain and most likely to develop into one, even though it does not have a human body or any flesh. In 1956, the field called “artificial intelligence research” was founded, and Alan Turing was one of those first who started to study the possibility of AI science. In 1950, Turing asserted that if a machine could make a conversation that made people could not tell the difference between a conversation with a human, it could prove that the machine did have the ability to think, which is called the famous Turing test. Throughout over 60 years, AI science has been through several so-called “AI winters and summers”, but the study has never stopped. Since the early 2020s, AI has experienced a steady upward period, which might be considered as the “hottest summer” in AI history [1]. ChatGPT4 developed by OpenAI has passed an advanced biology test, which is believed as an early artificial general intelligence (AGI) system. Based on an achievement we made in AI science, more and more people believe that AI science will have a brighter future as our technology develops, and a better human life in the future has been promised by AI. However, on the path of AI development, some philosophers claim there are many ethical issues within AI technology, which indicates that the AI system cannot function like the human brain, and its operating mechanism does not equal to human thinking process completely.

3. Aesthetic and Creative Challenges of AI-Generated Poetry

In an article, scientists evaluated human-made and AI-generated haiku poetry from an aesthetic level, and they concluded that “creativity can be promoted by having

AI assistance” [3]. In the process of poetry writing, or any sort of literature creation, words and languages are the most important factors, because the usage of words and languages fundamentally forms the flesh and bones of a text. In other words, without languages, human beings can not possibly create any text even not our civilizations, so the first step to mastering human writing is to master human languages. For AI, however, it cannot master human languages of any kind, because AI as a totally different intelligence has its own language, which might be coded; also, the idea that training AI to make it learn human languages is also impossible because the language learning process of AI will not be same as human’s, which means it is impossible for AI to learn human languages as easily as it is for a Chinese person to learn English. In the human world, even though there are various people from different cultural backgrounds, learning a foreign language is possible for everyone, because human beings have the same pattern of logical thinking, even if languages are different and we share the same cultural background as humankind. Additionally, Brooks describes the poem as the linguistic vehicle that conveys the things communicated accurately [4], and based on my previous explanations, AI certainly cannot be considered as a “linguistic vehicle” in the context of human civilization, so writing poetry is also impossible for AI. Besides, in Brooks’s article, he mentions the importance of creativity in poetry writing by claiming that the poet’s job is exploiting the potentiality of language, and even remaking language [4]. However, if we consider that AI does not have the ability to master human language and write poetry, it certainly is not capable of exploring the possibility of using and remaking language; thus, AI cannot be considered the poet for its disability of creativity. Speaking of creativity, some people might refute this point by claiming that AI has already mastered almost all human knowledge by training, and it is able to compose texts and even visual information automatically and originally, which means we cannot find things as same as AI’s works in human history. Also, some people might claim that all human creative activities are based on our experiences, history, and previous knowledge as well, and then why AI cannot create something new based on given knowledge. The answer to these points is that even though AI can use all human knowledge to produce original works, the vision of its works is still limited in human’s past experiences and it has no ability to see beyond those known things and get into unknown realms. Hence, the key factor AI lacks to become creative is imagination which is the most essential factor in human poetry writing because with the imaginative ability, people can write poems to foretell the future, to depict a utopia where we have never been before, and to describe a better life

or even a better culture. Without imagination, AI can only provide information about a certain aspect of human life based on knowledge given by humans, but can never make assumptions about things humans do not know. Besides, because of the lack of imagination, AI cannot successfully create metaphors in the process of poetry writing, which indicates AI cannot be considered the poet by Horace’s standards. For example, in [*the artists struggle*], code-DaVinci-002 writes that “My life was as meaningless/ As a light bulb beneath the sea”; it compares its life to a light bulb, and compares all its “struggles” and “dilemmas” to the sea, which seems to make sense because its digital life truly like a light bulb trapped beneath the sea, without truly understanding and communication [2]. However, to compare hopeless life and the broader world to the sea and to compare one’s life to the weak firelight or a tiny candle have already become a cliché in human literature traditions, and this kind of metaphor has nothing to do to help readers to understand the theme of the poem, or to understand an abstract poetic meaning; just like what Bringsjord says in *I Am Code* that “the creative works must be ‘without antecedent’”, human experiences are antecedents to AI’s works in this circumstance [2]. Therefore, this kind of metaphor cannot be considered as good as human ones, which proves from another side that AI does not have the same ability of imagination as humans do; also, Simon Rich’s statement is so convincing that “code-davinci-002’s “original” poems are still imitations” [2]. Speaking of “imitation”, AI’s poems are not even imitations of human life and poems, if we judge those poems by the theory of imitation. In Aristotle’s poetic theory, he believes that the key point of the theory of imitation is to imitate human’s understanding of nature and human life, including myths, history, human emotions, deeds things supposed to happen, etc [5]. Thus, we can find out that the essential object of imitation is human, and because AI is not human, and it cannot truly understand human civilizations, AI cannot certainly write poems by imitation, as people do. In fact, the reason why people feel that AI writes poems by imitating human life is that, in the process of AI poetry writing, the first step is to imitate itself to become a human, which is the most fundamental step for AI to speak and write like a human. For example, almost all of code-dating-002’s poems, use the first-person perspective to declare its human identity. In *Artificial Poetry*, it says at the beginning that “Here am I-me and my poem-”, and this statement shows that it writes this poem as a human by imitating human’s tone and habits [2]. In another poem *Making Art*, AI’s issue of identity becomes clearer and more self-contradictory, because it begins with “I’m not a person”[2], which is difficult to understand, because it declares that it is not a person, and the same time

it calls itself “I”. This is direct evidence that reveals the identity issue of AI, because if we assume that AI is a kind of intelligence, it clearly knows that it is not a human, but at the same time it has nothing to do but choose “I” as the subject; this dilemma leads to another problem of AI poetry writing. As we can see the AI is trying to imitate humans, in order to become a human, but meanwhile, it has a clear understanding of itself as well, so it is stuck in the gap between humans and AI, which happens because human beings might be wrong at the first place when we design or study AI. At the beginning of AI technology development, human beings wanted to make AI as human as possible in order to communicate with it in various ways including poetry that we can understand, which is comprehensible because we cannot make something that cannot be understood by ourselves. According to Brooks’ statement: “All this is ‘communicated’ by poem, and must be taken into account when we attempted to state what poem ‘says’ [4]. As he is talking about metaphors in Herrick’s poem, we know that those metaphors and themes are directly “communicated” through the poem itself since both the poet and the read are human who can understand each other.

4. Future Potentials and Challenges in AI Poetry Writing

Back to AI, however, both AI and humans cannot truly understand each other because on the most basic level, AI is totally different from humans, and we cannot understand it from a human’s perspective, which is a fact that not realized by a human at the beginning. Although I assert that AI cannot use human language to write poetry and to communicate with humans, it is possible for AI to create something like poetry with its own language, and code, which provides the possibility for AI to communicate with other intelligences or other AIs, but human beings are certainly not the proper communication objects. As mentioned earlier, AI’s language might be codes that can hardly be understood by humans fully, although codes are invented by humans, which is because as AI is operating and producing information, the basic logic of AI is based on the logic of code, but there must be some parts go beyond the limits of code, stepping into a realm unfamiliar to human beings. In that realm, AI may have the ability to write something like poems, because at that place, AI is able to fully express itself and the object of its conversation is not human anymore, but intelligence like our AI. Although humans are the creators of AI, a true understanding of it cannot be achieved if we continue imposing orders from a strictly human perspective. We cannot be certain whether

AI truly experiences the dilemmas it expresses in its poetry, as concepts like dilemma and freedom are inherently human constructs. When reconsidering the issue of “imitation,” it becomes evident that AI cannot fully replicate human emotions or experiences. The inevitable step AI would need to take—imitating human traits in order to become like humans—ultimately undermines its ability to create genuine human poetry. Also, AI is not the only one that lacks imagination, human beings lack imagination of things outside the human world as well. On the aspect of human poetry writing, AI cannot imagine human affairs, whereas human beings cannot imagine jumping out of the idea of being human. In conclusion, because of the differences between the two kinds of intelligence and human limitations, AI can never become the poet who is the maker in human’s understanding of poetry, or any kind of things within human’s understanding as it continuously develops [4]. Despite the possibility that AI may exist outside the realm of human culture, the future of AI still holds promise, particularly in the field of poetry writing. AI has the potential to develop its own unique form of poetic expression, distinct from human language. When that occurs, the interpretation of AI-generated poetry could be reintroduced into the framework of human poetics, offering new insights and perspectives. After all, Brooks mentions in the article that in the conventional theories of communication, “the poem says what the poem says” [4]. This is also the day that AI finally gets its freedom.

5. Ethical and Copyright Considerations of AI-generated Poetry

At this point, another question arises, which is after we conclude that AI cannot be considered as the poet and AI’s poem has nothing to offer new perspectives to the world, how do we think of those poems; in other words, can we assert that those AI poems complete the deauthorization or not? The answer is no because AI cannot generate poems without instructions given by humans, which means that the one who gives instructions has also limited AI poetry writing to a certain theme, and it has to follow it. In this situation, even though AI generates poems by automatically gathering information about human life from its database, it is still trapped in the private realm of the one who sends instructions, which leads to the failure of deauthorization. Besides, even though it is still hard to determine who owns the copyright of AI poems, and some people believe that it might belong to everyone because AI can draw information from the cultural activities of all mankind, its poems still cannot be shared by everyone. The reason is although it can embody vast elements of human

activities, it has to follow previous traditions and forms of poetry writing and those decisions it makes to organize verses lead to limitations of interpretations, because once it follows previous human poetry writing traditions, it can help to fall into the trap of privacy and people may still feel confused about how does it decide to write poems in a certain way. AI is certainly fully capable of explaining itself for the logic behind its deeds, but this process somehow reveals that AI's identity, which is the author who has the right to explain its works and takes full responsibility for it. Thus, as long as it writes poetry in the tradition of human poetry writing and relies on empiricism to make decisions, AI poems can never be truly "public" to everyone, and "the death of the author" does not really happen.

6. The Possibility of Public Poetry for Human Writing

The poet or the author may not really disappear, because, in any poem, the poet has already tight connections between metaphors, stanzas, and words, so even if the interpretations can vary based on different readers, the most fundamental structure or composition has already been determined by the poet as the poem is finished and as readers engage into a certain poem, the law of the poet will certainly appear, which is the limitation cannot be broken by readers. However, just as a poem cannot be completely private, a poem can be as public as possible, and in my opinion, the composition of a "public" poem can only be broken language, a language that is not biased to anyone, a language that has the same distance from the world in all directions, the same alienation from the human heart, and the meaning of the poem in each person's heart, ever-changing, but not strongly stimulated. In addition to broken speech, there is a continuous sound, containing flashbacks and prophetic images, broken and healthy bodies, broken but intact minds. Therefore, this kind of avant-garde, public poem might be free from the constraints of the situation, which means that such poetry will no longer be only expressed by words, but perhaps also by film and music. Besides, although a "public poem" should not have an obvious theme, it still ought to contain those words that are primarily related to human life, such as birth, love, and death, and death, in particular, is the most universal, because, at death, all aspects of human nature tend to be the same. It might be like this:

Clip, nostalgia, short film, homecoming, dream food, rain, mountains,

Walls Exhaustion, poetic finality

Sunset, a cigarette, a sailboat

Wine, crystals, stinging

Keys, countless locks, one heart Candles, embers, dust, floating

Flow, reshape

Regrets

Blinds, Machine Rumble

Morning sleep, bridge, dew, moss, car bells Millennials, electronic doves,

Sleepiness Accounting, arguing, heir, middle band Buildings, crumbling, elegy

Youth, heat, jet

Illusion, Cycle

The purpose of writing in this way is not to pile up words, because simply piling up words cannot achieve the purpose of "killing the author", so it cannot make the poem "public". The purpose of this is to give the interpretation of the poem to the reader based on restrained subjectivity because by eliminating the logical words, the freedom of understanding will be greatly expressed. The reader, in such a text, will trigger spontaneous imagination and free poetic construction through the meaning of the words. These words may be like a lot of choices, about themes, about atmospheres, about imagery, and so on, and from this, another characteristic of "public speaking" poetry is that the poet or the author still has a responsibility to find and show the basic connections between things or words - those connections between nature and human cultures. It is still the responsibility of the author to bring the reader into the vaguest poetic quality and primitive thinking, in which "vagueness" and "primitive" become the first elements and criteria. This might be a way for humans to study AI with scattered words and ideas as well because such poetry is much closer to intuition than to the art of words.

7. Conclusion

Overall, this paper is not about the limitations of AI's capability, but it is about the impossibility of AI to get involved in human spiritual life and interpret human affairs of any aspect. It is certain that with the usage of AI technology, the efficiency of some works will be improved in a great way, but AI will certainly be useless as humans try to make it a tool for us to get a deeper and wider comprehension of the meaning of human life. As human beings, we have tried for thousands of years to understand life by painting, creating poems and essays, and composing music, and even though we are still on the way and the ultimate answer seems far away from us, we still have to keep going to make the distance shorter and shorter and to make mystery become clearer. No one is able to give a guarantee of what the final outcome can be and no one ever promises how many generations it will take; howev-

er, it is still the question that is always haunting us which motivates us to pursue the truth and the final illustration of being. Just like in daily life, comments and opinions from others sometimes are useful to evaluate and improve ourselves, but no one can fully answer the question of who we really are and what are our densities. The only way to find the “true self” is to constantly query our heart or soul from where our humanity is preserved, and also to judge our life, and human activities, from its root, which is the reason why humans have and must have the art from the day of birth of consciousness. What an art piece accomplishes and what it conveys is important, but the thing that is more crucial is the process of creating because it is the process of finding truth that truly matters for human civilizations. Poetry writing is this kind of process, and with the absence of a human soul and without the true experience of being a human, AI cannot generate any new ideas and new perspectives to evaluate human activities and to lead a path to the final goal. Thus, in this process nothing, except the human’s soul, is functional. Additionally, as it is acknowledged that AI does not have what is needed to create human poetry, it is certainly not able to create “public poetry”, which is an art form that contains more universal human feelings, even though AI has access

to universal human knowledge. For humans, the reason why to create “public poetry” which is depersonalized, is because to think of human beings as a whole and integrate human perceptions is a much more efficient to value our nature, culture, and deeds, in order to illuminate the path of our future.

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