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## Augmented Scholar: Opportunities and Threats (Not Only) for IS Scholars

Tomasz Marcin Mucha  
*Aalto University*, tomasz.mucha@aalto.fi

Timo Seppala  
*Aalto University*, timo.seppala@aalto.fi

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## Augmented Scholar: Opportunities and Threats (Not Only) for IS Scholars

Tomasz Mucha (tomasz.mucha@aalto.fi); Timo Seppälä (timo.seppala@aalto.fi)

It is hard not to notice the proliferation of machine learning (ML) techniques in research and practice. Organizations globally are keen to leverage ML to drive their performance (Berente et al. 2021). Similarly, scholars are rapidly incorporating ML into their methodological toolboxes. It is surprising, however, to see a void in the discussion on the impact of ML on bread-and-butter activities of researchers – academic reading and writing. This TREO talk aims to spark a dialogue regarding opportunities and threats that ML technologies bring for these vital practices, as well as the special role that IS community can play in this regard.

Text-to-speech and speech-to-text are already commonly available but remain underutilized. The cornucopia of practical use cases in academic context is knocking at our doors: dictating paragraphs, taking notes while driving, transcribing meetings, listening to own writings, and increasing the reading speed by listening to automatically generated speech at high pace. Are these just gimmicked ways to do the same things we are doing already? We dare to say that they are not. New generations of scholars are growing up with these technologies in their back pockets. More importantly, these tools help scholars get more ideas to their heads faster, and later put new ideas on paper. Therefore, we urge scholars – especially those who proudly carry the banners of IS discipline to new frontiers, such as human augmentation – maybe they can also taste first-handed, how it is to be somewhat more augmented.

For (not only IS) scholars there is even more important change fueled by ML that is on the horizon. Recent advances in large language models, such as BERT, GPT-3, T5, or BLOOM attract the attention of media and businesses. We also need to consider how these advances might be changing our own work as authors, reviewers, editors, and teachers. The good news is that we are about to get powerful tools in our hands. And, if these hands are skillful, we will be able to create more and better-quality outputs. These new models can help with building compelling texts from scattered sentences, bullet-points, or outlines. Revising a manuscript to match the style of a journal might also become easier. However, the bad news is that we are facing new risks of content overflow and novel forms of plagiarisms. If generating an article from a set of few short prompts becomes as easy as clicking a mouse few times, then creating a “submittable manuscript” will become a commodity. This should drive us to re-examine the meaning of “originality” and “authorship” in the context of academic articles. Equally, the potential for surge in the journal submission numbers will create new demands for editors and reviewers.

The time for IS scholars to reflect on and start a serious conversation about these is now. It behooves us to lead the discussion on this topic as we are the experts standing at the intersection of technology, humans, and organizations. How will we set the standards for future writing and reading practices? The ball is in our court. Shall we rise to this occasion?

### References

Berente, N., Bin Gu, Recker, J., and Santhanam, R. 2021. “Managing Artificial Intelligence,” *MIS Quarterly* (45:3), MIS Quarterly, pp. 1433–1450.