UDC 519.8
A.O. Naida, L.B. Moroz
Ternopil Ivan Puluj National Technical University, Ukraine

DATAFICATION: THE PROBLEM BENEATH THE SURFACE

Information and communication technology has developed rapidly over the past 20 years. One of the biggest developments has been the emergence of social media. Our use of new technologies has allowed us to 'datify' our day-to-day activities in a new way. Datafication is also known as datafy, meaning to collect, analyze and use all types of essential data. An organization that implements datafication is said to be datafied. In contrast to quantification, datafication aims to convert social behavior into numerical data.

In the last few years, datafication has become a buzzword strongly used in the big IT industry. Although the term was coined in 2013, there is not much relevant information about it online. This topic was clearly presented to a huge mass of people in the book called "Big Data" by V. Mayer-Schoenberger and K. Cukier (2013): "Datafication is the transformation of everything into quantified (meta)data, transmitted online through social media and communication platforms, allowing for real-time tracking and predictive analysis" [6; 2].

The spread of mobile technology has greatly affected social services. They provide the means to connect anywhere, even from the devices that are constantly in our hands. All of the digitization in our world today means we have an enormous amount of data available, and data has now become the number one business asset for every modern organization [5]. Roger McNamee, who was an advisor to Mark Zuckerberg early in the company's life and profited from an early investment in Facebook company said: "The first 50 years of Silicon Valley, the industry made products – hardware, software, sold them to customers, [it was a] nice, simple business. For the last 10 years, the biggest companies in Silicon Valley have been in the business of selling their users."

To make the kind of business that has the guarantee of being successful by placing an add, one has to have great predictions. Therefore, companies need a lot of data. Datafication is the process of analyzing the data streams using the social media platforms to enable better understanding of their customers. The data can be continuously extracted from human lives for the benefit of particular interests. Considering all the above, we conclude that data is owned by either individuals or by owners of the infrastructure. Those make people publicly share their personal information by promoting usage of their services. For the last decades personal resources have been highly appropriate to post online. Personal information has not been safe ever since. These big companies have created the online world that has become primary for younger generations. The content that we consume is a reflection of our interests that forms our role model. Simple algorithms are now able to predict what will keep you engaged. Social media are not just the tool for communication. The classic saying is "If you're not paying for the product, then you are the product". Most people think that Google is just a search box and Facebook is just a place to see what their friends are doing. But what they don't realize is they are competing for your attention. The idea that is being brought up in a show "The Social Dilemma, 2020" is: If something is a tool, it's waiting for you to use it patiently. Unlike social media that subconsciously demand you to take some kind of action. It's how we have moved away from having a tools-based tech environment to an addiction manipulation-based tech environment [3].

People tend to perceive social media as a way to connect people around the world, for that reason to dispel the delusion the documentary "The Social Dilemma" provides a new perspective on social networks. "The Social Dilemma" is an original film created by Netflix, which contains interviews with staff that have previously worked for different social media platforms, such as Google, Facebook, Instagram, etc. These former social media staff

explained how social media use algorithms that contribute towards users becoming addicted to the apps. They also raised the issue that these practices could be unethical due to the negative impact social media can have on people, especially teenagers, both mentally and physically. The documentary is worth watching and it helps you to reflect on your life and your own social media habits [7]. The documentary also examines how social media design nurtures addiction to maximize profit and its ability to manipulate people's views, emotions, and behavior and spread conspiracy theories and disinformation [1].

Every single thing you do online is being tracked and measured carefully. Former President Barack Obama declared that "nobody is listening to your telephone calls" meaning that they don't pay as much attention to the context of your message as they're interested in the by-product that you produce which is the metadata. It is the new type of content that is created for people to move their informal lives onto digital platforms. In fact, those metadata allow for endless tracking.

It's essential to use critical thinking and analyze every piece of information that comes your way in this decade. In order to not be tricked, one should not be predictable in their actions. Thus, to stop the continuous cycle of consuming unnecessary information everyone needs to know that our attention is the product being sold to advertisers. Therefore, datafication is being used to discriminate against others on the basis of race, gender and class in order to privatize data measurements to tell us who we are and what we should do. In simple words, we are no longer choosing the type of content that we consume online, it is being customized.

As mentioned, many young people use the Internet as a coping mechanism, making them a vulnerable group to Internet addiction. The main problem with data management is that it is very vague. Any damage is less visible because only the data controller really knows what is happening with people's information, even children's. We can't say what types of data are being collected on kids; where and by whom; and how it might be used in the short and long term – both for the benefit of children but also considering potential risks [4].

Different forms of resistance – from an ineffective but strategic retreat from certain platforms to a growing awareness of them as data objects – can contribute to creating problems and alternatives to data development. It is not clear whether such resistance could eliminate some aspects of data processing, but it is certainly one of the greatest social problems of our time.

References

1. Contributors to Wikimedia projects. The Social Dilemma - Wikipedia. Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. URL: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Social_Dilemma.

2. Datafication. Internet Policy Review. URL: https://policyreview.info/concepts/datafication (date of access: 05.12.2022).

3. Documentary Review: Netflix's "The Social Dilemma". NAOC. URL: https://natoassociation.ca/documentary-review-netflixs-the-social-dilemma/ .

4. Lomas N. Children are being 'datafied' before we've understood the risks, report warns. TechCrunch. URL: https://techcrunch.com/2018/11/09/children-are-being-datafied-before-weve-understood-the-risks-report-warns/ (date of access: 04.12.2022).

5. Marr B. The Top 10 Tech Trends In 2022 Everyone Must Be Ready For Now. Forbes. URL: https://www.forbes.com/sites/bernardmarr/2022/02/21/the-top-10-tech-trends-in-2022-everyone-must-be-ready-for-now/?sh=da7520827df5 (date of access: 02.12.2022).

6. Mayer-Schönberger V., Cukier K. Big Data: A Revolution That Will Transform How We Live, Work, and Think. – Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013. – 256 p.

7. The Social Dilemma: A Summary - Coolminds. Coolminds. URL: https://www.coolmindshk.com/en/the-social-dilemma-a-summary/ .