



Type and AI

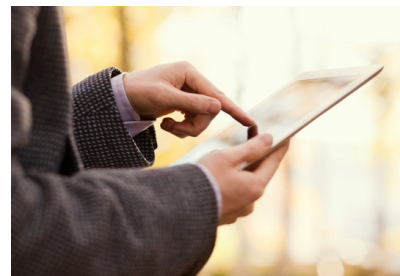
by John Hackston

a speaker at the 2017 BAPT conference

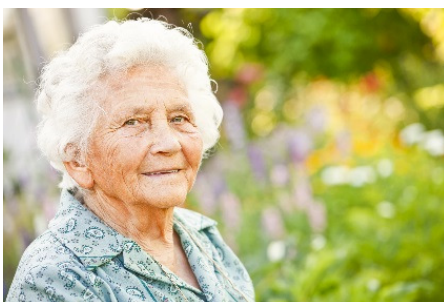
Here is a short quiz:

- Do you search for information on Google?
- Have you ever booked travel or accommodation via the internet?
- Do you have Siri on your phone or Cortana on your computer?

If you answered 'yes' to any of these questions, then you are using a form of artificial intelligence (AI) – and maybe AI is using you a little bit too. Although the media is full stories about the future consequences of AI (for good or ill), the reality is that many of us are engaging with intelligent agents already. And this means that it is useful if AI can understand something about our personality and behaviour, and perhaps if AI agents can display a personality to us as well.



Of course, there are many ways of understanding human personality, but the type approach, as assessed by instruments such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), is increasingly being used in research to help robots work more effectively with humans. In some studies, it has been used to see how humans react to robots; this is then used as a guide to change the robot or its behaviour. Elsewhere, the MBTI has been used to first assess a human user's personality preferences, and results then used to customise an AI agent's personality. And humans don't necessarily need to be part of the picture; MBTI-based algorithms have been used to help robot 'teams' work more effectively together.



All of this may seem a little theoretical and removed from most people's real world experiences, but there are profound implications for the future – and not the distant future. Robots are already being used in healthcare and (in particular in the area of mental health) they need to work with and display a 'personality' to the user. And while we may think that people, not robots, should be taking care of people, this just may not be possible in an ageing society.

For practitioners who already work with tools like the MBTI, there are ethical and practical challenges ahead. What can humans do in this area that AI can't – and vice versa? What are the ethical implications of the use of AI in personality assessment, feedback and decision-making? And are there lessons that practitioners can take from AI research? These questions and others will be explored and debated in a session at the British Association of Psychological Type (BAPT) conference this April.

John Hackston is Head of Research and Development at OPP Ltd. A Chartered Psychologist with 25 years experience in helping clients to understand and use psychometric tests, he has held roles in consultancy, training and research. John passionately believes that the ethical, focused use of personality questionnaires can be a force for good in the workplace.

The 2017 conference of the British Association for Psychological Type is 6 - 8 April. For the complete programme and registration, please visit

<http://www.bapt.org.uk/events/2017-conference/programme>

