

Seven hours without Wikipedia

Simply there are situations, in themselves seemingly invisible and unimportant, but like a random spotlight, they allow you to grab out of the picture detail that once seemed ordinary and unimportant. And suddenly, thanks to the special angle of this spotlight, a puzzle is new, and you see that this little and unimportant detail actually affects a lot.

A brief introduction to the context of

On 24 August, Roskomnadzor issued a statement which said that the Agency sent providers a notice about the need to block a Wikipedia article about carace prohibited for distribution by court in the Astrakhan region. Wikipedia refused to remove or alter the article, explaining that all of the information for it was taken from the website of the United Nations and other academic sources. The project participants have renamed of the "charas (a narcotic substance)", and at the same address created a list of values of this word. In the message of Roskomnadzor separately, it was noted that the steps to change the url of the article did not restrict access to information, which the court found prohibited.

At approximately 2 a.m. on August 25 providers started blocking Wikipedia.

On the morning of August 25, many users did not open neither the Wikipedia or Wikiquote or Wikisource.

It's actually a milestone for education. Not all providers were as efficient, many sites continued to operate "by inertia". But the overall picture seemed clear. In execution of a judgment in the Astrakhan region was blocked best altruistically and powerful intellectual project of humanity.

We didn't realize it, but I woke up on August 25 in a different reality.

Because Wikipedia is not just another informational website. This is the starting point from which to begin its work with the information of millions of users. Adults. Children. Our students. This assay stone, which verifies knowledge. Turn to him often, even too often. So often that it causes dissatisfaction among the teachers really could not find the source? But the fact is that for millions of our students are Wikipedia and became so "original". The first point at which to begin working with the information.

Just the first thing they come when they want to learn something new — this is Wikipedia. They come to her, practically always, not even noticing and not realizing that it's a special project. When they come to class and want to check whether you are correct the definition sudictive them in a notebook, they know that will help gulp Wikipedia. When they are performing your homework will be to watch whether it was true the Volga flows into the Caspian sea, they don't believe the textbook. He's old and says "before historical materialism".

And try to go to a search engine with a simple question and not to stumble on Wikipedia.

Look for the answer they will be online. And what "throws" the network: hundreds of ads about selling used cars "Volga"? Advertising resorts of Azerbaijan in the Caspian sea? Today in the first [website that will write essays](#) place to search is sure to be a Wikipedia article. May not be complete. Perhaps biased. But an encyclopedia article. With a clear organization of information. With the attempt impartial analysis. With reference to authoritative sources.

As I wrote, Wikipedia can be claimed. For example, a well-known fact that in most of the scientific publications link on Wikipedia will not be accepted. By the way, you wonder why? In my discussions with teachers who have a prejudice refer to Wikipedia ("Good teachers do not rely on Wikipedia, and for the researcher it is generally bad form") is the only cause of rejection is usually called the possible errors ("In those areas where at the very least understand to use Wikipedia to children has long been banned because of the abundance of errors"). Of error important. But, oddly enough, the scientific community does not like Wikipedia is not for:

There are serious reasons why the links to "Wikipedia" (as a source, of course) a very bad symptom that negatively characterize the quality of the work. First, the information in the link, in General, unpredictable: the page can be changed at any time (pre-moderation, as I recall, is that Wikipedians are not entered).

Well, Yes, in Wikipedia there is a whole ritual of "roll back edits", there is a "change history" and all that. The question is that the reader is "scientific" articles should be able to ascertain what is exactly meant by the author when he referred to "Wikipedia". After all, said the author of a link in the list of the sources of their information, and the information on the link is unpredictable, because it leads to an article which only I could edit or replace some of the all-knowing "pioneers-expert-on-all-questions".

The reader of the article, which claims to be scientific must know about the features of Wikipedia and be able to use all the tools of its engine to conduct their own research the "history of transformations" of the Wikipedia text.

Secondly, it is not clear who is the author who posted on Wikipedia that particular information. Wikipedians mostly hidden under some nicknames, that is anonymous. The situation is compounded by the fact that the specific change that was current at the time of the visit page Wikipedia reader, who wishes to see the content "by reference" can be done by anyone.

So, it turns out that the reference to "Wikipedia" in the list of sources, in General, denotes uncertain text written is not clear how anonymous. The indication of these links as sources is an obvious disrespect to the reader and a demonstration of the author's own misunderstanding of the principles of the functioning of Wikipedia and, worse, the principles of preparation and accumulation of scientific knowledge".

Note that in the above quotation, the scientist clearly points out two reasons why Wikipedia is undesirable as the source of the link:

1. "Dynamism", the variability of the Wikipedia article, the inability to capture its contents in the form of "static" text.
2. "Anonymity," the authors of the text of the Wikipedia article, its collective nature.

It is impossible not to admit that, taking into account the specifics of scientific works, both of these claims can be considered with understanding. But does that Wikipedia article less important as a source of information? Not at all! Claims are made only in form but not in fact. We note parenthetically that the scientist does not impose Wikipedia claims the possible errors, but only to the fact that the text is impossible to put the "iron" link.

"Kyakhtinsky Listok" censored Kyakhtinsky mayor.

Source: Wikipedia

By the way, a few years ago I set out to find out how effective system for the protection of Wikipedia from errors and intentional distortions. And to that end analyzed the article, which for three years had been attacked by vandals.

"history "war" pranksters with Wikipedia lasted almost three years. In this case we are talking about the same text that the group of "jokers" (or "vandals" — as you like) sought to impose on Wikipedia. Protection of the free encyclopedia was strong enough, the average distortion of the article hung on the site for approximately one hour (not counting the two cases where the material has been respectively four and eight hours). However, we must admit that we are talking about the article, which was taken under special control. In the end, we see that over a period of three years in total for about 25 hours this article was posted on Wikipedia in such a way that it seemed unreal it could not be doubted, no one sane person".

In my unprofessional opinion, if errors exist (and they are — where do without them), then they are so insignificant that they can not go to any comparison with the typos in printed publications, many of which are "molded" in haste by non-professional publishers.

Really, in order to start thinking, we should ban everything?

However, the news of the ban of Wikipedia, many teachers were perceived as positive. Some colleagues who do not trust the declared by the Wikipedia principle of neutrality, even happy that now the children will not be imposed on a single point of view, and will be given a range of views: "the Ability to analyze information enables the development of critical thinking and universal ways: mapping, correlation, the comparison of". It's amazing what is so prevented Wikipedia to implement these principles? Really, in order to start thinking, we should ban everything?

I say this not just. For me Wikipedia is one of the examples of projects that are honestly trying to build a neutral and objective approach to presenting information. Not all and not always they do. But what is the alternative?

Alas, only one alternative — the bias. With one side or another. Advertising or propaganda. The biased choices or impose their point of view. The key to the health of Wikipedia is its collective nature. It is believed that the presence among the authors of different points of view Willy-nilly will cause them to find consensus. Of course, communities have a small team, the excesses are possible.

"In small sections, where the community is small, sometimes one man, possible fluctuations. For example, in the Chechen Wikipedia recently was assumed to be a lock for the mention of the fact that Chechnya is part of Russia. This problem has been solved. Wikipedia Aceh adopted the rule that an encyclopedia should be based on the principles of Islam. This problem was also solved. But in large projects (and Russian included in the top ten for most of the parameters) of the fluctuations is already small enough that such rules were not accepted. All decisions are made by consensus of the community — that is, abstracting from some details, the consensus of active editors. If the administrator (editor, with additional powers that the draft entrusted to him by election) try to enforce the some considerations to bypass the consensus that his edits will be reverted, and he will lose the flag".

Why ban Wikipedia called the understanding on the part of teachers? I will quote again Yaroslav Blanter:

Wikipedia — the free encyclopedia spreading the free knowledge. It would be strange to expect that Russian state policy is the difficulty of distributing free knowledge was supported by this project, which, in General, the state does not depend, it does not have, and has a completely opposite ideology.

This is because the answer is not only about the state. Wikipedia is a project to spread free knowledge. Outside of the state. Outside of school. Out teacher.

When I Sadikova definition of the lesson and the children I mind that Wikipedia is wrong, I don't like it. I don't like checking up on me that I was not the only source of knowledge in the classroom, and that children are able to produce these knowledge by yourself, without my podskazok. And find my mistakes. Yeah, I don't like it. And I have two options — "to give the hat" and ban or send to me at the right direction. "To punish" or "pardon"? "Execute" — in short.

That's why Wikipedia doesn't like.

Special attention deserves the question, how is it that children compare what they received in school, from Wikipedia. Not with the TSB, not with libraries of Resources, namely Wikipedia.

And here we will have the answer that many people don't think.

In search queries Google gives preference to Wikipedia... the pages of Wikipedia in Google appear in the first results in 99% of search queries.

In addition to these promising numbers, the Wikipedia Google search occupies the first position in the search results, in 56% of cases. At the same time, in 96% of cases, Wikipedia gets the top five search results. Only 8 keywords (mail, news, trainers, national, sweets, wardrobe, phone, flight) Wikipedia Google not appearing on the first page of the search results.

That's it! The infrastructure of the information today is structured in such a way that the gate through which students, they inevitably found it Wikipedia.

This is a very important point. Especially if we consider that the quoted material from the site specialists in SEO (search engine optimization, that is, a raising of positions of a certain commercial website in search results).

One of the reasons "love" Google to Wikipedia, of course, is its neutral status, its collective nature, the consequence of which content pages are harder to manipulate.

But for us it is important that Wikipedia appears on the first page of almost any request. That's where our children have such a desire to know all of Wikipedia — not great to her of love, but because they are accustomed to this Google.

And that's why its not like our adults. "We cannot allow any American to Google to try to impose their American Wikipedia!" Alas, I have to upset the patriots: our native Yandex behaves the same way.

The presence of Wikipedia on the first page is the result of an objective process, and not an attempt of the Americans to "push" your own service.

By the way, in 2015, according to some Google changed the ranking algorithm:

"...webmasters who conducted the study, noted that if earlier the number of queries Google deduced in order of decreasing priority:

1. Page Wikipedia.
2. Page large organizations.
3. Village government agencies.

Now the sequence has changed, and Google gives the page requests of the mentioned types of resources in the following order:

1. Page large organizations.
2. Village government agencies.
3. Page Wikipedia".

So now it is pointless to accuse Google of promoting "American" projects.

And that's what makes sense to blame Wikipedia, so it is provoking to think and compare information. Unless, of course, to be able to understand Wikipedia is not as frozen text, namely as a collaborative dynamic project for writing a truly encyclopedic and neutral articles.

As a wonderful example, here is the story that unfolded on the page, telling of the "hero of the French resistance, a personal friend of General De Gaulle, Ahmedia Jabrailova. The essence of the story is:

"The editor of "Wikipedia" Vadim Gomoz said: the investigation began with the fact that he came across an article about a hero of the French Resistance from the Caucasian village Armada Michel (Ahmedia Dzhabrailova), which during the war was personally consulted General de Gaulle, and the only person with whom de Gaulle demanded to meet during his arrival in the USSR in 1966.

"I was surprised that I never heard about such a significant character, and tried to find information about him. First search for French and English books digitized by Google, revealed that the famous hero of the Resistance, they just never mentioned. Then everything was a matter of technique. We raised the first Soviet newspaper files at the library about this character and found his early biography in the newspaper "Week" in 1960, radically different from the later legends about a hero. The late legend that began with the publication of the "Baku worker" in 1965, it was directly contrary to the established historical facts, including well-known dates," said the editor.

The editor's queries of "Wikipedia" in the museums of the Resistance and French archives is not corroborated 1965 Azerbaijani newspaper. Armed Michelle in the archives is simply not revealed. But the early biography of 1960 coincided with the history of the Azerbaijani Legion of the Wehrmacht in the French town of Rodez, which in August 1944 went to the side of the French.

"Probably in the interests of Soviet propaganda was created by the legendary "hero of Resistance", but since the first, apparently close to the truth, the biography included information that leads to participation in the Eastern legions of the Wehrmacht, it was decided to replace the fictional legend. After that, the simulacrum began to live its own life, multiplied episodes of its heroic role in the Resistance, it was filmed, he received Soviet awards, traveled to France to meet with "friends of the Resistance", etc. is Quite a typical example of Soviet propaganda of the most famous is enough to mention the never-existing heroes Panfilov".

Here they are, the marks of a great hero of the simulacrum.

However, this is just the summary of this story to the media. The real battle for Jabrayilov's (or the truth of history) turned into wiki pages. Few know that in addition to the main text of each Wikipedia article has a discussion page. On this page, and was the scene of bitter battles. The study of such pages very often obsolete to understand the level of effort and professionalism of the authors-researchers. Here is an example of just one dialogue:

No Dachau, according to Authentic, Djabrailov was not. I have on hand the detailed story Jabrailova of "Baku Worker", where he writes that after the camp, near Lviv, he was sent to work in Germany, and then to a labor camp in Alsace. In short, another legendary source. The maximum can serve as the AI for the Soviet awards Jabrailova.

Divot 10:16, 2 February 2015 (UTC)

— sent to work in Germany" - and Dachau in Germany.

Interfase 13:51, 2 February 2015 (UTC)

— Yes, only Jebrailov writes that he was there the cars were unloaded, not sitting in a concentration camp. And the following calls after Lviv camp in Alsace. Dachau in Alsace?

Divot 13:59, 2 February 2015 (UTC)

Dachau is not in Alsace and in Germany. And it's not Jebrail write, and journalist. And the next after Lviv he does not mention a camp in Alsace, he says about Germany. The fact that the article gives information about what Jebrail unloaded trains in Germany.

Maybe it was in Dachau. In Alsace Jebrail came after Dachau. Interfase 14:16, 2 February 2015 (UTC)

— For the mediator, the colleague, to the mediator. Arguing with you makes no fucking sense.

Divot 14:42, 2 February 2015 (UTC)

— The phrase "first in Germany and then Alsace" is meaningless. Alsace at that time was administrative Germany. Moreover, in contrast to Lorraine, Alsace was part of Germany, not only administratively but also culturally and ethnically.

73.193.21.45 05:27, 12 February 2015 (UTC)

This dialogue allows us to look "behind the scenes" of Wikipedia. And it's not even that, was actually Dzhabrailov hero or not. A controversial issue has caused a fierce debate, but also led to the need to develop a text acceptable to all parties, that is by definition neutral.

It turned out it or not is another question (so far, the authors are inclined to believe that his story was fabricated and the article is proposed for deletion on 28 June 2015, however, the text still lives, the last edit was August 15).

We would learn about the complicated history Jabrayilov's without Wikipedia? No. If you weed out links to Wikipedia, Google gives a lot of very complimentary articles about the "hero of the French resistance". That is, for example, a message in the top five: "On the days of the French generals reminded the President about the one glorious son of the Turkic people. And his name Ahmedia Dzhabrailov," — said on the eve of the famous Turkish TV channel Kanal D". Let me remind you that Wikipedia contributors "unearthed" that in any French sources of information about Armada Michel no information. Given that the cited resource is Turkish, and he refers to the Azerbaijani source, there is a fragment of the information war.

And if not Wikipedia, we have joined in this war because the legend is so beautifully written and so want to believe her that...

So well, that is Wikipedia. With their problems, and "cockroaches". With excesses in the field, but with a clear and unambiguous desire to develop a neutral position.

By the way, the case ended with locking?

Blocking of Wikipedia in any country is always a great information about world's leading news publications.

We also started the conversation with the fact that on the night of August 25, providers started blocking Wikipedia on the whole territory of Russia.

However, on the morning of 25 August on the website of Roscomnadzor reported that "the article on the narcotic substance "charas" contained in the moment in Wikipedia, according to the expert opinion of the Federal drug control service of Russia, does not violate the requirements of the law" and "referred to in this judgment reference was excluded from the Unified register of prohibited information"

Roscomnadzor "played down". Ban Wikipedia in Russia lasted less than seven hours.

But in those seven hours, we realized how important Wikipedia is and how fragile freedom of access to information.

Or do not understand?