

Re: death of the mind.

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.cognitive/2004-08/0722.html>

From: Glen Foy (*spam33_at_butter.toast.net*)

Date: 08/30/04

Date: Mon, 30 Aug 2004 13:14:29 -0400

"Lester Zick" <lesterDELzick@worldnet.att.net> wrote in message
news:41334b60.35181257@netnews.att.net...

> On Sun, 29 Aug 2004 19:08:11 -0400, "Glen Foy"

> <spam33@butter.toast.net> in comp.ai.philosophy wrote:

>

>>

>> "Lester Zick" <lesterDELzick@worldnet.att.net> wrote in message

>> news:4131f1fe.18660890@netnews.att.net...

>

> [. . .]

>

>>> Glen strangely finds computation to be a metaphor but does not find

>>> behavior to be a metaphor. However, it would be a little more helpful

>>> to specify what kind of computer you think the brain is. Typically

>>> computationalists think the brain is a turing machine. Behaviorists

>>> think the brain is a behaviorcule. The problem reduces to what kind of

>>> machine the brain is and how it functions to produce the kind of

>>> effect it does. When behaviorists address the problem they just assume

>>> the brain is some kind of machine but are vague and inexact when asked

>>> what kind of machine it is. On the other hand, computationalists think

>>> the brain is a computer without being able to say what it computes or

>>> how.

>>>

>>> Regards - Lester

>>

>> That strikes me as a fair appraisal.

>>

>> As far as "what kind of computer you think the brain is", many

>> computationalists would say that at the lowest level it is something like

a

>> pulsed artificial neural network. But the brain is surely composed of

>> countless such networks, and all the really interesting questions, it

seems

>> to me, revolve around how these networks interact and influence each

other,

>> how the networks are layered, the highlevel architecture, not the

building

sci.cognitive: Re: death of the mind.

> >blocks. Being able to recognize the shapes of letters is lightyears away
> >from natural language understanding.

>

> Of course. The difficulty is that most computationalists naively
> assume that we're already able to recognize letters in cognitive
> terms. Certainly we can robotically, but it's by no means clear that
> all we have to do is architect high level robotic circuitry the same
> way to produce cognition. In other words, is cognition the same as
> computationalist robotics or is there some other mechanism at work
> which produces both robotics and cognition?

>

> The real problem is that as turing robotics currently stand, the field
> is the equivalent of neo Pythagoreanism where a finite binary number
> is simply assigned as the equivalent of cognition when in point of
> fact it is nothing more than a robotic equivalence. When this problem
> is recognized, addressed, and resolved, then we'll be able to concern
> ourselves with higher level design architecture and not before.

>

> Regards – Lester

>From the computationalist's point of view, I would argue that cognition is
a pattern of activation, involving many individual neural nets. The pattern
is hierarchical and highly structured, and is characterized by a high level
of unity and variety at every level in the hierarchy.

This is much more interesting than a binary number, but still may not be
what you're seeking.

Regards,
Glen