

Re: death of the mind.

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.cognitive/2004-08/0745.html>

From: Lester Zick (lesterDELzick_at_worldnet.att.net)

Date: 08/30/04

Date: Mon, 30 Aug 2004 22:32:20 GMT

On Mon, 30 Aug 2004 13:14:29 -0400, "Glen Foy"
<spam33@butter.toast.net> in comp.ai.philosophy wrote:

>
> "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

>> >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.

I don't disagree. I do disagree, however, that turing mechanics are
what is being utilized.

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

It's not so much what I'm seeking but what computationalists imagine
they have found in computer programs.

Regards – Lester