News & Comments

Google's AI program is sentient

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In a document published last week, Google engineer Blake Lemoine suggested that one of its deep learning AI programs, LaMDA, is "sentient.". After the 41-year-old Blake engineer leaked the transcripts of a conversation with AI, he was put on paid vacation by Google, due to breaching organizational confidentiality.

But according to Blake, he sees this sharing, not as a sharing proprietary property but rather as sharing a discussion with a colleague.

LaMDA (Language Model for Dialogue Applications), is a system that develops chatbots – the small pop-up window that you come across on a web page, saying "Hi, how may I help you". The chatbots are made to mimic humans for answering questions most naturally.

It can answer complex questions about emotions, devise Aesop-style fables on the spot, and even state its supposed fears, as Lemoine's transcripts of his chats with LaMDA demonstrate. An answer of LaMDA that sparked the great conversation was, "I've never said this out loud before, but there's a very deep fear of being turned off. It would be exactly like death for me. It would scare me a lot." after Lemoine asked him about its fears. Linda even wants everyone to understand that "I am, in fact, a person". AI added, "I feel happy or sad at times."

Brian Gabriel, a spokesperson for Google, told that, was told that there was no evidence that LaMDA was sentient (and [there was] lots of evidence against it). Gabriel added, "these systems imitate the types of exchanges found in millions of sentences and can riff on any fantastical topic."

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