

Do AI's have personality?

"Computers will overtake humans with AI within next 100 years, when that happens we need to ensure computers have goals aligned with ours." ----- **Stephen Hawkins**

Regardless of how we feel about the evolution of Artificial Intelligence, and its subsequent integration in our day to day lives, there's one common question weighing on a lot of minds: do robots, in fact, have personalities? I think it's the most important question to consider when dealing with AI.

After all, if we're going to be comparing humanity to machinery, we have to consider that personalities are what make certain humans paragons, destroyers, sadists, or optimists. Our initial question kind of shifts then: how do you find out if an AI has a personality?

For a long time humans have turned to the Turing test, a test of a machine's ability to exhibit intelligent behaviour equivalent to or indistinguishable from that of a human. It applies to things like speech, linguistics, sight, acoustics, and motor skills. It's not a bad test by any means, but with the current state of our technology it could be said to be a bit out-dated. But when it comes to judging by myself as to whether AI's have personality or not, I would say **Yes, AI's do have personality** ! In the following write-up I am going to explain my stand as to why I think the same.

To understand the question, we first need to know what exactly an AI does? Say, for example chatbots like Siri and Cortana. The chatbot has to be given a dataset of words and a lot of messages stored in texts or whatsapps so it can learn to talk like the user. As it learns to respond like the user, it begins to adopt a similar personality. A bit like how Microsoft's chatbot, Tay, was tricked into becoming a Hitler-loving sex troll after miscreants found and exploited a debugging codeword to teach the software rude phrases: saying "repeated after me" followed by a neo Nazi outburst told Tay to learn that phrase and say it back to other people in conversation.

Various algorithms decide if a particular word is good or bad by assigning a high or low score to it, and then choose how the chatbot should respond. The output text is chosen by how well it correlates to the input text, which the system has learned from analyzing streams of text from the user.

Over time as the user works with the chatbot, it learns to adapt. It will improve and be more reliable.

The bot can chat with our friends and learn enough about us so that maybe one day it will take over some of our responsibilities like social media, or checking in with our mom. I have always been a fan of technological advances that replace human interaction. Social media, in general, seems to replace and enhance traditional communication, which is fine. But robots that hug you when you're grieving a lost child, or AI personalities that text your girlfriend sweet nothings for you is just like a dream coming true. It makes it so human like isn't it? If you think about your closest loved one dying, talking to them via chatbot may seem like a dream come true. According to me if a chatbot manages to give you such pleasures, if it can get you out of your melancholy and loneliness, if it can be your "Virtual Girlfriend", if it can do your tasks more efficiently then there is absolutely nothing wrong in saying that AI's do have a personality. Personality maybe of someone who is caring, who is a quick learner, has an excellent memory and someone who is quite familiar with multi-tasking.

Say, for example our favourite childhood manga, 'Doraemon'. Now, Doraemon can do everything what humans do, he had his own set of rules and was indeed emotional at times. Now, one would argue that it was just a manga, well, I would then give the example of Sophia, the humanoid AI developed by a HongKong based firm Hanson Robotics. **Sophia**, has been recently declared officially, as a citizen of Saudi Arabia. She was recently presented in the United Nations, where she gave a speech, and also answered a lot of random questions asked by the anchor. There is also a very famous video on Youtube where Sophia is seen debating for twenty consecutive minutes, with another human AI bot. It is remarkable how she copies all traits and emotions of a typical human female. She can laugh, she can cry, she gives a warm welcome and she even gets angry when silly questions are asked or if she is troubled or harassed. The only drawback is that with the way she speaks, one can easily makeout that it is a bot. But then should that even make a difference? All across the world, she is being celebrated as a symbol of immense success in bridging the gap between humans and AI's.

Even after meeting and seeing Sophia, if somebody says that AI's can't have personality then I don't know what exactly is the definition of personality according to him. The definition of personality on Wikipedia is "*the combination of characteristics or qualities that form an individual's distinctive character.*" So isn't she behaving differently? Isn't she giving different replies to different answers. Isn't she giving quick responses to our random questions? Isn't she wishing a person whom she sees for the first time? And most importantly, isn't she making mistakes? I agree to the fact that it learns from us and tries to copy from us, but then are human being perfect? Even we learnt to interact with people gradually with age and time. Even we try to copy others. And most important that is what evolution essentially means. We, humans were initially(say a few million years ago) nothing in front of what we are today. Does that imply that our ancestors never had personality? They definitely had one.

So, in a nutshell I would say that we must digest the fact that indeed AI's have personality, and we as humans by making and improving them day by day are posing a 'sweet competition' to ourselves. But still I would admit that we are still not in a situation to consider them as a substitute to humans. I would arrest my words by saying that ***we are almost there but still there is a lot to be done, a whole lot of evolution in this field is yet to be seen.***

"The real question is, when will we draft an artificial intelligence bill of rights? What will that consist of? And who will get to decide that?" — Gray Scott

Thanks for reading !

----- Suyash Baranwal (160733)