Why People Think Computers Can't

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March 21, 2023

1 Summary of Computing Machinery and Intelligence

In the fall of 1982, Marvin Minsky presented his views on why people believe computers cannot think. Despite the rapid progress in computer technology, many people still hold the belief that machines lack the capability to think intelligently like humans. Minsky argues that this belief is largely due to our limited understanding of what intelligence is and how it can be achieved.

According to Minsky, people tend to underestimate the complexity of intelligence and equate it with certain human qualities, such as emotions and consciousness. Since machines lack these qualities, people assume that they cannot possess intelligence. However, Minsky contends that intelligence is not limited to these attributes and can be achieved through other means.

Moreover, people often make the mistake of assuming that intelligence is a fixed and immutable property. Minsky argues that intelligence is a dynamic and adaptable process that can be enhanced and expanded through learning and experience. Therefore, machines can also acquire intelligence through the same processes of learning and experience.

Another reason why people believe that computers cannot think is their limited understanding of the capabilities of current computer systems. Minsky believes that computers have already demonstrated remarkable abilities in fields such as mathematics, logic, and pattern recognition. However, people still tend to focus on the limitations of computers rather than their strengths.

In conclusion, Minsky argues that the belief that computers cannot think is based on a limited understanding of intelligence, its nature, and its potential for growth and expansion. He believes that as our understanding of intelligence expands and computer technology advances, machines will eventually demonstrate the same level of intelligence as humans in all pure intellectual fields.

2 Opinion/Weaknesses/Strengths

The opinion is that Marvin Minsky's justifications for why people believe computers cannot think are valid. Minsky challenges common misconceptions about intelligence and argues that machines can acquire intelligence through learning and experience. The paper highlights the remarkable abilities of current computer systems, but does not provide a clear roadmap for how machines can acquire intelligence, which may leave some readers with unanswered questions. Overall, the paper is a thought-provoking contribution to the debate on machine intelligence.

The paper does not address the ethical implications of machines acquiring intelligence. Minsky does not provide a clear roadmap for how machines can acquire intelligence, which may leave some readers with unanswered questions.

Minsky offers a unique perspective on the limitations of human understanding of intelligence and the potential for machines to acquire intelligence through learning and experience. He presents clear and concise arguments for why people believe computers cannot think.

3 Comment on how the current approach can be improved

Possible improvement is to explore the ethical implications of machine intelligence. As machines continue to acquire increasingly advanced capabilities, it is important to consider the potential consequences of their actions and how they may impact society. By addressing these concerns and proactively seeking solutions, researchers can help ensure that machine intelligence is developed in a responsible and beneficial manner.

4   Questions

1. What are some examples of tasks that people commonly believe computers cannot perform, and how does Minsky argue against these beliefs?

2. How does Minsky define "intelligence," and how does his definition differ from popular conceptions of intelligence?