

What is consciousness and how to test if an individual has it

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I. ABSTRACT

We describe consciousness in such a way that it is testable and we propose an abstract recipe for making a test.

II. KEYWORDS

consciousness, truth, information, question, art

III. INTRODUCTION

So far, scientists do not agree on what consciousness is, but this paper has the potential to change that.

Consciousness is what separates people from animals, but why and how? If you notice, animals do not have true language, and they often cannot do things that are easier than what they already know how to do. For example, animals like birds build nests but they don't build anything else, not even if it's something easier, not even for fun. There is a specific reason for why people are so much more creative, creative enough to build their own tools, even language is a tool, and that reason is literally: the truth.

At primate research institute of Kyoto University (Japan), Tetsuro Matsuzawa proposed the cognitive tradeoff hypothesis, which suggests that humans have a worse memory than chimpanzees, because we humans traded part of our memory for language [1] [2] [3]. While training can enhance memory, we doubt it is enough to compensate, and we suspect that what actually happened, is that we humans traded some memory for consciousness, and consciousness gives us the ability to process the truth (information), and the consequence of this is that it allows us to develop the complex language, we humans have.

IV. ONTOLOGY

Consciousness is the ability to comprehend the idea of truth, the ability to know or be aware, that the truth exist. By truth we mean truth, true information, regardless of complexity. Animals never ask for the truth, by asking

questions or any other way, because they don't know that the truth exists, and you cannot teach them that (but you can condition animals to fake having consciousness, to some extent). You cannot ask for something you don't know exists, and neither can animals.

To test whether an individual has consciousness, we must check how the individual reacts when he finds a truth he never had beforehand. The reaction may not always happen, but if the individual has consciousness, then the reaction is that the new truth, causes the individual, to ask other new questions, in such a way that he ends up finding other new answers/truths and questions, and inventing a new art. The individual must also have the capacity to cope against lies, by negotiating with objective arguments, that his own answers, to his own questions, are true.

The question must be related to the new truth that caused the question, and by question we mean asking for another new truth. As the individual is chaining the questions (and answers), the new truth contributes to him mastering the art, making the question a good question. By new we mean never had beforehand. By art, we mean something that can be mastered with the help of having the contributing truth. The reader may disagree, but we are allowed to use the word "art", for a lack of a better word (even if it might not be the case). Examples of art: drawing, dancing, poetry, song making, singing, driving, cooking, spitting, jumping, and even mathematics, engineering, programming and language (which is, by the way, a construct, and probably the ultimate construct consciousness can directly bring).

Obviously, feelings are not needed to have consciousness. Just because animals have feelings, that does not mean they also have consciousness.

V. DISCUSSIONS

VI. RESULTS

We described consciousness in such a way that it is testable (we proposed an abstract test). And we proposed an abstract recipe for making a test.

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