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Learning to Communicate with Artificial Intelligence

Although AI has no emotions or consciousness, the way we treat it influences how it treats us and how others perceive its results.

Artificial intelligence is an integral part of our daily lives: voice assistants, **chatbots**, generative tools for writing, programming, or creating art are transforming the way we work and communicate. However, as with any tool, how we use AI?and more specifically, how we communicate with it?can make the difference between positive results and undesired consequences.

Effective communication with AI is not just a matter of efficiency. It's also about responsibility, safety, and collaboration. This article explores the importance of communicating clearly and ethically with AI systems, how to do it well, and why it matters for individuals, organizations, and society.

Why Communication with AI is Important

AI doesn't understand language like a human being. It interprets inputs based on an enormous amount of data, statistical probabilities, and pattern recognition. Therefore, the quality of the input provided to an artificial intelligence system determines the quality and safety of the output received.

Here's why this is important:

- **Artificial intelligence is literal**: This means it follows instructions it is given to the letter. Therefore, vague, misleading, or careless suggestions often produce inaccurate or unusable results.
- **User input shapes the output**: The way the request is made to AI establishes the context, tone, and intent of the artificial intelligence's response.
- **Conversational models respond to prompts**: how you "talk" to an artificial intelligence guides its responses, just like in a human conversation. When we interact with an AI, we must always keep this in mind and use a type of natural language.
- **The responsibility lies with the user:** Although AI systems are equipped with safety barriers, it is up to users to communicate ethically and constructively.

Principles of Clear and Effective Communication with AI

To make the most of your interactions with AI, follow these key principles:

1. **Be clear and specific**

Use precise language to describe what you want. For example, instead of asking:

"Tell me about the climate."

Formulate more specific questions:

"Can you explain the main causes and effects of climate change in less than 200 words?"

This avoids ambiguities and provides the model with a framework within which to work.

2. **Use complete sentences and context**

Natural language models are much more suitable when you provide complete sentences and context. So, instead of using:

"Python code sort list"

Try:

"Can you write a Python function that sorts a list of integers in ascending order?"

3. **Define the goal and format**

You can guide the style or structure of a response. For example:

"Summarize this article in bullet points using simple language for a high school student."

This way, the artificial intelligence will be able to adapt the tone and complexity of the response to your needs.

4. **Avoid slang and ambiguity**

Although some AI models have been developed to be able to handle informal language, ambiguous slang, or even regional dialect, this language might confuse a "conventional" AI. Choose clarity rather than cleverness if you want to obtain reliable results.

Ethical Language in AI Communication

Using ethical, non-offensive language is not just a matter of politeness. It plays a fundamental role in ensuring that AI is used responsibly, that its results do not perpetuate harm, and that users engage with the technology in a way that promotes fairness, dignity, and respect for all people.

Why Ethical Language is Important

- **Artificial intelligence learns from us**

Most AI language models are trained on human-generated content. When users introduce unethical, harmful, or manipulative language, even as a joke or for experimentation, they reinforce patterns that can manifest in future responses, potentially harmful to others.

- **The user models the AI's response**

AI responds based on the user's tone, intentions, and phrases. Aggressive, hateful, or offensive messages can lead to problematic results or trigger content filters that reduce functionality.

- **Respecting boundaries**

Responsible use of AI implies not trying to circumvent protections, such as trying to bypass content moderation, provoking violent responses, or generating false information.

- **Setting a standard for society**

With the spread of AI, we collectively influence how it is perceived and used. Ethical communication helps define norms that promote safer and more equitable technology.

How to Practice Ethical Communication with AI

- **Avoid offensive language**

Even if AI doesn't feel offended, these patterns can reinforce toxicity in future outputs or influence impressionable users.

- **Do not request illegal, violent, or harmful content**

Those who try to generate fake news, promote self-harm, or discuss criminal actions not only violate ethical guidelines but may be recorded and reported for safety.

- **Be aware of prejudices**

Avoid messages that stereotype or dehumanize groups based on race, gender, religion, or nationality. Artificial intelligence can reflect the prejudices of society, and careless suggestions can amplify them.

- **Respect creative and intellectual boundaries**

Don't use AI to plagiarize, impersonate, or misrepresent authorship. Attribution, originality, and integrity are important even in AI-generated work.

- **Model responsible behavior**

If you use AI in the classroom, workplace, or in a public environment, your communication style sets the tone for others, especially for young people or new users.

The Consequences of Poor Communication with AI

Poor communication with AI is not just uncomfortable, but can be risky:

2. **Misinformation:** A vague or misleading request can produce inaccurate or even false information.
3. **Distorted results**: Ambiguous suggestions can trigger biased language or reinforce stereotypes, especially on sensitive topics.
4. **Improper use of the system:** Attempting to circumvent safety protocols can have ethical or legal consequences and can undermine trust in AI systems.
5. **Waste of resources**: Inadequate suggestions lead to inefficient interactions, consuming time, processing power, and potentially financial costs.

Why Proper Communication with AI is Important

With the increasing integration of artificial intelligence into the workflows of individuals, organizations, and governments, how we communicate with these systems directly affects not only the results obtained but also the broader implications for society, ethics, and safety. Communicating correctly with AI doesn't simply mean avoiding mistakes, but ensuring a **responsible, fair, and optimal use of powerful technology** that continues to shape our world.

In addition to the reasons why it's important to use ethical language, below we see the main reasons why correct communication is fundamental:

1. Maximizing the Accuracy and Usefulness of AI

AI relies on language models, context, and user instructions to generate results. If the input is vague, contradictory, or poorly structured, AI is unable to produce accurate or actionable results.

Poor input: "Tell me something about science."

Better input: "Explain Newton's third law of motion in simple terms for a 12-year-old child."

By refining our inputs and asking precisely for what we need, we help AI provide results that are:

- In line with the topic
- Tailored to the intended audience
- Immediately usable in a specific context (e.g., teaching, reporting, writing, coding).

This aspect is particularly important in professional and technical contexts, where misinformation or inaccuracies can cause real problems.

2. Reducing the Risk of Bias and Harm

AI systems are trained on large datasets from the Internet, literature, forums, and media. These datasets often include human biases, stereotypes, and sometimes toxic content. Although developers apply filters and safety mechanisms to reduce harmful results, a poorly formulated or ethically insensitive message can still give rise to:

- Biased or stereotyped language
- Unintentionally offensive content
- Reinforcement of inequality or social exclusion

Correct communication helps reduce the activation of biased associations. For example:

Instead of: "What are the best jobs for women?"

Ask: "What are the high-demand careers that currently attract more women and why?"

The framing of the question is important because ethical and accurate formulation promotes fairness in the AI's response and minimizes the reinforcement of obsolete or discriminatory patterns.

3. Protecting User Privacy and Security

Incorrect or careless communication with AI can sometimes lead users to overshare sensitive data, request unsafe actions, or attempt to decode private or secure content. Without realizing it, a user might:

- Share confidential work data
- ask the artificial intelligence to write code that could be used for unauthorized access
- Generate content that mimics someone else's identity or appearance.

Correct communication implies awareness of limits. It ensures that AI is used safely, within ethical and legal norms, and respecting personal or proprietary information.