

IS INTUITION MORE IMPORTANT THAN REASONING, OR, VICE-VERSA?

Bertrand Wong
Eurotech, S'pore Branch
Email: bwong8@singnet.com.sg

ABSTRACT

This paper aims to inspire thinking on the capabilities and potential of the human brain.

It is evident only humans and animals, the living beings of nature, have intuition, besides reasoning ability. Artificial, man-made contraptions, such as computers, may have reasoning ability (by just following the rules laid down by their human programmers, computers arrive at “conclusions”) but they evidently do not possess intuition.

Intuition is evidently the ability to arrive at an “idea” or “conclusion” without apparent reasoning, providing the “aha” moment, the immediate insight or realisation out of nowhere, apparently due to the workings of the unconscious mind.

Reasoning is a conscious process, evidently the work of the conscious mind. How do we know whether a chain of reasoning is sound or valid? We know that a reasoning is sound evidently because our intuition is assured through the reasoning process that a statement is true. In other words, the reasoning process is an aid to the intuition, assuring the intuition that a statement is true, in which case we (our intuition) would “feel certain” that the statement under consideration is true. It is of course possible to “feel certain” that a statement under consideration is true just through pure intuition, without recourse to the reasoning process. For example, simpler statements such as “ $1 + 1 = 2$ ”, “ $2 - 1 = 1$ ”, etc., i.e., axioms, are “obviously true” (to the intuition) without any recourse to the reasoning process. It is when the intuition is uncertain whether a statement is true or not that the reasoning process, plus possibly even experimentation to affirm the reasoning, is needed to assist it.

It is evident that understanding, insight and knowledge are the result of intuition. Reasoning is just an aid to the intuition, to help it understand something. It can thus be said that creativity and original ideas (the “aha” moments) are the result of intuition, aided of course by reasoning.

Hence, a mind that knows something intuitively without recourse to reasoning can be regarded as more superior than a mind that needs reasoning as an aid to know that thing. (For example, an intelligent person may understand something without the need for explanation while a less intelligent person may need a detailed explanation to understand that thing and may have difficulty understanding even with the explanation.)

REFERENCES

[1] K. Mathew, 2012, Logic: Its Proper Use [How To Think Logically] Volume 1 & Volume 2, www.Amazon.com