Thinking machine response

Linguistics, English

Ali Almuhamidh Chris Pyle Thinking Machine response ‘ Thinking machines’ is an essay by Steven Pinker. Pinker is a Canadian American psychologist and writer whose initial literature aimed at scrutinizing the problems of language and language acquisition. In his essay, ‘ thinking minds’, Pinker delivers one of his fundamental theories; the computational model of thinking (Pinker 525). In the essay, Pinker states how intelligence and rules go hand in hand. Rules provide a base to judge intelligence. He provides the explanation to the computational theory of mind by drawing comparisons of the human mind to a thinking machine. According to Pinker, the mind works in a computational manner by processing representations in an algorithmic and rule controlled manner.

Summary

Pinker notes that cognitive science has made it possible to study intelligence. It is difficult to define intelligence, but it is seeable. Intelligence is a measure of achieving goals under difficulties by undertaking sound decisions based on set rules. These set of rules provide a base for confirming or proving whether the decisions carried out are intelligent or not. Humans, according to Pinker, stand to learn a lot about the reasoning process and intelligence through computing machines. Intelligence gets derived from information and not from the spirit or a special substance. Pinker counters other definitions of intelligence forwarded by other thinkers such as those from the school of behaviorism who state that intelligence gets described in terms of desires and belief (Pinker 526).

Pinker (536) uses the Turing machine to advance the computational theory of mind. He explains how a machine that can carry out rational thought can

get built. The Turing machine processed symbols intelligently to provide data following set definitions, yet it was just an arrangement of gadgets.

According to Pinker, the mind works in a similar way.

The computational model of thinking states that the mind has representations, which it processes in a rule controlled and algorithmic way (Pinker 541). But it does not imply that the mind is similar to a machine.

According to Pinker, unlike a single general purpose computer, the mind is a collection of computers which he refers to as ‘ mental organs’. These ‘ organs’ all carry out specialized subject matter, and each has its own learning mechanism.

Response

Pinker’s computational theory of mind offers selling points and others that can get argued as untrue. The first advantage is that it explains how a collection of matter such as the brain or computers can be intelligent. The theory advances the science of cognitive psychology where experimenters get to characterize the mind’s information processes and structures. The theory allows for the characterization of the mind as a biological mechanism, and not simply as a machine.

Pinker (531), defines intelligence as the ability to achieve goals in light of obstacles by undertaking decisions based on rational rules. This is a limited outlook of intelligence. It is difficult to define intelligence when an act of intelligence gets born out of an unconventional rule. For example, an act of bravery does not get based on rational rules but rather an inborn human instinct. In the event of a fire outbreak in a building, extremely few people follow the safety procedures of evacuation. Most people will react to the fire

outbreak in an instinctive way to save their lives. This can also represent intelligent decision making in spite of the fact that the survivors did not follow set safety procedures. Intelligence, therefore, cannot only be defined by basing it on rules alone as suggested by Pinker.

Pinker (549) states that the brain transforms information and thinking presents a computation process. It is not right for him to separate the brain and mind processes. He distinguishes the brain from the mind by stating that the mind represents what the brain does. He believes that the mind produces the activity of the brain. This disproves common knowledge, which intimates that the brain and mind is one. The mind forms part of the brain and are not separate.

Works Cited

Pinker, Steven. " Thinking machines." Pinker, Steven. How the mind works. New York: Penguin

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