# Re: Patterns of evolution in intellegince

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***From:*** Phil Roberts, Jr. (*philrob_at_ix.netcom.com*)
***Date:*** 09/21/04

Date: Tue, 21 Sep 2004 18:00:37 +0000 (UTC)

melvin wrote:

*> Phil Roberts Jr. wrote:*
*> ".*
*>*
*>>Human intelligence is mostly ANAlogical in a nature. Reasoning*
*>>which, according to Hume, is simply comparing, is a development*
*>>from conditioning. Although we often focus on the logical*
*>>sequential aspects of both conditioning and reasoning, simply*
*>>because they enable us to cognize the order in the manner in*
*>>which we cognize order, the heart of the process is ANAlogical*
*>>in which:*
*>>*
*>> conditioning = the cognition of OBVIOUS similarity and*
*>> difference*
*>> example: this A + B sequence is similar*
*>> to one previously observed*
*>>*
*>>and*
*>>*
*>> reasoning = the cognition of ABSTRUSE similarity and*
*>> difference*
*>> example: electricity is like water flowing*
*>> in a pipe.*
*>>*
*>>and with the dividing line between conditioning and reasoning as*
*>>indistinct as the blurriness in the concept of similarity itself.*
*>*
*>*
*>*
*> What evolutionary pressures would lead to more emphasis on reasoning*
*> than conditioning?*

Don't know. The assumption here is that intelligence in the form of increased skill in ANAlogical thinking was heavily favored in man's ecological niche as simply evidenced by the fact that we seem to have more of it than other species. Of course, I'm

assuming that the increase in intelligence can be accounted for
mostly in terms of a transition from an ability to notice
obvious similarity and difference (enumerative induction) to
a capacity to cognize increasingly more abstruse similarity
and difference. BTW, I forgot to mention that the Latin
for 'ratio' as in 'rationality' is "to compare". I'm also
assuming that ANA−logical is just another way of saying
NOT logical, although perhaps a latin student in our midst
will find fault here.

*> You also stated that logic has a quantitative*
*> component below.*

No, Mel, you've got that backwards. Logic is BIVALENT, its an
all or nothing proposition. One misstep in the sequence and you
move from logical to illogical. Rationality is different, in
that it also entails a quantitative element and, so far, there
are good reasons for supposing this quantitative element is
open−ended (e.g., the endless amendability inherent in our
scientific hypothesese, the demise of foundationalism
verificationism, falsificationism and the rise of explanationism
in epistemology where theory A is better or worse than theory
B rather than "true" or "false", etc.). This allows one to
incorporate Aha! experiences,
those moments of significant insight sometimes referred to as
ampliative inference, into one's notion of rationality. In
this view, rationality is not about following rules, but more
about "standing outside the system" (Lucas/Penrose) or "thinking
outside the box" (Ross Perot). Its what scientists do when they
dare to suggest that old ways of thinking have got something
wrong and there is a paradigm shift.

*> Do you think that the amount of the quantitative*
*> component contributes to the "abstruseness" of the similarity comparision,*
*> or is that set by other factors.*
*>*

No. I assume the ANA−logical nature of reasoning is what produces
ever more comprehensive conceptions and values. Much of this
is the result of cognizing the abstruse similarity and difference
in features in which we have already cognized abstruse similarity
and difference. For example, Aristotle was one of the earliest
to notice the abstruse similarity between diverse occasions in
which has cognized more obvious similarity, e.g., the similarity
between objects in the category man, and the properties they
share, e.g., mortality reduced to the rule if A then B,
A therefore B.

In the case of the specific inference involved with Socrates,
the reasoning has already occurred and is present in the
premises in which one cognized a category of objects (man)

sharing the same properties (e.g., mortality). Once you've
gotten this far, conclucing Socrates is mortal is more like
REMEMBERING what the category man entails than like reasoning,
at least to the extent I'm on the right track here.

> *The reaction to the Monty Hall varies drastically between people.*

The Monty Hall paper was extremely interesting. Thanks so much
for bringing it to our attention.

The guys who figured out that you can acctually achieve a 2/3
chance of success by switching doors have probably utilized a
combination of logic and reasoning to decipher the "correct"
answer. And, I am not suggesting that they might not be
right and the average person might not be wrong, merely that
this does not qualify as evidence that the average dufus who
quesses wrong about the doors is IRrational and the logicians
are rational. The former may be illogical, and less rational
than the experts, but to the extent there is an open ended
quantitative component in rationality, to that extent ALL
rationality ascriptions have to be in RELATIVE terms with
the implicit reference to the average.

BTW, my contention that rationality NEVER appears in nature in
any but a relative sense entails the conclusion that my own
speculations on the nature of rationality are themselves only
relatively rational and, just like a scientific hypothesis,
will probably require further amending at a later time. In
otherwords, I am proposing a "theory" of rationality here that
actually predicts its own eventual demise. It also means that
no fixed objective can itself ever be construed as rational in
any but a relative sense, including maximizing your own self−
interest. Not even the pursuit of rationality itself is
immune to this rule, and which can accomodate our intuitions
about Dr. Frankenstein's monomania.

> *What evolutionary patterns would lead to such divergence or do you*
> *believe that there are environmental pressures which lead to this*
> *divergence?*
>

In man's ecological niche, it is likely that intelligence was
heavily favored as evidenced by the fact that we appear to have
more of it than other creatures. I'm merely suggesting that
this increase in intelligence was more a matter of an increased
skill in the cognition of similarity and difference rather than
an increased skill in logical/probabilisitic thinking.

Thanks for questions.

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PR