

Getting closer to iconic logic

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Abstract

Visual and other non-symbolic representational forms and reasoning about them are increasingly visible in the intersections of logic, computer science and linguistics. Peirce's system of existential graphs, putting forth "actions of the mind in thought" by "moving pictures of thought" is among the promising logical methods for the purpose. By taking some unpublished sources into account, I expound ways in which a truly iconic logic may be found in extensions of that system. Notwithstanding some claims to the contrary, it is the iconic, especially diagrammatic representations that are continuously created and presented to the mind. But diagrams are not the only kinds of iconic representations. One of the key open questions thus is: what is the logic that relates to images and metaphors in the fashion in which the logic of graphs relates to diagrammatic icons? I suggest that, by taking clues from cognitive semantics, it is the degree of analogicity in the representations and in the facts represented rather than the quality of those representations that distinguishes the three kinds of logics from one another, two of which are yet to emerge and be developed.