

Is there a universal language? - The enormous difference between senses versus, language and mathematics.

We are surrounded by words and symbols in life - everything is about words and relating to them, from computer interactions to information exchanges, at this moment you're reading a whole load of them! However the problem is that words are really a very abstract phenomenon. I could describe something verbally: a farm in the country with a green meadow, woods with bluebells and a well and water being drawn from the well... words trigger images that are conjured up by the mind. However, this is really quite abstract. A cognitively created symbol-word has to be processed and relate to memories and ideas, in the mind. There is a big difference between spontaneous images occurring within the mind, and the situation of putting words to these images and creating "meaning" or "value" to these images. This puts the symbolic nature of language on a very different footing to the nature of artistic expression. Artistic expression doesn't need to be thought about, this involves visual art, sound, touch and sensation, taste and smell. Basically all forms of imagination that do not require cognition but are experienced whether they are from a state of the body in sickness or in health. All these forms of culture could be described as a "universal language".

Language and mathematics are often considered to be a "higher order" function of the brain and these tie in with things like music, however the kind of music being described here is the process of reading musical symbols, not of actually playing music, especially spontaneously, which is very different. Mathematics and language are a very particular kind of analytic thought process, fundamentally based on and originating in logic. Logic is the philosophical expression of the foundational premises or starting points from which the symbols of either mathematics or another language or symbol can be used. Please note that musical symbols are NOT music and in fact only occurred recently. Before the time of Bach little written music existed and music was played and learned by ear. Ultimately it is at this basic level that the foundational misunderstanding of the universe is most clearly noted. Logic is fundamentally based in dualism. We all use logic, it is implicit within everything we do, analytically-speaking, and forms the basis whenever we use the mind. If one of the primary logical premises is that "I" and "You" are separate bodies, then this basic axiom is thereafter built into language and mathematics and becomes the principle in which the symbols are arranged. This is what derives most "meaning" and "values" within stories and ideologies.

Now some mathematicians might argue that mathematics exists without there being a human manipulating the numbers, but in fact this is impossible. We do not see any animal in the whole of nature applying symbolic language to anything, only the human does this and the human is only a very small proportion of nature. Actual numeric symbols do not occur in nature. It is only when we apply man-made symbols to natural patterns that ideas are formulated within the human mind. This is very different to the belief that mathematics exists *before* nature. There are those people whom we regard as being overly logical, they appear quite rigid and severe in their approach as opposed to the intuitive types whose expressions seem spontaneous, un-hampered by a "systematized" way of thinking. This is seen as very illogical or not in line with a logical

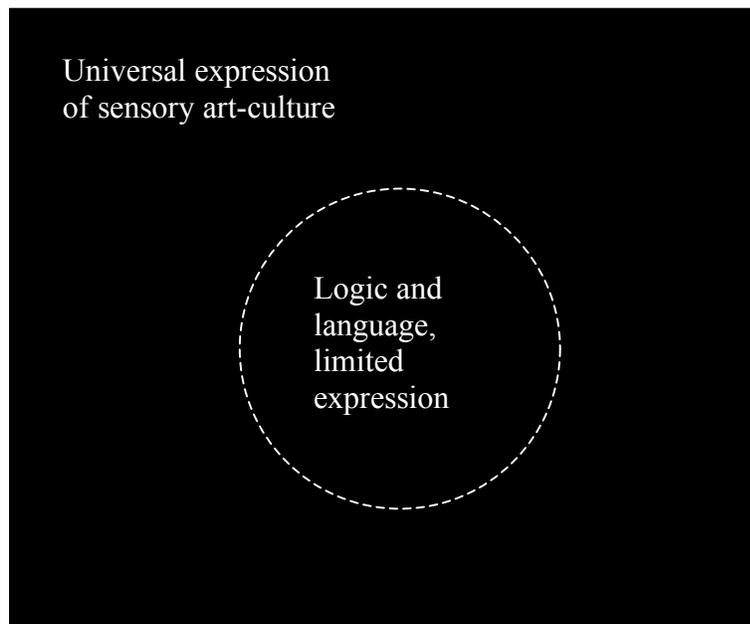
analytical way of thinking and therefore easily dismissed by logic and these two views seem to oppose. In fact all that is occurring here is that logic is very much the way of the analytic mind, it is the application of a formalized or theoretical view of the way things are, including premises that things are based upon, and offering this as an explanation of what "Is". However, this is not based in sense but in abstract thought. It is always a belief system and as such will fundamentally be based in dualism, which is why there is a coinciding of the religious person and the person of science, both of whom have their own religious-based individualism. Each is based in a different perspective of the universe, much like two philosophers having an argument about calling a kettle black or white. No child is logical, no child has a natural mind that contains a logical requirement, or a requirement for logic, and this is where the theory of logic being a necessity for life or understanding falls down. Interestingly it is only at about the age of about 3 that children move into a state of vivid imagination that they begin to apply words to. Before this there is no imagination, there is just what is happening as it is. The mind has not developed so as to create spontaneous images as yet, the child is completely connected to what is happening right now. At age 3-ish comes spontaneous images and only after this comes adding words onto these image. After this age we move into a situation where words take over and simply being or spontaneous word-less imagination is said to be all bullshit. We adhere to verbal, the "real" world of language, "meaning", cultural "values" and mortgages become what it's all about, although of course this is a trap of the dis-ease process of the sense of separation left behind when "higher-order" mental function was encouraged early in life.

Mathematics in and of itself is nothing but symbols, just as language is a jumble of symbols or sounds before they are denoted meaning and intended direction by the user. If there is no user there is no mathematics and there is no language. Mathematics seems to differ from language in that it seems to follow particular patterns of meaning, so $2 + 2 = 4$ but this is the same as the actual words "two plus two is four". The sound of the words means something to the speaker in the same way that the mathematician writing this on the blackboard knows what it means. It is not actually as absolute as it seems, which of course we know from algebra when letters are given numeric values and so we have a combination of the two forms of language. There is complex language with complex ideas and simple language with simple ideas, the same as mathematics. The point is that no language is universal, it depends why you're using it, the intention behind it, and it requires a person to want to derive abstract meaning.

Direct communication via the 5-senses is very different from what we understand as language. The senses are felt and this is why art rather than analytic science is foundational. One could say that originally there was just instinct through the 5-senses, then this formed art and traditions of expression or the 5-senses. Then later this became symbolized and logic began at the same time as language and mathematics came into being. So the more basic the expression the more it speaks to a deeper aspect of ourselves. This is why languages do have a voicing that is particular, but are not what real connection is about. Many primitive cultures have absolutely no need for mathematical interactions and abstractions and only a limited need for vocabulary. These people are amongst the last of those expressions of humanity that are truly at peace.

This is recognised very much in Japanese art forms where mostly those practices such as medicine, archery, tea ceremony, martial arts and music and many other expressions are learned traditionally via direct non-verbal transition and the verbalization of something is considered a vulgar approach. It is when the analytic process of the mind kicks in that the sensing of something is hampered rather than aided, which is very often misunderstood in the West. Of course there are huge manipulations of this ideology, which is much like the “do as I say” approach involving hierarchical masculine domination, but if the art form is purely a natural occurrence, then the most direct way to learn anything is via the sensory perception of it rather than via verbalization or symbolic representation. This has always been the way with all tribal and ancient cultures for millennia.

When we consider the nature of the universal understanding of “love” this is most often associated with touch, sexuality and a deep sensory connection which is also very much a universal expression. The senses basically rule the mind and are more basic than the theories and perceptions of logic which are too narrow to incorporate a perspective view that is far greater than its limited premises and intentions. Logic is the child of art and as such needs to be seen in context of it. The universality of the sensory arts are something logic can’t reach as logic is a stiff and narrow tool with which to see only a small part of something. That which derives from instinctive-intuition is the mother of invention. So in fact the term “universal language” is a contradiction in terms.



David Nassim
9/11/11