

On Idealism

In this essay I am going to show that Idealism is the only philosophy that we should accept about the nature of mind and reality. In order to do so I am going to prove that the mind is fundamental and non computational, the material is linguistic and abstract, in addition to showing further problems caused by the materialist way of thinking.

Idealism

We know that we exist because we see the world, feel the world, hear the world, and understand its patterns. Our Mind (i.e consciousness) is all we know about the whole of existence. Nothing is more real than the feeling of pain or the experience of the redness of red.

The world is made of visual scenes made of different frequencies of colors, feeling of the world like the touch of wind or the heat of fire, sounds of the world like the sound of birds or the sound of the ocean in a quiet night. The world is nothing but a set of experiences and ideas.

The fundamentality of the sense experience lies in its independence: It is literally impossible to describe any of the senses by anything else that is not it.

When you try to describe the color red you never really describe it, all you do is trigger a memory of something that looked red before. You only remind the receiver about the experience he/she had before when seeing the color red.

Imagine a born blind man who never saw anything from birth, once you try to describe the color red to the born blind man, you will suddenly realize that it is an impossible task since the man has no memory of the

experience to trigger. Given all the languages, logic, knowledge, and scientific tools, it is literally impossible to describe the redness of red to a born blind man. This applies to all the other senses equally, the feeling of pain or the sound of musical instruments, etc.

An experience can only be experienced to be known.

But sense experiences, although being the most fundamental, but they are not the whole story. In the following lines I am going to show that the analytical part of the mind is probably equally fundamental just like the senses.

Concepts, Objects, And Relations

Concepts

Everything starts with the senses, they are the first and most fundamental level of existence. But we have the ability of abstracting the senses into concepts and ideas. Take for example a red ball on a white floor, it all starts with our fundamental awareness of redness and whiteness, then comes our awareness of the distribution of different frequencies of color in our screen of vision.

From this picture we abstract the concept of a ball and a concept of environment based on several qualities. This lies in our fundamental mental ability to analyze and abstract.

The building blocks of abstraction are what we call concepts, and these concepts are irreducible, I argue. The concept of a square is the integration of four straight lines, equal in length, perpendicular to each other, and each touching from the end, and symmetrical (do not change no matter how we rotate). Remove any quality and you totally lose the concept of a square and you get a totally different concept. A quarter of a square is a straight line, a half of a square is two perpendicular straight lines, etc.

I argue that the awareness of squareness is just like the awareness of the redness of red, independent and irreducible, however not as clear.

Consider the concept of a number. A number is the building block concept of the concept of counting, but nothing can be said to describe the process of counting itself except through the act of counting.

Any attempt to define counting will necessarily include a word that takes counting for granted like (estimating - adding - number - quantity - etc), so we are not actually defining counting, we are just referring to it using different kinds of words, just like when we describe the color red by triggering the memory of something that looked red before and not by defining the redness of red.

Although counting is dependent on the senses, the concept of a number itself is separate from the senses. In other words, I can say that there are two apples on a table, or 2 tables in a room, or two rooms in the apartment, or two apartments in the building. But, the concept of the number two itself is not the apple or the table or the room. It is independent and irreducible, you can't reduce the concept of quantity to something that is not a number or quantity.

Objects

The same can be said regarding the concept of an object, but this concept is more complex and includes different levels of ideas. First we abstract ideas like “pattern” and “connection” and “conservation” and “environment”, the integration of these ideas creates the object.

- Patterning: The awareness of patterns

A pattern is a structured concept like the concept of a square or a concept of a triangle. Some other patterns are less organized or asymmetrical, we can call them pseudo patterns. For example, the pseudo circular shape of an apple or the pseudo symmetrical shape of a tree.

We can be aware of a structural pattern and decide that this pattern is an object separate from its environment. A ball for example can be recognized and separated from the surrounding environment just by recognizing its symmetrical circular pattern.

We can also recognize patterns based on integration of certain aspects that do not necessarily have a regular shape. For example, a room with white floor that has red wine spilled on it, the red wine has no regular shape but it has a single color and single behavior, so we can decide to recognize the oneness of the color of the spilled wine as a single object, based on the color or the behavior or both.

Our awareness of patterns is fundamental and cannot be described in other terms.

- Connection: The ability to subjectively integrate separate aspects into a single object based on causal relations.

A glass of water is made of two objects, the patterned and behavioral object of a glass, and the behavioral object of water. But since there is a causal relation between the glass and the water (the glass is defining the

shape of the water and is preventing it from taking a different shape), we naturally consider the glass of water as one object.

A bicycle is made of different objects connected together to form an integrated whole. There is a causal relation between the parts of the bicycle and it can be considered a single object based on the causal connection of the parts.

It is important to note that the mind is free and unlimited, we can refuse to consider the bicycle a single object and just consider it a number of objects connected together. On the other hand, we can choose to consider the bicycle and the driver as a single object. There is always some freedom in the creation of concepts, and this freedom is itself one fundamental aspect of mentality.

- Conservation: Our awareness of the unchanging nature of the object.

Once we define the object, its properties that we perceive through our senses have to be conserved. Consider a moving red ball on a white floor, although the overall distribution of color frequencies in our screen of vision is changing, which gives the impression of movement, but at the same time the object of the ball conserves its experiential properties during movement. This conservation contributes to the concept of an object.

- Environment: The ability to patternize and connect a set of surrounding aspects as a single environment.

The environment is an object in itself but in a more general sense. The environment could be a table, a room, or the whole visual vision. This ability is as fundamental as all the above.

Relations

Relationality is a fundamental aspect of mentality. Mental relations come in two categories, necessary relations and arbitrary relations.

Necessary relations

Are the relations that we discover in the world. One example is movement, movement is a relation between two or more objects, and if there is a lonely object that doesn't have any other object to relate to, or a surrounding environment, movement will not exist or make any sense.

Imagine that you can only see whiteness, in which the whole vision is white with the same frequency, in this case no matter how you move your head you will never see movement because the whiteness is all there is and there is no other color or object to relate it to. Movement will only happen if there is a black point in the middle of your vision and this point moves with the movement of your eyes. Only then movement will start to make sense.

The same applies to causations and correlations and any other form of change. These all happen in the mind and do not make any sense without a mind to be aware of the relations. Our ability to find and create relations is fundamental and cannot be reduced to other things.

Another form of necessary relations is logical and mathematical relations. The fact that the number 1 is half the number two, or the fact that the part is smaller than the whole, etc, these are all relations that we discover as facts about the world.

It is important to note that the fundamentality of our ability to logically relate abstract concepts lies not just in the awareness of the relation, but also in

the awareness of the impossibility of the contradiction of the relation. In other words, it is not just about that $1+1$ equals 2, any simple computer can do that, but it is also about this internal feeling of impossibility that $1+1$ will equal any other number than 2. We will come to the difference between our minds and computers later on.

Our awareness of these relations and our certainty of the impossibility of the contradiction of the relation is fundamental and cannot be described in different terms.

Arbitrary relations

The most famous example is language. We create symbols, mainly sound symbols in the form of different patterns of sound waves coming out of our mouths when we spell letters and words. We then arbitrarily relate these symbols to anything in the world (objects, actions, feelings, happenings etc). This is the very basic idea behind any language.

The word C-A-T is how we pronounce the C and the A and the T in this exact order. The pronunciation of the word itself is just a sense sound experience associated with a patterned experience of sound, both the sound and the sequenced pattern of sounds are fundamental sense experiences.

Then we decided, arbitrarily, that this specific sequence of patterns of sounds C-A-T relates or refers to the four legged animal that we all visually see. The visual experience of the cat is also a combination of the experience of colors and the experience of patterned frequencies of colors that make up the image.

So language is a combination of the idea of a symbol and arbitrary relations between the symbols and any other thing based on our decisions. These relations could change from person to person. I can wake up and decide that the word CAT will relate to my car and not to cats.

It is important to mention that I am only mentioning the very basic idea behind language. Languages are much deeper and contain levels of complexity that I am not well equipped to summarize. I will leave that to philosophers of language.

The same applies to the invention of computers, the invention of games, and almost all human inventions originate from arbitrary relations combined with necessary relations.

Computation and intelligence

It is often assumed that our mentality is computational. When it comes to basic sense experiences like the redness of red or the feeling of pain, no time is required to prove that these fundamental aspects are not computational. I will explain further in the following lines, but we need first to understand the basic idea of computation.

Any organized and repeating set of events could be used in the process of computation.

“A note to remember: A process is a set of organized changes, a change is relational, and relations are mental by nature.”

Most modern computers are based on the idea of a bit of information expressed by the abstract concepts of ONs and OFFs, with minor exceptions like the analogue computers, the sequence of these ONs and OFFs define the required outcome desired by the mind of the programmer, what we call the software. No matter what kind of software used, direct softwares or neural network softwares that learn and evolve, all are based on the same basic abstract concept of sequencing of the ONs and OFFs.

Now, these ONs and OFFs are represented by the hardware of the computer, the classical computer will represent by the absence of electric current (OFF) and the existence of electric current (ON), or a quantum

computer in which the ONs and OFFs are different quantum states of a particle. That's how computation works in modern computers, and here lies the difference between the mind and computation.

I clarified earlier that each experience is independent, in which it can't be described by any other thing that is not itself. Please refer back to the born blind man thought experiment.

Claiming that the feeling of pain or the redness of red can be represented by the sequencing of the ONs and OFFs of electric circuits or the sequence of the quantum states of elementary particles, is exactly like trying to describe the redness of red to the blind man using these computational and physical terms.

The same way of thinking applies even to the aspects that seem accessible to computation like logic and language.

I clarified earlier that our logical thinking lies equally in the ability to be aware of the logical fact and the awareness of the impossibility of any contradiction. A computer will easily calculate $1+1$ to be 2, but it will never have the internal feeling of necessity of that fact, it will never feel the impossibility of $1+1$ equaling any number other than two.

A computer will beat the best human being in chess, but it will never understand the true meaning of winning and losing, nor will it enjoy winning or hate losing. Enjoying and hating are fundamental experiences that are irreducible to computational processes of any kind.

Even when it comes to the act of computation itself, like $1+1$ equals 2, just because computers can make that happen doesn't mean that they are experiencing it the same way as we do. If two people left Rome heading to New York and they both arrived, doesn't mean that they both took the same path. One of them could have traveled by plane and the other could have taken a ship but at the end they reached the same point.

Another major difference lies in the irreducibility of mental concepts that I clarified earlier. To us, a square is an irreducible concept that cannot be split in half, but to a computer, a square is split into millions of bits of information following a specific sequence. The irreducibility of mental concepts seems to contradict the discreteness of modern computers.

Ironically, one of the things that show the fundamental differences between mentality and computation is our lack of efficiency and accuracy that these computational machines have. Imagine multiplying two nine digits numbers, the simplest calculator can do that in a split of a second with no errors, while the vast majority of human beings will not be able to do so, and the ones that can do it will probably hit a wrong answer in their first trial.

Computers are just a tool that humans invented to do certain mental tasks fast and efficiently, but only humans understand the depth and meaning of these tasks. To a computer, there is no difference between speaking english and playing chess, it's all ONs and OFFs all the way down, it is a mechanical machine following its encoded software.

The degree of intelligence these machines reached (and will continue to reach to impressive degrees in the near future) **only shows further the fundamentality of human intellect**, and the fundamental ability to create mathematical relations and abstract programming languages that let these machines operate in extremely smart and unexpected ways.

Imagine this thought experiment, we invented an artificially intelligent robot that looks exactly like us, and we supplied it with temperature sensors all over its iron body, and we supplied it with mechanical tools that function exactly like muscles, from large muscles in the arms and legs to tiny muscles in the face that control facial expressions very accurately. Then we implemented a learning neural network software that can identify faces and facial expressions and supplied it with billions of gigabytes of videos to learn from, these videos will include real people reacting to different temperatures, from the annoying feeling of extreme cold, to the annoying feeling of very hot weather, and everything in between like the nice bite of

an ice cream or the nice entrance to an air conditioned room after a long walk in a very hot day.

After a long time of learning, the robot will be able to identically replicate our reactions and emotions to heat and cold using its temperature sensors and mechanical facial expressions. It will look equally joyful and equally suffering through its facial impressions and bodily movement, **however it does not experience anything at all.**

At the first glance anyone who is not aware of the details will believe that this robot feels everything, but anyone who understands the details will be 100% sure that this robot is just following the software instructions and does not really feel anything. The same applies to modern language processors, they now speak as if they are real humans but with no understanding of what they are saying whatsoever, they don't even know that they are speaking a language. **They don't know in general.**

AI Computers are just extremely complex dishwashers.

Matter

We all know that there is an outside world separate from us. The main reason for this knowledge is ignorance and discovery.

We discover patterns, events, places, and facts. Since we discover things then we were ignorant of earlier, then these things were outside the scope of our minds, otherwise we wouldn't have discovered them and we would have already known them in advance. The fact that there are things in the world that we are ignorant of and we discover gives us certainty that there is an outside world separate from us. A world to comprehend, search, and discover.

But, there has been an unjustified belief that this separate world is non mental. And I am going to show that this belief is only about language.

The best well known example is Matter. What is Matter?

Any answer will be an idealistic answer.

A table is nothing but the sense experiences of the table in addition to the abstract concept of a four legged object that holds other objects. The abstractness here lies in different levels, the fourness, the legness, the objectness, and the holdness of other objects.

Movement is just the change of frequencies of colors on our screen of vision. A moving red ball in a white room is the change of frequencies between red and white and vice versa, and this change in frequencies gives visual movement. Then comes the fundamental analytic ability of relating these two frequencies, objectifying the redness as a ball, and objectifying the whiteness as an environment or a room.

The colors, the change of the location of colors in relation to each other, and the abstract idea of an object, all make up what we call movement and change.

The world as a whole is nothing but a set of experiences and abstract ideas. What else about the world other than Colors, Sounds, Feelings, Smells, in addition to Objects, Movement and Change?

Consider our best source of knowing and understanding the external world, Physics.

Physics is about experiments and theories to describe the experiments and predict the outcome of further experiments in a mathematical framework. In short, experiment + mathematical framing of experiments + mathematical predictions about further experiments.

Any experiment is nothing but a set of experiences and ideas. The double slit experiment, particle colliders, microscopes, telescopes, or any experiment you can think of, are nothing but a set of experiences and abstract ideas.

Any experiment is an observation. We observe by our sense experiences and analyze through our abstract analytical thinking.

The other part of Physics is equally mental, Mathematics.

Mathematics in general is a set of abstract concepts and relations. These relations are sometimes necessary like Euclidean geometry, and other times arbitrary like the rules of multiplication of Matrices.

Icons of physics Like Einstein, Dirac and Wigner (and many others) have always committed an error of considering that only the mathematical part of physics is mental and the other part is not, this error has caused big philosophical problems for them. Eugene Wigner claimed that the ability of mathematics to describe the world is unreasonable, Einstein called it the

most incomprehensible fact about the world, and Paul Dirac claimed that there is no rational explanation for it.

These great men faced this philosophical problem only because they failed to acknowledge that everything about physics is mental, not just the mathematical part. Had they acknowledged the mental nature of physics as a whole, no unreasonableness or irrationality would have occurred to them.

The role of language in Materialism

What does Non Mental even mean?

As we showed earlier, language is a set of symbols in the form of patterns of sounds followed in a certain sequence, these patterns only have meanings when we decide to relate them to things in the world, an object or an action or a feeling, etc.

The sound pattern of the word PAIN has its meaning based on the relation that we decided to give to the feeling of pain. The word ITGO exists only in the form of a sequenced pattern of different sounds I-T-G-O, this word will only have meaning if we decided to relate it to something.

If no meaning has been given to any given word, this word's existence will only be the patterned sound it gives.

When we say that there is a THING that is not mental, and we call this thing MATTER or UNIVERSE or FRODO. These words are just limited to the patterns of sound they give, they are literally just sounds (a sound is a sense experience). Now, what is the meaning of these words?

Anything that we are going to relate to these words will be either a sense experience, an abstract idea, or a combination of both. Any meaning these words can have is necessarily mental.

Materialism is only about language, this is an inescapable fact.

The vast majority of people do not, and did not, recognize the role of language in Materialistic philosophy, even some Idealists.

There is a school in Idealism called transcendental Idealism, the most famous transcendental idealist was Immanuel Kant. Transcendental idealists claim that Idealism is only epistemic, meaning that we can only know anything through our mental lenses and it is impossible for us to know anything else, but transcendental idealists claim that the thing in itself exists separately and it is not mental.

Now Mr Kant, what does “the thing in itself” mean? What do these patterns of sounds relate to? Can you find a meaning for these words that is not mental?

The thing in itself is something that:

We can't imagine, because imagining is a mental construct.

We can't conceptualize, because a concept is a mental construct.

We can't think of in any way whatsoever, because thinking is a mental construct.

The above is the literal definition of absolute nothing. We can't imagine it, conceptualize it, or even think about it.

Language is the main source for Materialism.

Materialistic errors: Emergence

Some philosophers treat the word Emergence like the word Abra Cadabra, in which it can create something out of nothing.

Emergence is simply the increase of complexity of any system. Any emergent phenomenon is limited, defined, and controlled by the properties of the parts constituting the phenomenon. Change the properties of the parts and you get a totally different emergent phenomena.

Based on the nature of the parts, some emergent phenomena should emerge, others may emerge, and others are impossible to emerge.

Consider a point on a piece of paper, we can draw anything we want by increasing the number of points in a specific structure. Imagine drawing an elephant from hundreds of points, this elephant is an emergent complex structure that does not exist in the simple building block points. Although the complexity of the elephant is emergent, it is impossible for the elephant to move inside the paper because each point is static and the emergence of movement from static parts will be something out of nothing. The point will be moving and non moving at the same time.

An infinite number of complex shapes can emerge from a simple point, but no matter how complex the emergent structure is, the simplest form of movement is impossible to emerge. **Movement should be present in each point in order for complex movement to emerge on the large scale.**

Emergence is just the increase of complexity of something that already exists, not the emergence of something out of nothing. Expecting the feeling of pain to emerge from the movement and interaction of particles that do not feel pain is exactly like expecting the elephant to move from one page to the other.

Materialistic Errors: Illusionism

Some philosophers claim that the so-called “Matter” objectively exists and it is completely non mental. Not just that, but they also claim, naively, that that Matter exists and the Mental does not. They are literally denying the phenomenal existence of conscious experience.

Denying the phenomenal existence of experience is denying existence as a whole. We know that we exist through seeing, hearing, feeling the world, and these are all phenomenal experiences. Deny them and you deny existence, period.

Some illusionists acknowledge the absurdity of such a claim and they will try at first to deny their denial of phenomenal experience. Here the conversation goes:

Idealist: Does phenomenal experience exist?

Illusionist: Yes, but not as it seems.

Idealist: Then what is a phenomenal experience if it is not what it seems?

Illusionist: Phenomenal experience is a combination of things that are not themselves phenomenal experiences.

Idealist: Then you are saying that phenomenal experience does not exist and you are just playing with words.

If I claim that the triangle exists, but it is nothing but a four sided concept, then I am denying the existence of the triangle. It is just a word game of denying the existence of something without admitting to doing so.

Clearly language is playing a major role in Materialist schools.

Another thing worth mentioning in response to illusionism is that the “Matter” they claim is fundamental is itself a set of sense experiences and ideas as has been clarified above in this essay. So there is nowhere for them to go.

Materialistic Errors: Dualism, Panpsychism, and the hard problem of consciousness

David Chalmers famously coined the term “the hard problem of consciousness” in showing the explanatory gap between the non mental matter and subjective experience. Again, the error here, which is being repeated over and over, is in the treatment of matter as a non mental objective thing, then wondering how a non mental thing becomes mental.

Once we acknowledge the mental/abstract/linguistic nature of matter, the hard problem of consciousness gets naturally solved.

Dualists are also materialists in the sense that they claim the objective existence of “Matter” without being able to acknowledge the abstract nature of “Matter”.

Panpsychists may not be materialists, but they are still influenced by the materialistic way of thinking.

Panpsychists claim that there are units of experience and these units are the building blocks of mental experience. This form of reductionism is more materialistic than idealist, and this has led them to a problem which they call “the combination problem”, in which they fail to explain how the building block units of experience gather to become the experience that we know.

I have shown in this essay that sense experiences are independent and cannot be described or reduced to simpler terms. Please refer back to the blind man thought experiment. I also showed that mental concepts as well are irreducible.

Once Panpsychists free themselves from materialistic ways of thinking, they will suddenly become idealists.

The Idealist Error: Solipsism

Some people make the mistake of denying the external reality. The argument goes like this: Since everything is nothing but a set of sense

experiences and ideas, then there is not contradiction in believing that everything in the world is happening within my single mind

Although this argument at first seems irrefutable, upon close inspection severe contradictions occur.

As a solipsist, anything that you are not aware of is absolute nothingness. Consider that I only exist and I saw an image of a right angle triangle for the first time, this triangle came to existence by my awareness of it. But, the concept of a right angle triangle depends on certain fundamental properties, one of these properties is the Pythagorean theorem.

Here occurs the contradiction of solipsism. The right angle triangle exists because I saw it in the picture, but the fact that the hypotenuse squared equals the sum of the two other sides squared did not exist because I wasn't aware of it. So the right angle triangle exists and does not exist at the same time.

If Solipsism is true, and everything is inside my mind, then I should know everything and anything, I should know all the mathematical theories and their proofs, I should know all the questions and all their answers. The words "Ignorance" and "Discovery" would have no meaning.

Conclusion

Idealism, once properly understood, will be impossible to escape or deny. It is clear that reality is mental because simply this is all we know about it, and that's how we know we exist.

The existence of an outside world is undeniable, but the arguments presented here are to prove the intrinsic mental nature of reality as a

whole. When we discover the world, we are literally discovering the mind of GOD. He is the only Solipsist.