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Address by the Guest of Honour

The way we think: the human brain and Artificial Intelligence

by

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The problem of “How to think” has been a fascinating one in science. Actually, a model of the computer was produced by studying the procedures of data processing in the human brain. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is now one of the most popular themes in computer science. In this lecture, I introduce some interesting previous studies done in relation to the topic of how to think. The first example is the method of thinking undertaken by Igo (囲碁) players. Igo is a popular game in East Asian countries. There are many professional Igo players. They are trained on how to think strategically to win the game. The next examples are taken from psychology and physics. From these examples, I will show that there are two types of thinking: (1) instinctive thinking and (2) logical thinking. The former is carried out only in the human brain, while the latter can be simulated by a computer. The problems of how to think, how to understand, and how to express oneself are closely related. As an example of AI methods, my recent work on the study of decision-making processes in society is also explained. From the considerations based on the examples, I examine what we should pay attention to in order to think well. In conclusion, I suggest that the best method of thinking is to use the human brain in its best condition together with getting possible assistance from computer systems (AI).