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Logic and Psychology—Minding the Gap with Jean Piaget

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Abstract

Since Gottlob Frege's disambiguation of laws of thought, logicians and psychologists alike have adhered to a strict division of labour, which has created a gap between reasoning as a psychological phenomenon and logic as a formal discipline. However, logic is a benchmark of reasoning according to the standard picture of rationality, and it is hard to accept that logic has no positive special role to play in reasoning. Intuitively, logic and reasoning are connected; however, attempts at bridging the gap are often vulnerable to accusations of psychologism. With logic as the mirror of thought rather than vice versa as his bearing, Jean Piaget developed a compass to navigate the hazards of psychologism. Since metaphors are helpful but ultimately poor substitutes for explanations, I intend to elaborate on Piaget's intimations on the relationship between logic and reasoning to negotiate the pitfalls of psychologism and bridge the gap in mind.