

Glossary

A Posteriori Knowledge: From the Latin “which comes after”; describes knowledge that the mind derives by inductive processes from sensorial perceptions and from experience.

A Priori Knowledge: From the Latin “which comes before”; describes knowledge that the mind derives from rational processes of preexisting ideas or concepts, which then allow by deduction to arrive at other forms of knowledge.

Analytic statement: A statement that is true by definition. This is also known as an “uninformative tautology” because the information given by the predicate is already given by the subject.

Architectonic: Kant's term describing the logical structure of a system of philosophy as dictated by human reason.

Architecture: The form or structure of knowledge resulting from accumulation of clustering of items of knowledge.

Categories: Kant's term describing the concepts in the mind, acting as a lens through which objects of the world are examined. There are four such categories: quantity, quality, relation, modality.

Empiricism: Philosophical theory or a school of thought that claims that all true knowledge is based on experience, hence a priori existence of ideas or knowledge (prior to experience) is not legitimate or true knowledge.

Epistemology: A branch of philosophical inquiry concerning the study of the nature of knowledge and its effects on reason and ethical conduct.

Eschatology: A set of beliefs, philosophical explanations, and a school in historical analysis concerning the last chapter of human history, or the "end of the world."

Ethnology: The focus in the study of knowledge on the ethics of human behavior.

Etymology: The systematic study of the origin of language by focusing on the structure of words and their initial diffusion in languages.

Hermeneutic: The systematic study of interpretation (of texts, symbols, etc.).

Homeostasis: A state of equilibrium, relative stability, or balance within different elements of a system or group.

Inductive Argument: An argument whose premises support the conclusion so that if these premises are true, the conclusion is probably also true.

Indexical: Concept or word that is used to represent other concepts or words, in a way that indexes stand for other concepts or words in a specific context in which they are employed.

Intuition: Kant's term describing the ability of the mind to perceive relations among sensorial representations of the empirical world, when these are given in time and space.

Logical Empiricists: A contemporary philosophical school which argues that scientific verification, as required by the logical positivists, is philosophically unverifiable. Hence, this school broke away from the early positivists in the distinction between analytic and synthetic statements.

Logical Positivists: A philosophical school developed in the early twentieth century that argued that scientific verification is key to attaining true knowledge.

Model A: A model of knowledge structure and progress based on transformations of information and databases. Also described as "Primitive Model."

Model B: A model of knowledge structure and progress, proposed in this book, based on the clustering of sensorial inputs as this phenomenon occurs in the human mind. Also described as "Neuronic Model."

Ontology: The branch of philosophy devoted to the study of being, its nature, and the kinds of physical, natural, or human existence.

Paradigm: An undisputed example of an archetype, also used to express an entrenched school of thought or a set of beliefs.

Parallax: The difference in position or direction of an object when observed from two distinct vantage points. May also be used metaphorically to describe the phenomenon of two different observations of the same event.

Phenomenology: A philosophical approach or a school of thought proposed by Edmund Husserl whose focus is on describing and understanding experience as it is perceived by human consciousness, so that the consciousness can refer to the physical world outside itself.

Positivism: A school of thought in the philosophy of knowledge in which knowledge is solely derived from experience and empirical investigations.

Prosopagnosia: An inherited impairment in the recognition of faces of other people, including sometimes the face of the patient. This condition does not preclude the person from recognizing colors, clothing, or emotions. Also known as “face blindness.”

Rationalism: A school of thought in the philosophy of knowledge contending that reason and the exercise of logic are solely responsible in the attainment of genuine or true knowledge.

Reductionism: A methodology of research by which the researcher explores increasingly smaller components of the phenomenon.

Reification: The process by which we ascribe material properties to an abstract.

Semantics: The study of the meaning of words, sentences, expressions, and signs of the human language (from the Greek word *semantikos*, meaning significance).

Semiotics: A general theory of signs and symbols, in artificial and natural languages, which includes such areas as syntactics and semantics.

Syllogism: A set of statements usually containing two premises from which a third statement, a conclusion, is deduced.

Synaesthesia: Joining sensations together involuntarily that are usually experienced individually.

Synthetic Statement: A statement whose true value solely depends on experience and empirical observations.

Transcendental Knowledge: Kant's term describing knowledge about the world obtained by pure reason.