

AI v2.0 – Human v0.2

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What this presentation is not about

- This presentation will not address Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- This presentation does not address Large Language Models (LLM) technology.

What this presentation tries to address

- This presentation seeks to address the relationship between Large Language Models (LLMs) and thought, exploring the effects this technology may have on what it means to be human.

Logical Positivism

- In the early 20th century, there was a philosophical movement that aimed to ground knowledge in empirical verification.
- This approach equated 'rational thought' with conclusions akin to verifiable science, thereby creating a complete separation between 'facts' and 'values' (Standish, 2016).
- Within this epistemological framework, matters related to metaphysics became regarded as 'cognitively nonsense' (Putnam, 2012, p.39) and were consequently dismissed as pseudo-questions.
- This new epistemology focused exclusively on facts that can be harnessed and controlled and sought to eliminate anything that escaped verification including aspects such as experiential knowledge.

Verification: A statement is meaningful only if it can be empirically verified.

Rejection of Metaphysics: Claims that cannot be tested through observation are deemed nonsense.

Science: The need for a common language and methodology across disciplines.

Effects of logical positivism

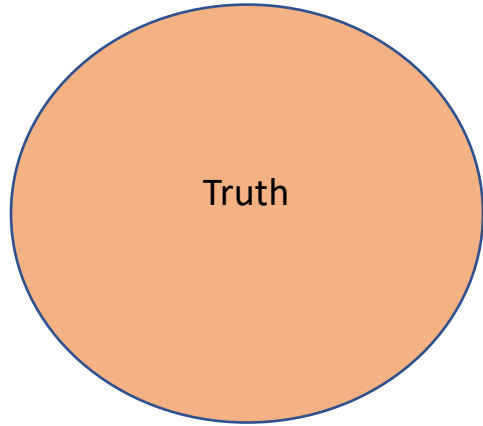
- 1) Heidegger (1962) – This scientific view of the world reduces everything to calculable, measurable entities, stripping the world of its inherent meaningfulness. It reduces complex human experiences, such as emotion, culture, and existential concerns, to mere data or problems to be solved.

McDowell - claims that the effort towards "disentanglement" from metaphysical or normative questions strips away the richness of how we engage with reality leading to a **“disenchantment of the world”** (Mc Dowell, as cited in, Standish, 2016).

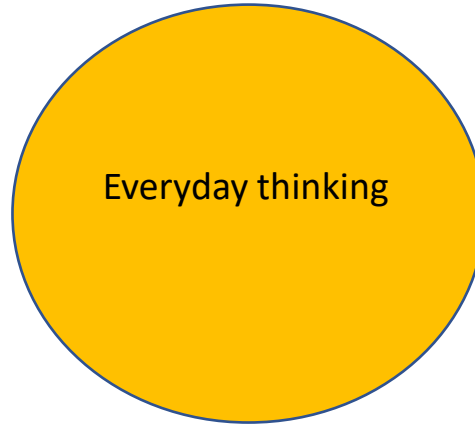
- 2) Foucault – Facts about the world are inherently shaped by dominant social, political, and historical contexts. Rather than being purely objective, this “epistemic monoculture” (Smith, 2014, p.24) is constructed by those in power, creating what Foucault (1995) calls a discourse of power. This discourse defines what is accepted as true or false, objective or subjective, while concealing the influence of power through a language of neutrality. In doing so, it reinforces dominant narratives, systematically marginalises alternative viewpoints and forms of knowledge, and establishes a **system of governmentality** (Foucault, 1995) that shapes the possibilities of who individuals can become.

... a whole field of recent objects, a whole new system of truth and a mass of roles hitherto unknown [come into existence].

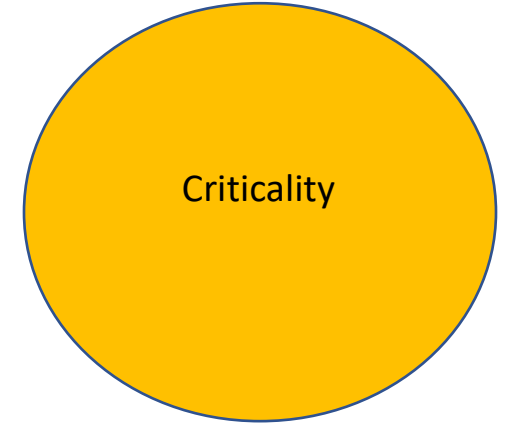
A corpus of knowledge, techniques, 'scientific' discourses is formed and becomes entangled with the practice [...] of power...



thinking 1



thinking 2



The “extra linguistic” aspects such as the sociocultural, cultural, and historical contexts that govern the social body.

Positions that rely on empirical observation and verifiable facts as the basis of knowledge, tend to overlook the broader social and historical influences that shape scientific inquiry and thereby harden these contingent elements into truths.

Thinking takes place within specific frameworks of logic.

If this logic (Truth), constructed by external forces, is accepted as self-evident and common sense, we thereby accept the impositions it imposes on how to be in the world.

Rather, it involves a way of being—an attitude—where the individual, as a subject, problematises her relationship to these truths, recognising that the obligations they impose are not necessary.

Current Political Landscape

- Today, neoliberal politics dominate the global political landscape.
- Neoliberal policies share certain structural tendencies with the epistemology of logical positivism, particularly in their reliance on quantification and measurement to promote efficiency and the self-correcting nature of markets.
- This makes them susceptible to the same criticisms levelled at logical positivism, especially the sense of disenchantment with the world that it can create.
- Both frameworks, in fact, reduce the complexity of human life to what can be measured, managed, and optimised. As a result, both contribute to a system of governmentality that turns individuals into objects of control, rather than autonomous subjects.

***“disenchantment
of the world”***

***“a system of
governmentality”***

Neoliberal politics and Large Language Models

- However, neoliberal politics besides prioritising measurable outcomes over qualitative experiences—they also introduce a novel dimension: speed.
- Neoliberalism demands not only the production of more but also the acceleration of production, emphasising a fast-paced, high-frequency output that further intensifies the pressures of efficiency and market performance.
- Large Language Models fit perfectly into this conceptual framework.
- LLM enable the rapid production of written content in incredibly short timeframes, making them the ideal technology for a context that relies on fast-paced, high-frequency output.

So there I sat and smoked my cigar until I lapsed into thought... 'You are going on', I said to myself, 'to become an old man, without being anything and without really undertaking to do anything.

*On the other hand, wherever you look about you ... you see ... **the many benefactors of the age who know how to benefit mankind by making life easier and easier**, some by railways, others by omnibuses and steamboats, others by the telegraph, others by easily apprehended compendiums and short recitals of everything worth knowing, and finally the **true benefactors of the age who make spiritual existence in virtue of thought easier and easier, yet more and more significant.***

*And what are you doing?' ... then suddenly this thought flashed through my mind: 'You must do something, but inasmuch as with your limited capacities it will be impossible to make anything easier than it has become, you must, **with the same humanitarian enthusiasm as the others, undertake to make something harder.***

*This notion pleased me immensely ... **I conceived it as my task to create difficulties everywhere.***

thank you

References

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