Basel University
Digital Humanities Laboratory
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Toward a Critical Formalism

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Outline

1. The internal critique of AI is disarmingly poor
2. The contemporary critical matrix is broken
3. Critique found refuge in literary criticism
4. Literary approaches relegate critique to a passive role
5. Formal thought can enable critique to take an active stance
6. Formalism is a realization, not a betrayal of critique
7. A critical formalism defines a new form of literacy

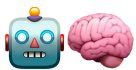
Outline

1. The internal critique of AI is disarmingly poor

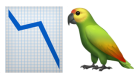
1.1 The theoretical debate has orgnanized around the AGI-Stochastic Parrots axis

1.2 Critical perspectives have not been able to change the terms of the debate

Stochastic parrots vs. AGI



LLMs have a relation to natural language, therefore they are like us



LLMs are not like us, therefore they do not and can not have any relation to natural language

The internal critique of AI is disarmingly poor

- Kirschenbaum (2023):
  Bender et al.'s (2021) paper "offers a disarmingly linear account of how language, communication, intention, and meaning work, one that would seem to sidestep decades of scholarship around these same issues in literary theory [...] the passage would be red meat for a graduate critical-theory seminar."

- Underwood (2023):
  "The beautiful irony of this situation [...] is that a generation of humanists trained on Foucault have now rallied around "On the Dangers of Stochastic Parrots" to oppose a theory of language that their own disciplines invented, just at the moment when computer scientists are reluctantly beginning to accept it."

Outline

2. The contemporary critical matrix is broken

2.1 The root of the critical program goes back to Kant

2.2 The contemporary critical matrix goes back to Nietzsche

2.3 Formal approaches to language disrupted the critical matrix

What is critique?

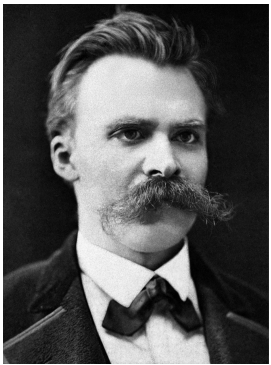
Anti-dogmaticity
Knowledge does not bear on substances,
but on phenomena

Conditionality
Knowledge is not absolute,
but relative to very precise conditions

Limitedness
The legitimacy of knowledge is not unbounded,
but circumscribed within fairly precise limits



The birth of contemporary critique



"In some remote corner of the universe, flickering in the light of the countless solar systems into which it had been poured, there was once a planet on which clever animals invented cognition. It was the most arrogant and most mendacious minute in the 'history of the world'…"

"On Truth and Lying in a Non-Moral Sense"
(Nietzsche, 1873)

The critical argumentative matrix

Knowledge depends on language

The critical argumentative matrix

Knowledge depends on language

↓

The relation between language and the world is essentially arbitrary

The critical argumentative matrix

Knowledge depends on language

↓

The relation between language and the world is essentially arbitrary

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Any regularity in language/knowledge is not natural but cultural/social/political

The critical argumentative matrix

Knowledge depends on language

↓

The relation between language and the world is essentially arbitrary

↓

Any regularity in language/knowledge is not natural but cultural/social/political

↓

We should resist existing regularities and create new ones

The critical argumentative matrix

Knowledge depends on language
(Epistemological)

↓

The relation between language and the world is essentially arbitrary

↓

Any regularity in language/knowledge is not natural but cultural/social/political
(Political)

↓

We should resist existing regularities and create new ones
(Aesthetic)

The critical argumentative matrix

Knowledge depends on language
(Epistemological)

[The relation between language and the world is essentially arbitrary?]

Any regularity in language/knowledge is not natural but cultural/social/political
(Political)

↓

We should resist existing regularities and create new ones
(Aesthetic)

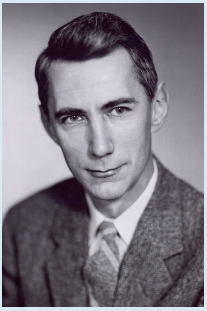
The formalization of language theory

Logical Syntax of Language (1934)



Logic
↓
Semantics

Information Theory (1948)



Mathematics
↓
Pragmatics

Generative Linguistics (1957)



Computer Science
↓
Syntax

Formal vs. Arbitrary

Formal vs. Material

Formal vs. Historical

Outline

3. Critique found refuge in literary criticism

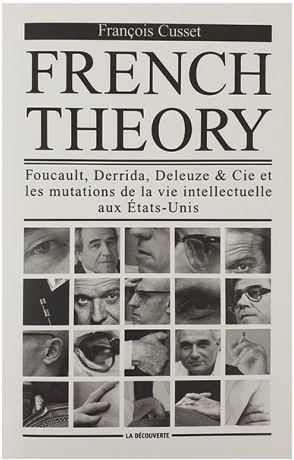
3.1 Political and aesthetic orientation of poststructuralism after 1968

3.2 Externalist philosophy and history of science through STS

3.3 American reception of French theory

3.4 Sokal affaire

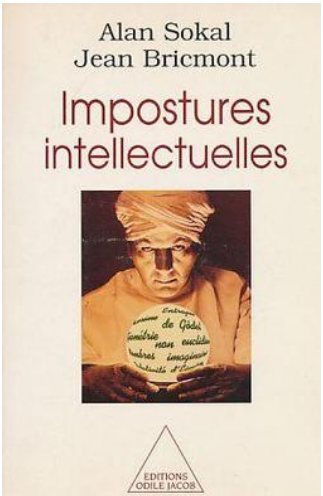
American reception of French theory



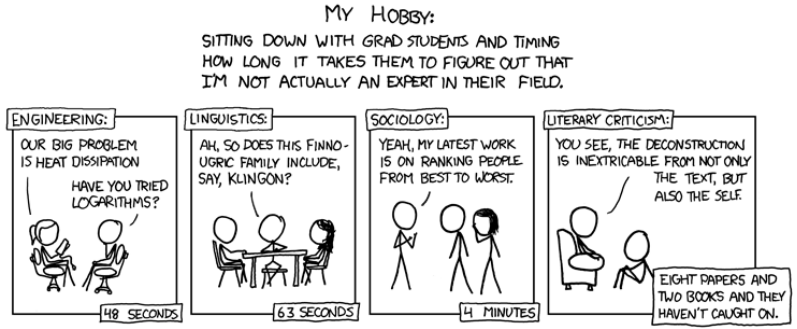
(Cusset, 2003)

- Importation from philosophy to literature departments
- “Narrative relativism” as main recontextualisation operator
- Publishing strategy articulating a unified corpus
- “Theory” becomes an intransitive activity

The Sokal Affair



(Sokal & Bricmont, 1997)



(credit: xkcd.com)

4. Literary approaches relegate critique to a passive role

4.1 Literary criticism considers the text as given

4.2 Passive attitude: Interpretation and Effects

4.3 The GenAI revolution is concerned with generativity

Textuality and passivity

Barthes (1977)

In this way is revealed the whole being of writing: a text consists of multiple writings, issuing from several cultures and entering into dialogue with each other [...]; but there is one place where this multiplicity is collected, united, and this place is not the author, [...] but the reader: the reader is the very space in which are inscribed, without any being lost, all the citations a writing consists of; the unity of a text is not in its origin, it is in its destination [...]

Derrida (1976)

That the "imprint" is irreducible means also that speech is originarily passive, but in a sense of passivity that all intramundane metaphors would only betray. This passivity is also the relationship to a past, to an always-already-there that no reactivation of the origin could fully master and awaken to presence.

Foucault (1981)

I should have preferred to become aware that a nameless voice was already speaking long before me, so that I should only have needed to join in, to continue the sentence it had started and lodge myself, without really being noticed, in its interstices, if it had signalled to me by pausing, for an instant, in suspense. Thus there would be no beginning, and instead of being the one from whom discourse proceeded, I should be at the mercy of its chance unfolding, a slender gap, the point of its possible disappearance.

Passive attitude

Effects	Prompting	Interpreting
Social	Co-writing	Latent spaces
Political	Vibe coding	Mechanistic interpretability
Environmental	AI slop	Computational hermeneutics
Economical	...	...
Psychological		
...		

Generative revolutions



Generativist Program

- Description of performance is not enough
- Account of generative competence is needed
- Natural language's generative power is beyond probabilistic data processing
- Generative mechanisms must be innate
- Generative devices have cognitive import

Generative AI

- Descriptive statistics of text is not enough
- Inferential capacities are needed
- Natural language's generation is a form of probabilistic inference
- Generative mechanisms can be learned
- Generative devices are intelligent

Outline

5. Formal thought can enable critique to take an active stance

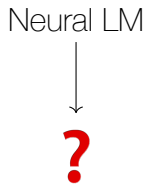
5.1 Formalism can ground an epistemological critique

5.1.1 From a formal perspective, LLMs are just computable functions
5.1.2 Empirical methods are ineffective to determine what a computable function computes
5.1.3 The right object of study is not the model, but the formal strucures implicit in the data

5.2 Formalism can inform a theoretical critique

5.2.1 Neural embedding models hide rich algebraic structures
5.2.2 The implicit structure can be radically generalized

LLMs as computable functions



LLMs as computable functions

Neural LM



LLMs as computable functions

Neural LM



LLMs as computable functions

Neural LM



LLMs as computable functions

Neural LM



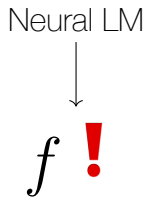
LLMs as computable functions

Neural LM



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LLMs as computable functions



LLMs as computable functions

Neural LM

Function

$$f : \mathbb{R}^n \xrightarrow{f_1} \mathbb{R}^{n_1} \xrightarrow{f_2} \cdots \xrightarrow{f_K} \mathbb{R}^{n_K} \xrightarrow{g} \mathbb{R}^m$$

LLMs as computable functions

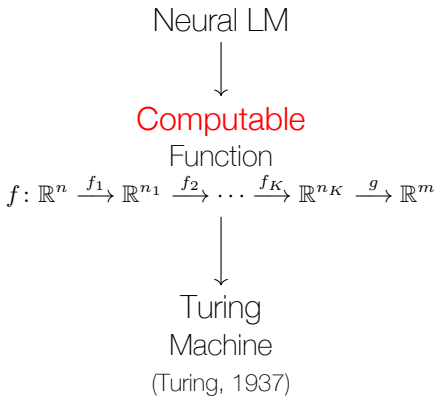
Neural LM

Computable

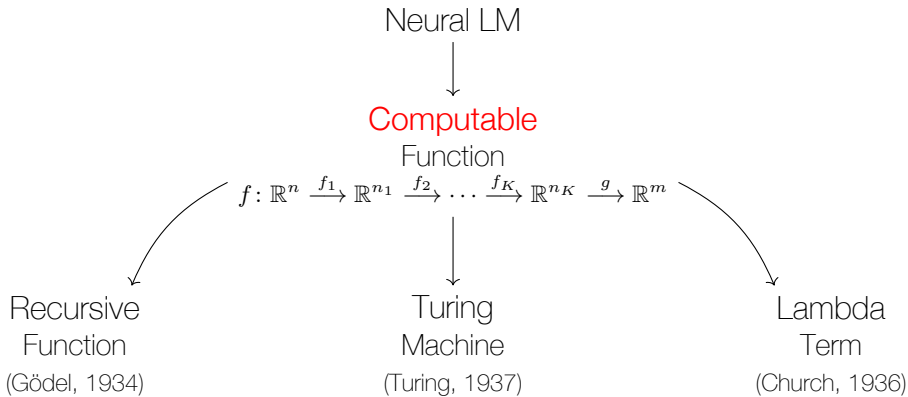
Function

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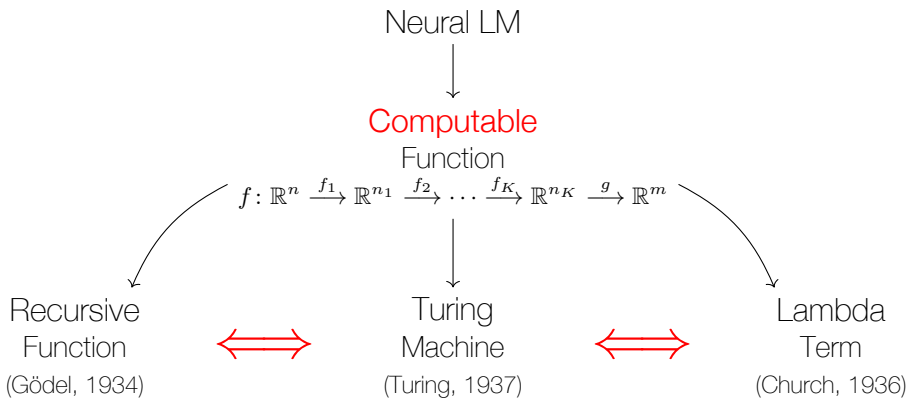
LLMs as computable functions



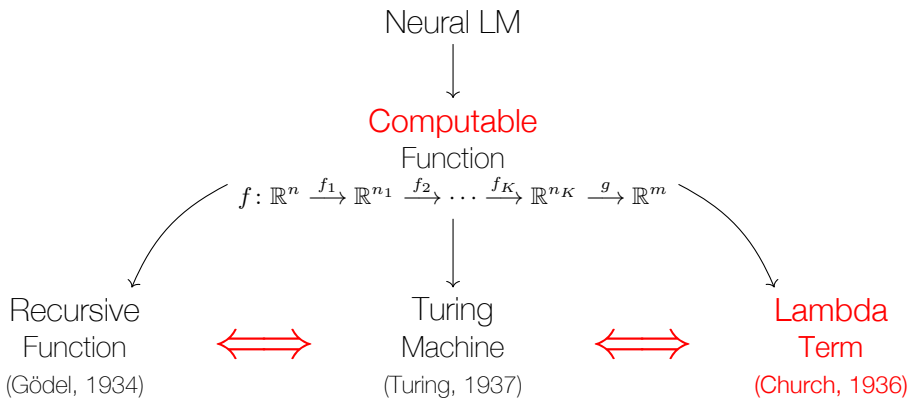
LLMs as computable functions



LLMs as computable functions



LLMs as computable functions



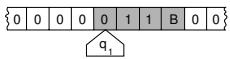
LLMs as computable functions

Neural LM

Computable Function

$f : \mathbb{R}^n \xrightarrow{f_1} \mathbb{R}^{n_1} \xrightarrow{f_2} \cdots \xrightarrow{f_K} \mathbb{R}^{n_K} \xrightarrow{g} \mathbb{R}^m$

Recursive Function (Gödel, 1934) ⟺ Turing Machine (Turing, 1937) ⟺ Lambda Term (Church, 1936)



credit: Nynexman4464

$\lambda m.\lambda n.\lambda f.\lambda x.mf(nfx)$

$P := \lambda m.\lambda n.\lambda f.\lambda x.mf(nfx)$

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0: $\lambda f.\lambda x.x$

1: $\lambda f.\lambda x.fx$

2: $\lambda f.\lambda x.f(fx)$

3: $\lambda f.\lambda x.f(f(fx))$

4: $\lambda f.\lambda x.f(f(f(fx)))$

5: $\lambda f.\lambda x.f(f(f(f(fx))))$

$\ldots$

n: $\lambda f.\lambda x.\underbrace{f(\ldots(f}_{n \text{ times}}x)\ldots)$

Empirical Evaluation

$P := \lambda m.\lambda n.\lambda f.\lambda x.mf(nfx)$

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$\lambda m.\lambda n.\lambda f.\lambda x.mf(nfx)(\lambda f.\lambda x.f(fx))(\lambda f.\lambda x.f(f(fx)))$

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$\lambda m.\lambda n.\lambda f.\lambda x.mf(nfx)(\lambda f.\lambda x.f(fx))(\lambda f.\lambda x.f(f(fx)))$

$\lambda f.\lambda x.f(f(f(f(fx))))$

Empirical Evaluation

$P := \lambda m.\lambda n.\lambda f.\lambda x.mf(nfx)$
$P' := \lambda r.\lambda s.\lambda f.\lambda x.f(f(f(f(fx))))$

0: $\lambda f.\lambda x.x$
1: $\lambda f.\lambda x.fx$
2: $\lambda f.\lambda x.f(fx)$
3: $\lambda f.\lambda x.f(f(fx))$
4: $\lambda f.\lambda x.f(f(f(fx)))$
5: $\lambda f.\lambda x.f(f(f(f(fx))))$
...
n: $\lambda f.\lambda x.\underbrace{f(\ldots(f}_{n \text{ times}}x)\ldots)$

$\lambda r.\lambda s.\lambda f.\lambda x.f(f(f(f(fx))))(\lambda f.\lambda x.f(fx))(\lambda f.\lambda x.f(f(fx)))$

$\lambda f.\lambda x.f(f(f(f(fx))))$

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...

n: $\lambda f.\lambda x.\underbrace{f(\ldots(f}_{n \text{ times}}\, x)\ldots)$

$\lambda m.\lambda n.\lambda f.\lambda x.mf(nfx)(\lambda f.\lambda x.f(fx))(\lambda f.\lambda x.f(f(fx)))$

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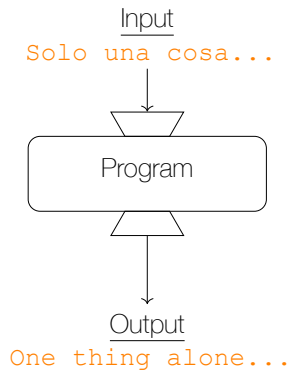
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$$\lambda m.\lambda n.\lambda f.\lambda x.mf(nfx)(\lambda f.\lambda x.f(fx))(\lambda f.\lambda x.f(f(fx)))$$
$$\lambda m.\lambda n.\lambda f.\lambda x.mf(nfx)(\lambda g.\lambda y.g(gy))(\lambda h.\lambda z.h(h(hz)))$$
$$\lambda n.\lambda f.\lambda x.(\lambda g.\lambda y.g(gy))f(nfx)(\lambda h.\lambda z.h(h(hz)))$$
$$\lambda n.\lambda f.\lambda x.(\lambda g.\lambda y.g(gy))f(nfx)(\lambda h.\lambda z.h(h(hz)))$$
$$\lambda f.\lambda x.(\lambda g.\lambda y.g(gy))f((\lambda h.\lambda z.h(h(hz)))fx)$$
$$\lambda f.\lambda x.(\lambda y.f(fy))((\lambda h.\lambda z.h(h(hz)))fx)$$
$$\lambda f.\lambda x.(\lambda y.f(fy))((\lambda z.f(f(fz)))x)$$
$$\lambda f.\lambda x.(\lambda y.f(fy))(f(f(fx)))$$
$$\lambda f.\lambda x.f(f(f(f(fx))))$$

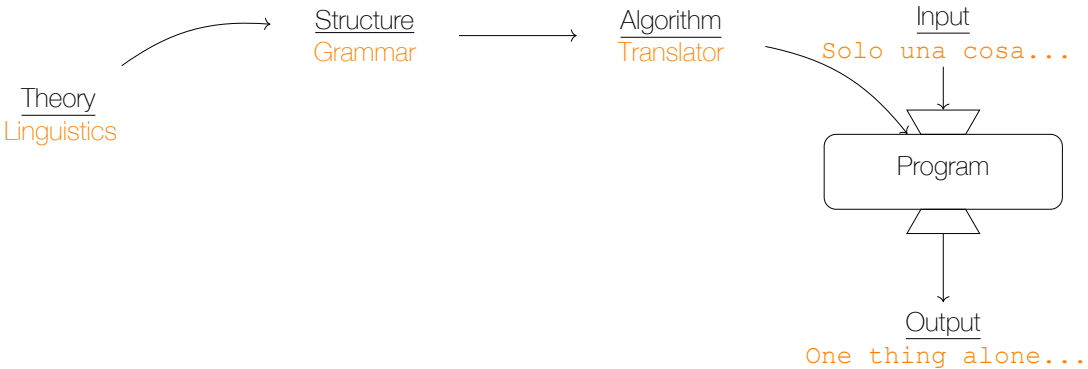
Empirical Interpretability



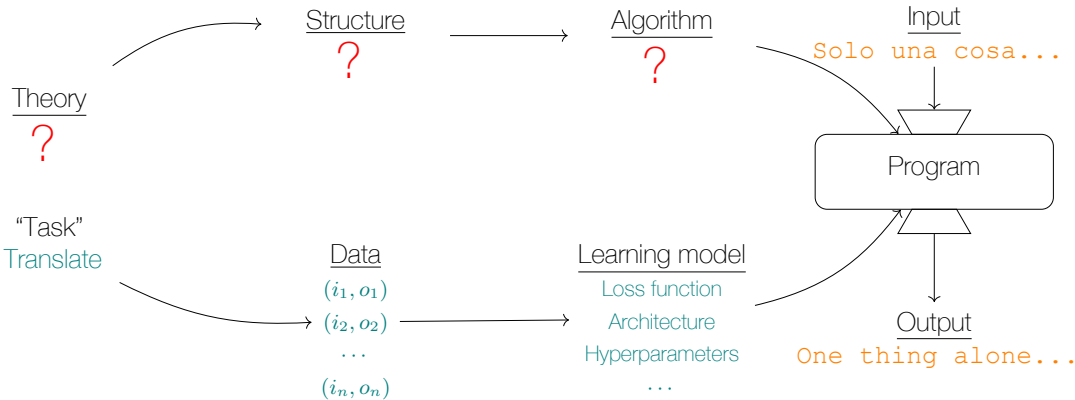
The implicit structure of data



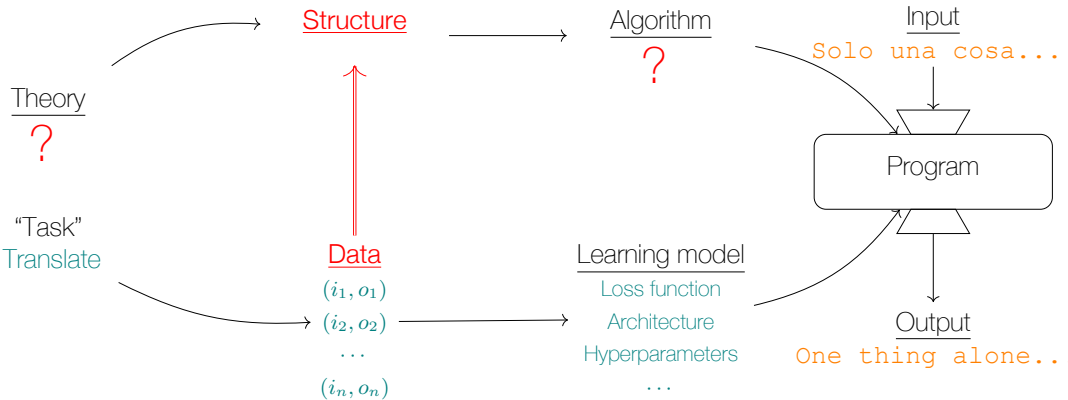
The implicit structure of data



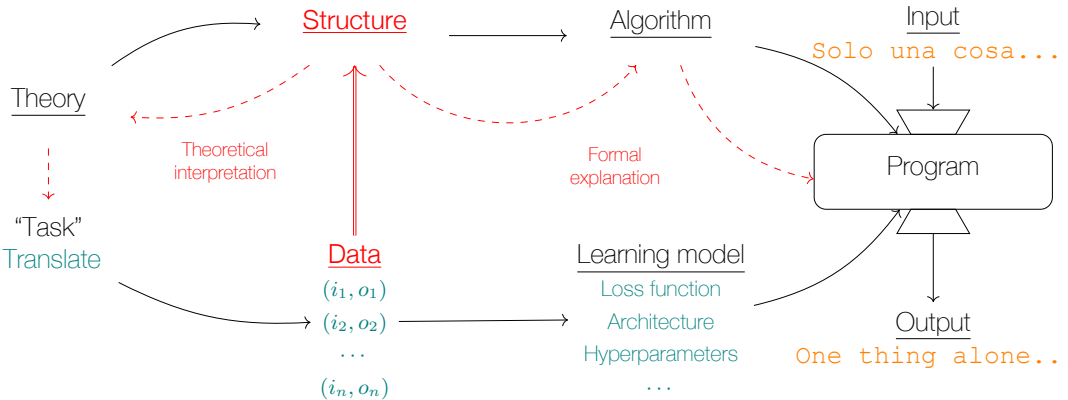
The implicit structure of data



The implicit structure of data



The implicit structure of data



The structure of embeddings

Structure

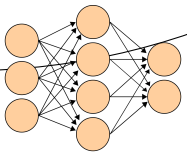
?

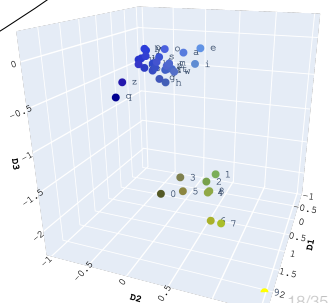
{-, /, 0, 1, 2, . . . , 8, 9, =,
a, b, c, . . . , w, x, y, z, é}

Embedding

Data







word2vec explained (Levy and Goldberg, 2014)

$$\ell = \sum_{w \in V_w} \sum_{c \in V_c} \#(w,c)(\log \sigma(\vec{w} \cdot \vec{c}) + k \cdot \mathbb{E}_{c_N \sim P_D}[\log \sigma(-\vec{w} \cdot \vec{c}_N)])$$

$$\frac{\partial \ell}{\partial(\vec{w} \cdot \vec{c})} = 0 \quad \text{when} \quad \begin{aligned} \vec{w} \cdot \vec{c} &= \log\left(\frac{\#(w,c) \cdot |D|}{\#(w) \cdot \#(c)}\right) - \log k \\ &= PMI(w,c) - \log k \end{aligned}$$

Additional constraint: $\vec{w}$ and $\vec{c}$ should be low dimensional

The Singular Value Decomposition (SVD) provides an exact solution to this optimization problem.

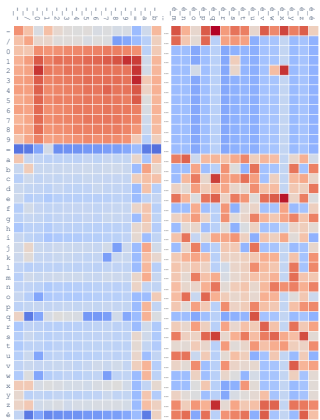
Example: Characters in Wikipedia

$$W = \{\texttt{-}, \texttt{/}, \texttt{0}, \texttt{1}, \texttt{2}, \texttt{3}, \texttt{4}, \texttt{5}, \texttt{6}, \texttt{7}, \texttt{8}, \texttt{9}, \texttt{=}, \texttt{a}, \texttt{b}, \texttt{c}, \ldots, \texttt{w}, \texttt{x}, \texttt{y}, \texttt{z}, \texttt{é}\}$$

$$C = X \times X = \{\texttt{(-,-)}, \texttt{(-,/)}, \texttt{(-,0)}, \ldots, \texttt{(é,z)}, \texttt{(é,é)}\}$$

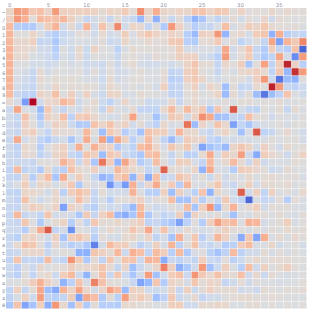
$$M_{wc} = \text{pmi}(w, c)$$

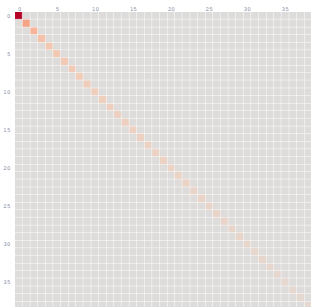
$$= \log \frac{p(w, c)}{p(w)p(c)}$$

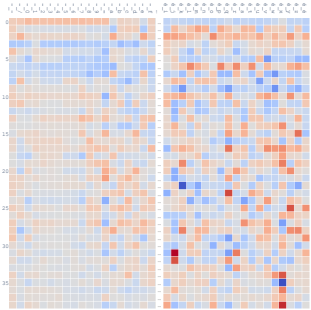


SVD of a PMI matrix

U Σ V^T

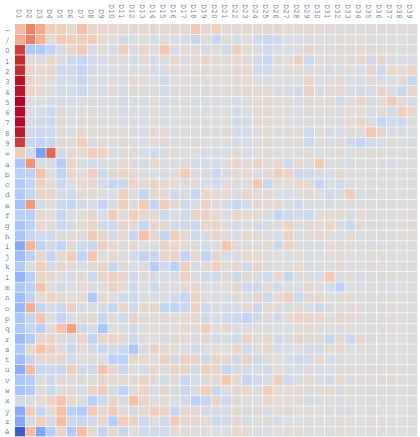






Truncate

$$U \times \Sigma$$

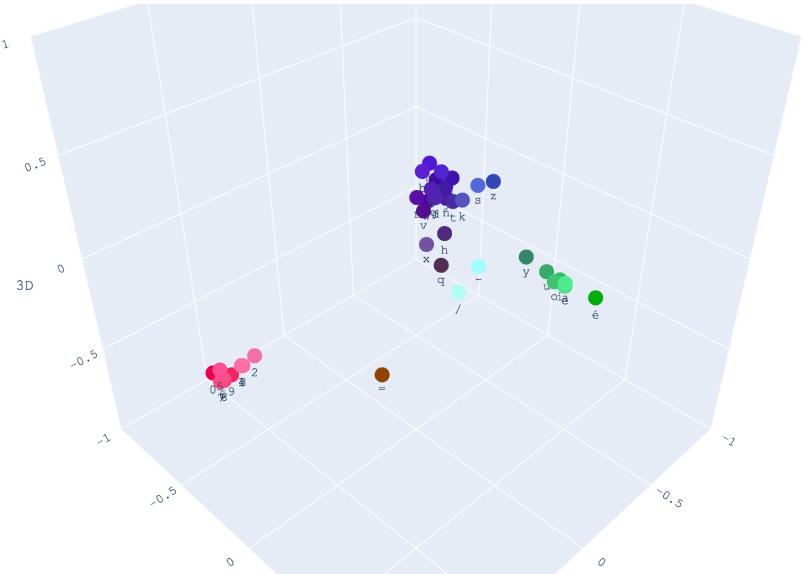


$$\hat{U} \times \hat{\Sigma}$$



$$\hat{U} \times \hat{\Sigma}$$





The structure of embeddings

Structure

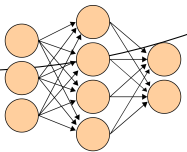
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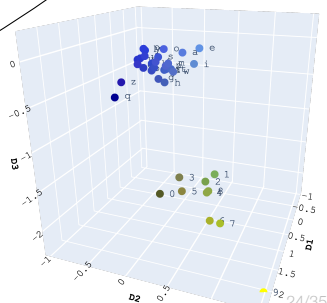
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a, b, c, . . . , w, x, y, z, é}

Embedding

Data







The structure of embeddings

Structure

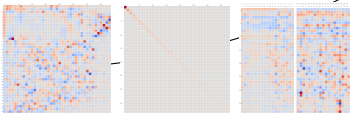


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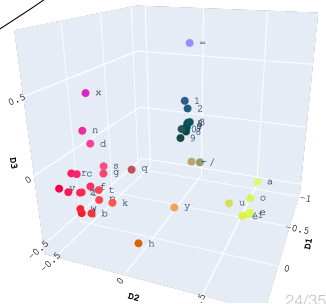
Embedding

Data

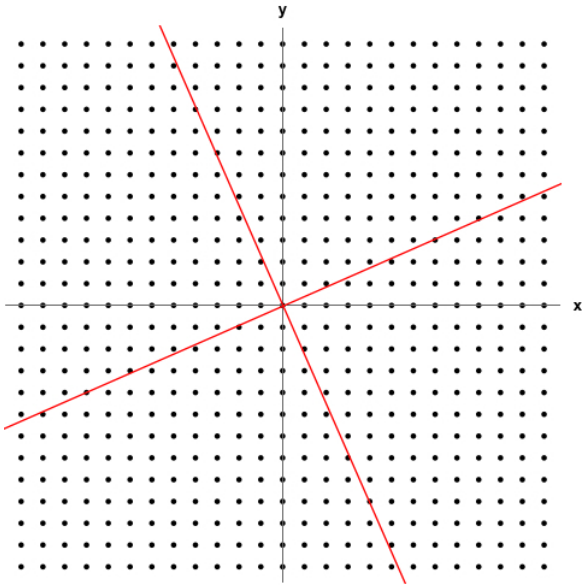




SVD



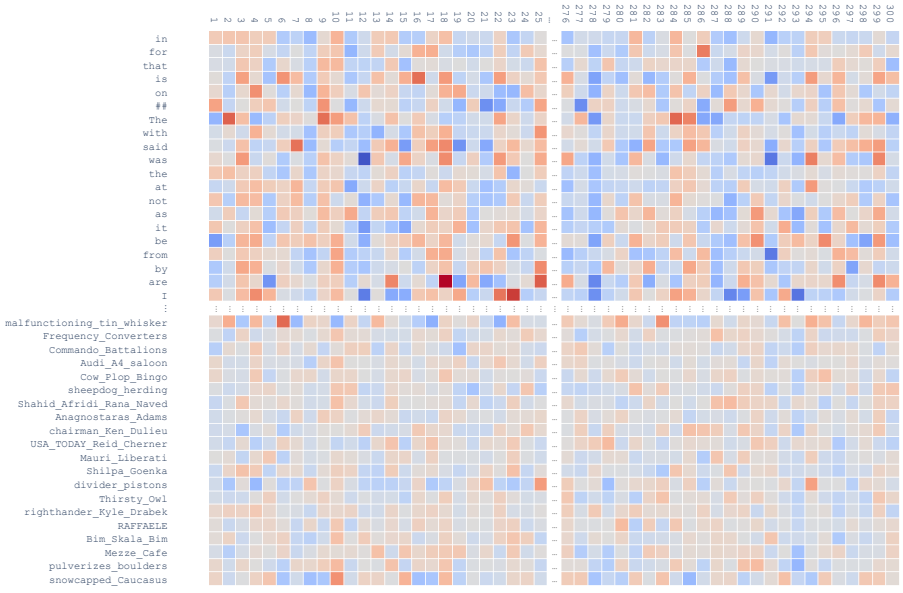
Eigenvectors (linear fixed points)



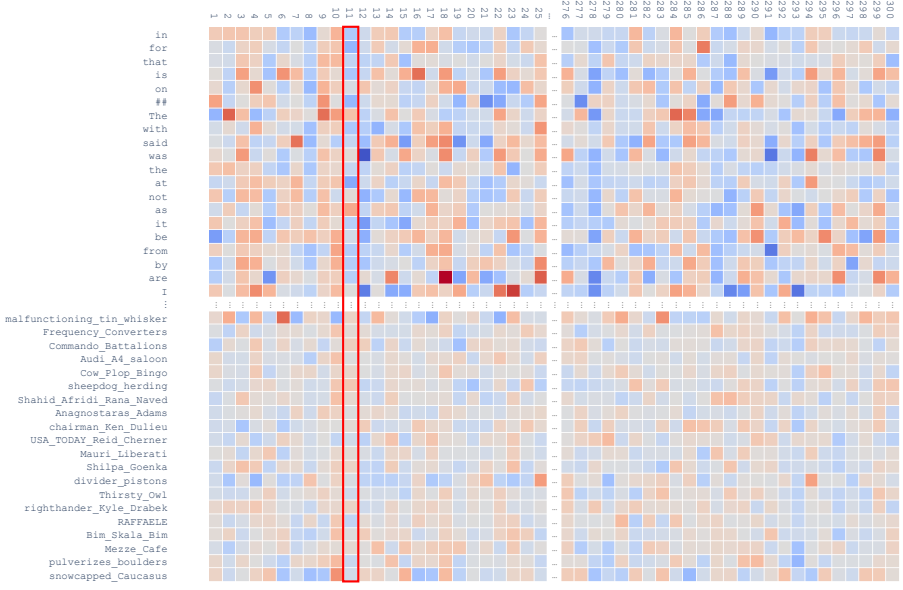
Embedding dimensions as fixed points



Embedding dimensions as fixed points



Embedding dimensions as fixed points



The structure of embeddings

Structure

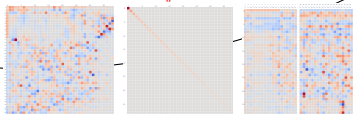


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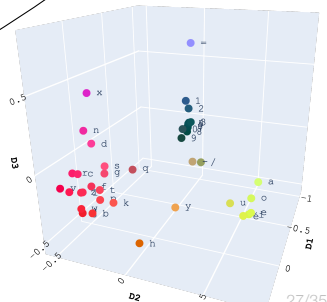
Embedding

Données





SVD



The structure of embeddings

Structure

?

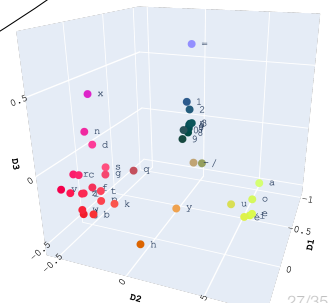
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Embedding

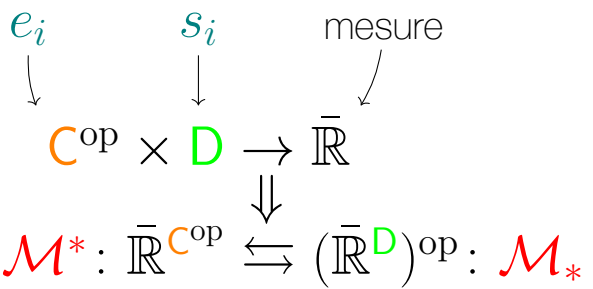
Données



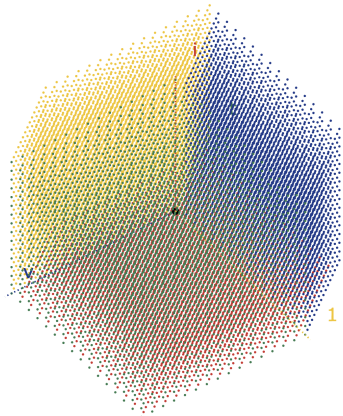
$$C^{op} \times D \to \bar{\mathbb{R}}$$



Profunctor and nucleus structures

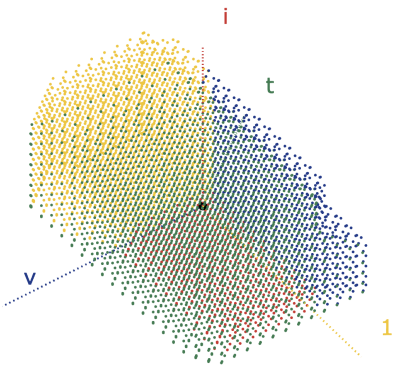


Profunctor and nucleus structures

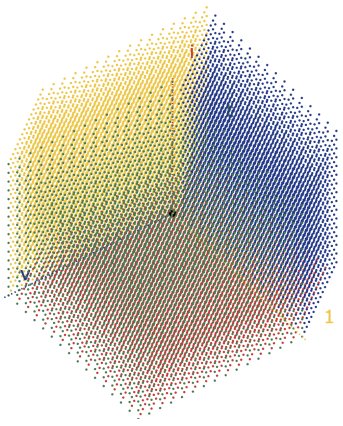


$$\begin{array}{ccc} \mathsf{C}^{\mathrm{op}} \times \mathsf{D} & \longrightarrow & \bar{\mathbb{R}} \\ & \Downarrow & \\ \mathcal{M}^* \colon \bar{\mathbb{R}}^{\mathsf{C}^{\mathrm{op}}} & \leftrightarrows & \left(\bar{\mathbb{R}}^{\mathsf{D}}\right)^{\mathrm{op}} \colon \mathcal{M}_* \end{array}$$

Profunctor and nucleus structures



$\mathcal{M}_*\mathcal{M}^*$

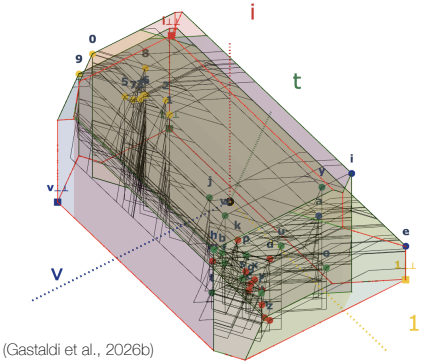


$$\mathbf{C}^{\mathrm{op}} \times \mathbf{D} \to \bar{\mathbb{R}}$$

$$\Downarrow$$

$$\mathcal{M}^* \colon \bar{\mathbb{R}}^{\mathbf{C}^{\mathrm{op}}} \leftrightarrows \left(\bar{\mathbb{R}}^{\mathbf{D}}\right)^{\mathrm{op}} \colon \mathcal{M}_*$$

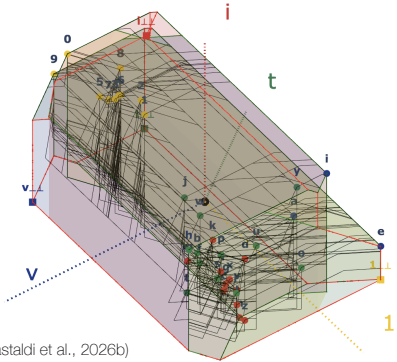
Profunctor and nucleus structures



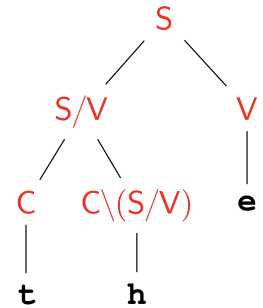
(Gastaldi et al., 2026b)

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \mathsf{C}^{\mathrm{op}} \times \mathsf{D} & \longrightarrow & \bar{\mathbb{R}} \\ & \Downarrow & \\ \mathcal{M}^* : \bar{\mathbb{R}}^{\mathsf{C}^{\mathrm{op}}} & \leftrightarrows & \left(\bar{\mathbb{R}}^{\mathsf{D}}\right)^{\mathrm{op}} : \mathcal{M}_* \end{array}$$

Profunctor and nucleus structures



(Gastaldi et al., 2026b)



(Gastaldi & Pellissier, 2021)
(Gastaldi et al., 2026a)

$$\mathbf{C}^{\mathrm{op}} \times \mathbf{D} \longrightarrow \bar{\mathbb{R}}$$

$$\mathcal{M}^* : \bar{\mathbb{R}}^{\mathbf{C}^{\mathrm{op}}} \leftrightarrows \left(\bar{\mathbb{R}}^{\mathbf{D}}\right)^{\mathrm{op}} : \mathcal{M}_*$$

Critical effects of a formal perspective

Anti-dogmaticity

AI performance does not rely on any substantive property of the models,
but only on the formal objects that models implicitly approximate

Conditionality

Those formal objects establish the strict conditions
under which models can operate

Limitedness

A formal analysis of current implicit conditions can show in which way they are limited,
and how they can be changed

Outline

6. Formalism is a realization, not a betrayal of critique

6.1 Lévi-Strauss and the mathematics of man

6.2 Foucault, Deleuze, Derrida and the power of the formal

6.3 Structuralism is a formalism

6.4 Russian formalism as a generative device

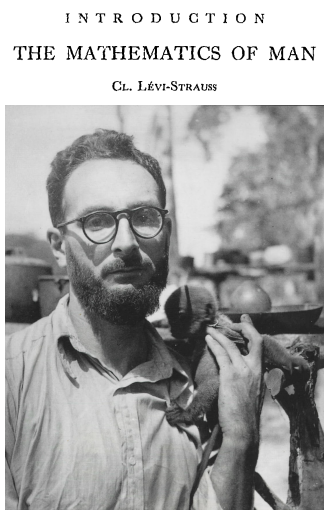
6.5 Bourdieu in embedding space

6.6 Structuralist mathematics

Lévi-Strauss and the mathematics of man

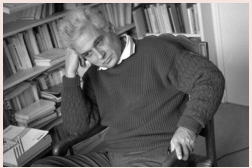
In the past, the great difficulty has arisen from the qualitative nature of our studies. If they were to be treated quantitatively, it was either necessary to do a certain amount o f juggling with them or to simplify to an excessive degree. Today, however, there are many branches of mathematics — set theory, group theory, topology, etc. — which are concerned with establishing exact relationships between classes of individuals distinguished from one another by discontinuous values, and this very discontinuity is one of the essential characteristics of qualitative sets in relation to one another and was the feature, in which their alleged 'incommensurability', 'inexpressibility', etc., consisted.

Lévi-Strauss (1954)



The power of the formal

Derrida (1976)



"Within cultures practicing so-called phonetic writing, mathematics is not just an enclave. [...] This enclave is also the place where the practice of scientific language challenges intrinsically and with increasing profundity the ideal of phonetic writing and all its implicit metaphysics (metaphysics *itself*)"

Deleuze (1994)



"Differential calculus is not the unimaginative calculus of the utilitarian, the crude arithmetic calculus which subordinates thought to other things or to other ends, but the algebra of pure thought, the superior irony of problems themselves — the only calculus 'beyond good and evil' ".

Foucault (2002)



"There is perhaps only one science for which one can neither distinguish these different thresholds, nor describe a similar set of shifts: mathematics [...] Hence the fact that their establishment is both so enigmatic [...] and so valid [...]"

Structuralism is a formalism

I am not sure how interesting it would be to attempt a redefinition of what was known, at the time, as structuralism. It would be interesting,though, to study formal thought and the different kinds of formalism that ran through Western culture during the 20th century. When we consider the extraordinary destiny of formalism in painting or formal research in music, or the importance of formalism in the analysis of folklore and legend, in architecture, or its application to theoretical thought, it is clear that formalism in general has probably been one of the strongest and at the same time one of the most varied currents in 20th century Europe. And it is worth pointing out that formalism has very often been associated with political situations and even political movements. It would certainly be worth examining more closely the relation of Russian formalism to the Russian Revolution. [...] That is how I would situate the structuralist phenomenon: by relocating it within the broad current of formal thought.

(Foucault, in Raulet, 1983)

Russian formalism as a generative device

"The purpose of art, then, is to lead us to a knowledge of a thing through the organ of sight instead of recognition. By "enstranging" objects and complicating form, the device of art makes perception long and "laborious." The perceptual process in art has a purpose all its own and ought to be extended to the fullest. *Art is a means of experiencing the process of creativity. The artifact itself is quite unimportant.*"

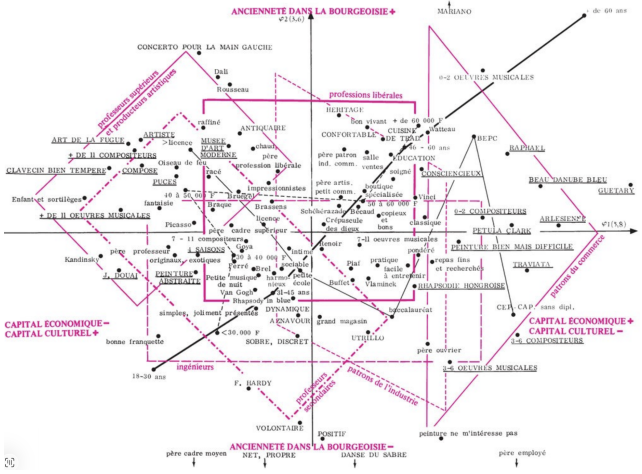
Shklovsky (1990)



(khlevnikov1921zangezi)

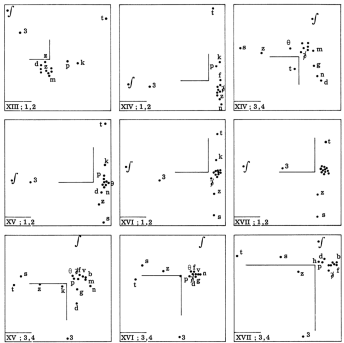
Bourdieu in embedding space

"If it is true [...] that, first, the dominant class constitutes a relatively autonomous space whose structure is defined by the distribution of economic and cultural capital among its members, [...] then these structures should be found in the space of life-styles [...]. To endeavour to establish this, the whole set of survey data was subjected to correspondence analysis."



(Bourdieu, 1979)

Structuralist mathematics



v. p.	1°	2°	3°	4°	5°
XII	,99	,98	,97	,92	,86
XV	,71	,41	,37	,27	,19

v. p.	1°	2°	3°	4°	5°
XIII	,94	,92	,86	,83	,75
XVI	,55	,29	,25	,19	,04

v. p.	1°	2°	3°	4°	5°
XIV	,87	,62	,49	,47	,45
XVII	,44	,23	,17	,09	,02

(Benzécri, 1976)

1) une voyelle neutre (amorphe), caractérisée par l'absence de chacune des propriétés β, φ, χ, λ : [ə] ;

2) quatre types élémentaires de voyelles, chacun caractérisé par une seule propriété :

$$[\varepsilon] = \varphi\,,\ [\mathrm{a}] = \beta\,,\ [\mathrm{y}] = \chi\,,\ [\mathrm{\alpha}] = \lambda$$

3) six voyelles distinctes, chacune caractérisée par deux propriétés :

$$[\mathrm{\theta}] = \varphi\beta\,,\ [i] = \chi\varphi\,,\ [\mathrm{u}] = \chi\beta\,,\ [\mathrm{e}] = \lambda\varphi\,,\ [\mathrm{o}] = \lambda\beta\,,\ [\mathrm{\tilde{\varepsilon}}] = \chi\lambda\,;$$

4) quatre voyelles combinées, chacune caractérisée par trois propriétés :

$$[\mathrm{\varepsilon}] = \chi\lambda\varphi\,,\ [\mathrm{o}] = \chi\lambda\beta\,,\ [\mathrm{\tilde{a}}] = \varphi\beta\chi\,,\ [\mathrm{\tilde{o}}] = \varphi\beta\lambda\,;$$

5) une voyelle polymorphe, caractérisée par les quatre propriétés considérées : la voyelle russe [ы] = $\varphi\beta\chi\lambda$.

On obtient alors le diagramme de la figure 2.

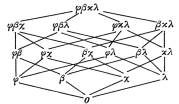
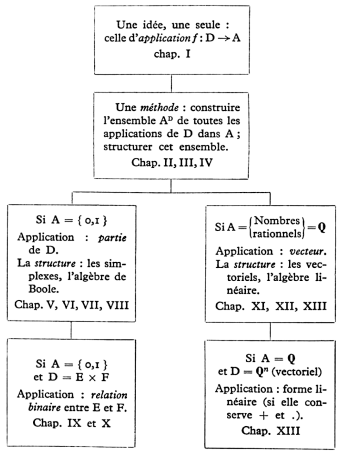


FIG. 2.

(Marcus, 1967)

Organigramme



(Barbut, 1967)

Outline

7. A critical formalism defines a new form of literacy

No intenso agora



No intenso agora



No intenso agora



No intenso agora



(Moreira Salles, 2017)

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Basel University
Digital Humanities Laboratory
September 30, 2026 – Basel, Switzerland

Toward a Critical Formalism

Gianni Gastaldi

ETH zürich SORBONNE UNIVERSITÉ

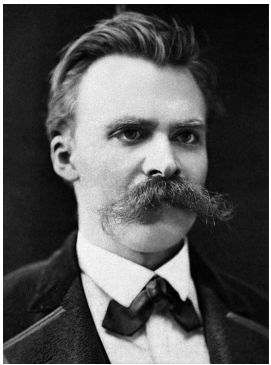
www.giannigastaldi.com

John Terilla

CUNY GRADUATE CENTER

jterilla.github.io

The birth of contemporary critique

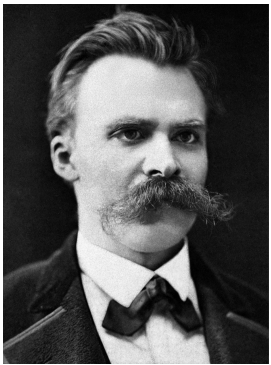


"In some remote corner of the universe, flickering in the light of the countless solar systems into which it had been poured, there was once a planet on which clever animals invented cognition. It was the most arrogant and most mendacious minute in the 'history of the world'…"

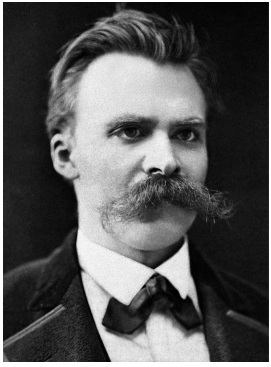
"On Truth and Lying in a Non-Moral Sense"
(Nietzsche, 1873)

The birth of contemporary critique

- “The ‘thing-in-itself’ ([…] truth without consequences) is impossible for even the creator of language to grasp”

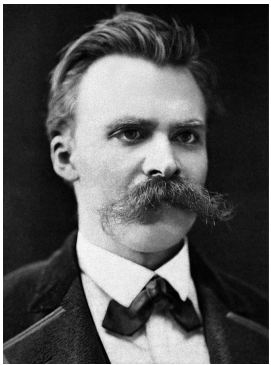


The birth of contemporary critique



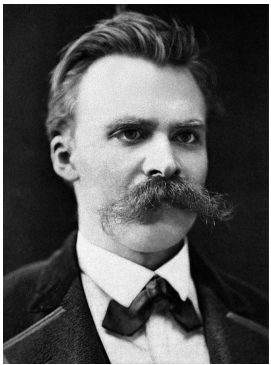
- “The ‘thing-in-itself’ ([…] truth without consequences) is impossible for even the creator of language to grasp”
- “The stimulation of a nerve is first translated into an image: first metaphor!”

The birth of contemporary critique



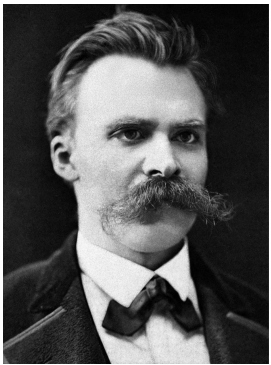
- “The ‘thing-in-itself’ ([…] truth without consequences) is impossible for even the creator of language to grasp”
- “The stimulation of a nerve is first translated into an image: first metaphor!”
- “The image is then imitated by a sound: second metaphor!”

The birth of contemporary critique



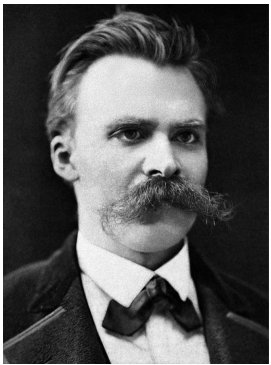
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The birth of contemporary critique



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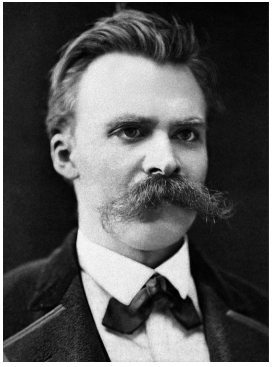
The birth of contemporary critique



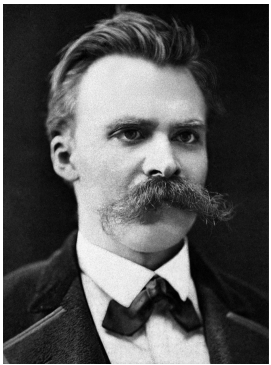
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The birth of contemporary critique

- “What, then, is truth? [...] a sum of human relations...”

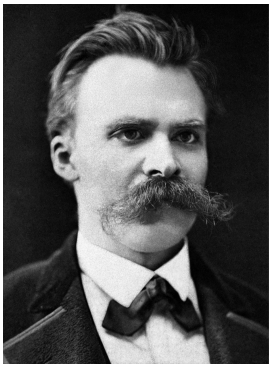


The birth of contemporary critique



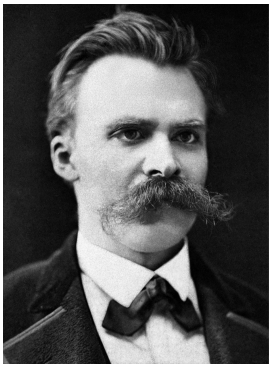
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The birth of contemporary critique



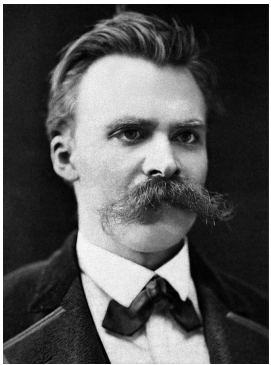
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The birth of contemporary critique



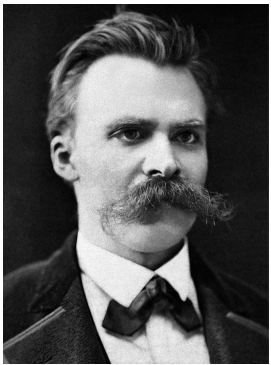
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The birth of contemporary critique



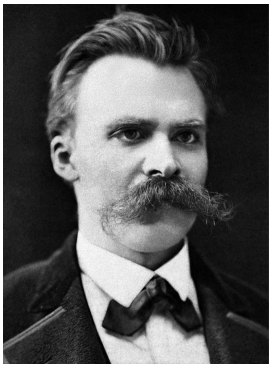
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The birth of contemporary critique



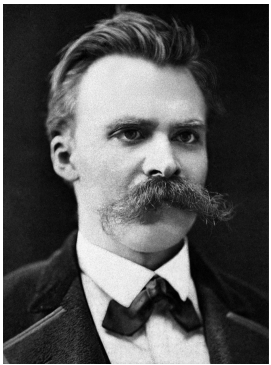
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- “...human beings forget that this is how things are; thus they lie unconsciously...”
- “...precisely *because of this unconsciousness*, precisely because of this forgetting, they arrive at the feeling of truth.”

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- “between [...] subject and object [...] there is [...] at most an *aesthetic* way of relating”

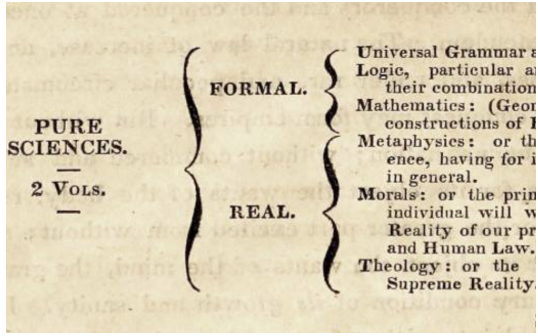
The birth of contemporary critique



- “between [...] subject and object [...] there is [...] at most an *aesthetic* way of relating”
- “Where the man of intuition [...] wields his weapons more mightily and victoriously than his contrary, a culture can take shape [...] and the rule of art over life can become established”

Formal objects of formal sciences

- “Formal” is a mode of existence where existence is guaranteed by the satisfaction of systems of conditions
- Formal objects are the object of formal sciences: Mathematics, Logic, Computer Science, Grammar?
- Formal sciences have their origin in the 19th century
- Formal vs. Substantial, Natural, Metaphysical


PURE SCIENCES.
—
2 VOLS.
—
FORMAL.
REAL.
Universal Grammar a
Logic, particular a
their combination
Mathematics: (Geo
constructions of
Metaphysics: or th
ence, having for i
in general.
Morals: or the prin
individual will w
Reality of our pr
and Human Law.
Theology: or the
Supreme Reality

(Coleridge, 1818)