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FREGE AND THE KNOWING AGENT

Frege’s logicist project demands that we can know the basic laws of arithmetic by conceptual means alone. We have to know these laws purely on the basis of our understanding the content; they have to be self-evident. As Wittgenstein pointed out in the Tractatus, self-evidence gives us not guarantee of the truth of a proposition. Is Frege’s notion of self-evidence infected by psychologism, as is often thought?

Whereas philosophers in the analytic tradition generally understand knowledge from a third-person point of view, I will argue that epistemic notions in Frege, such as justification and self-evidence, are rather to be understood from a first-person point of view. Knowing the laws of logic is understanding why they are true, and such a form of knowledge is essentially first person. I will argue that this reading of Frege’s epistemological notions does not imply a form of psychologism.