

Ontology of linguistics: a problem of unity of language as object of a science.

Ontology is the philosophical study of the nature of being, becoming, existence, or reality, as well as the basic categories of being and their relations. Traditionally listed as a part of the major branch of philosophy known as metaphysics, ontology deals with questions concerning what entities exist or can be said to exist, and how such entities can be grouped, related within a hierarchy, and subdivided according to similarities and differences.

Paradigm Shifts

A paradigm sets the standard for the way in which scientists 'do' science. In other words, it sets up problems for scientists to solve in order to further expand the reach of the paradigm. Kuhn called this type of science normal science or 'puzzle solving'. Rarely, a scientist may stumble upon a fact that cannot be solved using the existing paradigm. These types of observations are called anomalies and tend to cause a crisis in the paradigm. Eventually, either the paradigm adjusts to incorporate this new knowledge, or else it must be discarded entirely and a new paradigm created. It is this process that is called a paradigm shift. Examples of paradigm shifts are hard to point out⁵ but perhaps the best-known example is the Copernican Revolution. In that case, the Aristotelean paradigm of the sun rotating around the earth was discarded and replaced by a new paradigm in which the earth rotated around the sun⁶. The paradigm was shifted and thus allowed all kinds of new work to be done in the field of astronomy.

Paradigm Theory Today

All the previous information was a summary of Kuhn's theory. The problem is that under much review by other historians of science, it turns out that his theories don't hold up that well. It is rarely that clear cut and the understanding of paradigm is so vague that they paradigms are practically impossible to identify. Nevertheless, while Kuhn was being soundly rejected by scientists and historians of science, he was quickly accepted by thinkers in other fields, particularly in business. Everyone now views business problems as the result of an old, outdated paradigm, and the solution as a new paradigm which will better allow understanding of the marketplace. Thus, what was once obscure linguistic jargon is now obtuse business jargon due to a long a convoluted route through history and science.