



ОСВІТНІ, ПЕДАГОГІЧНІ НАУКИ

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**MULTI-PARADIGM COGNITION: PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS**

*Introduction.* This article delves into specific features of intellection and develops a framework of multi-paradigm cognition targeted at the acquisition, accumulation, and growth of knowledge. Specifically, it focuses on levels and paths of cognition, and examines mental operations through which complex cognitive activity may be carried out. Besides, this paper addresses cognitive performance of subjects, which is studied in terms of their profiles, conceptual systems, worldviews, mental operations, epistemic styles, types of thinking, etc. The article also prioritizes the significance of epistemological / gnoseological pluralism and a combination of rational, sensory and experimental constituents in a cognitive process. Additionally, this paper promotes the idea of interaction between manifold paradigms of cognition, which may result in the emergence of multi-paradigm epistemological systems and cascade models conducive to intellectual development of an individual.

The purpose of this article is to reveal the concept of cognition, characterize it from various perspectives, expose its stages, and elucidate a spiral framework of cognition expanding and elaborating on the model of knowledge development devised by K. Popper.

*Results.* Employing the methods of theoretical positioning, comparative analysis and qualitative research, the article advances and interprets a spiral model of cognition presuming knowledge discovery, accumulation and progression in the course of multifaceted mental activities.

*Conclusion.* The process of active cognition resulting in an individual's knowledge space and intellectual development follows an established algorithm, which is spiral in nature. It implies an incremental progressing through definite stages, each of which is aimed at completing concrete intermediate tasks and arriving at a sought-for solution to the problem. At that, cognizing subjects tend to mentally mature alongside the process of resolving the problem and hence, intellectually benefit from it. The possible solution to the problem may appear dependent upon cognitive profiles of

individuals (embracing their worldviews, epistemic styles, types of thinking, scopes of knowledge, etc.).

**Keywords:** cognition; levels and paths of cognition; knowledge growth; multi-paradigm cognition; epistemological pluralism; epistemic styles; spiral model of cognition.

**Introduction.** Throughout life human beings perceive the world, their environment and themselves. Striving for perception of reality is considered to be a natural need of an individual. Active perception of reality is regarded as cognition. This term comes from the Latin noun *cognitio* meaning "learning" and "knowledge" (Cognition, 2020). Interestingly, the concept of cognition dates back to the 15th century, where it implied "thinking and awareness" (Revin, 2012, p. 111).

In present-day interpretation, cognition means the "mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, and the senses" (Collins English Dictionary, 2015, p. 221). It embraces all aspects of intellectual functions such as perception, memory, thought, attention, imagination, intelligence, shaping of knowledge, judgement, evaluation, reasoning, computation, decision-making, problem-solving, comprehension and production of language. Cognitive processes implementing these intellectual functions are aimed at discovering new knowledge utilizing already existing knowledge (Cognition, 2020; Collins English Dictionary, 2015, p. 223).

**Formulation of the problem.** Cognitive activity, or cognition, fundamentally presumes an understanding of nature, society and self. The outcomes of this activity are acquired knowledge and experience. Cognition is thought to be multifaceted; it may be carried out in variant ways and

through various mental operations in accordance with multiple factors that affect its results. Hence, it does not occur within one established and generally accepted paradigm, but rather within multiple paradigms.

**The purpose of this article** is to highlight specific features of multi-paradigm cognition and offer a spiral model compatible with a natural process of cognition, which conduces to active intellection of a cognizing subject.

**Analysis of literature on the theme.**

Conventionally, scholars exploring cognition define it as a specific type of an individual's socio-cultural activity aimed at perceiving both the external world and one's own internal condition. They recognize that cognition may unfold in joint or individual activity; it "relies" on a variety of historical and cultural forms; it is carried out in different combinations of inherent and acquired experience. Fixed in this experience through more or less coordinated constituents, cognition primarily results in units of knowledge that constitute an individual's knowledge space. Therefore, within cognitive activity it is expedient to distinguish between the process and the outcome (Vovk, 2013, p. 206; Petrushenko, 2000, p. 77; Ananyin et al., 2021, p. 65; Collins English Dictionary, 2015).

From the perspective of the process, cognition may be looked upon as a dynamic characteristic of an individual's spiritual and theoretical perception of conditions of their existence; from the perspective of the outcome, cognition may be regarded as a result of this perception, which in fact, is knowledge or knowledge units, which are ready to be used, applied and disseminated, and serve the purpose of acquiring or discovering new knowledge.

An individual, perceiving and acquiring elements of the social world, discovers new, unknown connections, develops new images in the forms of knowledge structures; their own cognitive activity is implemented through operating and manipulating these structures in the process of utilizing and transforming units of knowledge. The efforts of an individual, as it were, "revive" the schemes of knowledge stored in their mind, transfer them into the *modus operandi* to interact with real-life problems, reproduce and process them one way or another in the course of cognition, and "return" them to the mind in enriched or augmented forms. Knowledge, therefore, is actually present in people's lives as a moment of cognition; it is exposed, expanded, renewed, restored, and implemented in various contexts of cognition (Vovk, 2013, p. 206; Petrushenko, 2000, p.

77; Ananyin et al., 2021, p. 65; Collins English Dictionary, 2015).

Noteworthy, in every period of social development, the process of cognition and knowledge as its outcome have always been in the focus of attention of philosophy, which resulted in the emergence of a separate philosophical trend – Gnoseology implying "the study of knowledge" or "the philosophy of knowledge and cognition" (Collins English Dictionary, 2015) (from Greek *gnosis* – meaning "knowledge", and the English suffix *-ology*, coming from the noun *logos* and meaning "the doctrine, study of..."). Gnoseology explores general mechanisms and patterns of cognitive activity. Following Aristotle, it received the name "Epistemology" (from Ancient Greek *episteme* meaning "a well-grounded knowledge"). Nowadays, Gnoseology is frequently defined as a theory of knowledge, whereas Epistemology is referred to as a theory of scientific knowledge. This suggests that the major difference between Epistemology and Gnoseology is that the former deals with the study of scientific knowledge, whereas the latter deals with all forms of knowledge (Ghilardi, 2013).

Within the framework of Gnoseology / Epistemology, scholars investigate how cognizing subjects progress from ignorance to knowledge along with the nature of knowledge in accordance with the objects reflected in this knowledge. Moreover, the role of cognition in the development of an individual and in their relations with the outside world is also in the focus of attention of numerous researchers. From this perspective, knowledge tends to fall into "knowledge WHAT", "knowledge HOW", "knowledge by evidence" and "knowledge of personal experience". Thus, the main objects of study within the framework of Gnoseology / Epistemology are the subject who knows and actually exists in the integrity of thinking, feelings and activity, the human mind, the process of cognition per se (or cognitive activity), and knowledge as its outcome (Vovk, 2013, p. 207).

The analysis of scientific literature allows asserting that cognitive activity occurs at two *basic levels*: at the level of sensory cognition and at the level of rational cognition. In particular, at the level of *sensory cognition*, the external world is reflected in the mind of a cognizing subject (who possesses the sensory organs, the nervous system, and the brain) in figurative forms as the upshot of their direct contact with the objects of reality. Such knowledge is expressed in sensory experience. The outcome of sensory cognition

is thought to be sensations, percepts, and impressions.

In contrast, at the level of *rational cognition*, which is most fully embodied in human thinking, there is a process of indirect perception of the world, ensuring the disclosure of its natural connections and their fixation in the language of concepts and categories. The outcome of rational cognition is forms of thinking via concepts, notions, ideas, inferences, and mental models. Furthermore, rational cognition employs such cognitive operations as induction, deduction, analysis, synthesis, abstraction, concretization, analogy, idealization, modeling, extrapolation, classification, etc. Rational cognition is believed to be formed under the influence of practical or empirical activity, that is, in the process of gaining experience (New Philosophical Dictionary, 2002, p. 479).

It is notable that the correlation between the sensory, the empirical and the rational in the processes of cognition has been of interest to philosophers from antiquity to the present day. They continually delved into the central question of Epistemology in an attempt to find a solution to the problem as to whether all knowledge has an experimental origin. Characteristically, empirical cognition is presumed to be the starting point of a cognitive process though emotions and feelings also play an essential part in it. Therefore, in Epistemology there exists an opposition between two major philosophical traditions – the tradition of empiricism and the tradition of rationalism.

Specifically, empiricists deny the existence of any ideas before gaining experience (personal or social), arguing that all ideas penetrate a person's mind through learning, the leading role in which is either one's personal experience or a generalization of the experience of others. Particularly, empirical experience fixes external manifestations of processes and events of reality, containing within itself what is accessible and susceptible to contemplation (for instance, everything that can be observed, heard, felt and understood). In other words, empirical experience reaches the mind primarily through perception.

Nameworthy, on the initiative of G. Leibniz, perception came to be considered as cognition by senses or concrete sensory perception of objects and phenomena of reality, and awareness by reason, rational cognition of reality in ideas – apperception.

Unlike empiricists, rationalists posit that, in addition to acquired ideas, an individual has, first and foremost, innate ideas (for instance, ideas of morality, justice, integrity,

harmony, etc.), which cannot result from experience (New Philosophical Dictionary, 2002, p. 231; ovk, 2013, p. 24–25). On the other hand, it is worth mentioning the phenomenon of *epistemological pluralism*, which postulates the existence of equal, independent from each other and functioning according to their own laws forms and sources of cognition, manifested in corresponding worldviews, epistemic styles (empirical, rationalistic and sensualistic), conceptual systems, and cognitive models, that is, in the multivariate development and progression of knowledge (Petrushenko, 2000, p. 77).

It has to be acknowledged that the philosophy of Antiquity laid foundations of science, the philosophy of the Middle Ages was scholastic, and the Renaissance era awakened a sense of dignity of every human (Humanism), and instilled optimism and hope (Enlightenment) among European nations. The period of the New Age, inspired primarily by enlighteners of the Renaissance, was marked by rapid advancement of science and, on its basis, applied knowledge. For example, according to F. Bacon, both reason and feelings participate in the search for the true. Employing allegory, the philosopher identifies the paths of cognition, labelling them as “the ant path,” “the spider path,” and “the bee path.” In particular, “the ant path” is conceived to be a method of extreme empiricism, characterized by a simple collection of facts obtained on the ground of sensory impressions, without their systematization and comprehension; “the spider path” illustrates the method of radical rationalism, which attempts to deduce knowledge from innate ideas. In this way it resembles a spider, weaving a web from the stuff that it produces itself; “the bee path” eliminates the extremes of empiricism and rationalism and represents a two-stage process of cognition, in which feelings provide data about the properties of objects, and these data are processed by the mind employing the methods and principles of theoretical thinking (Bacon, 2017).

By and large, from the end of the 19th century one could observe the developing trend towards a pluralistic interpretation of the process of cognition. Ontological and epistemological pluralism affirms a view of the world as multi-variant diversity, modeled through the prism of the principles of synergy, complementarity, relativity, and symphony. The trend to pluralize the ontological picture of cognition and being, and take into account the interaction of multitudinous equivalent substances that cannot be reduced to only two principles (and

therefore scientific paradigms), is now clearly discerned in all areas of present-day science (Petrushenko, 2000, p. 81; Lodatko, Liba, Pasieka, 2024). That being the case, the process of cognition is multi-paradigm,

synergetic and divergent, susceptible to multifariousness, and consequently, may yield better results.

The ideas expressed above are generalized and symbolized graphically in Figure 1.

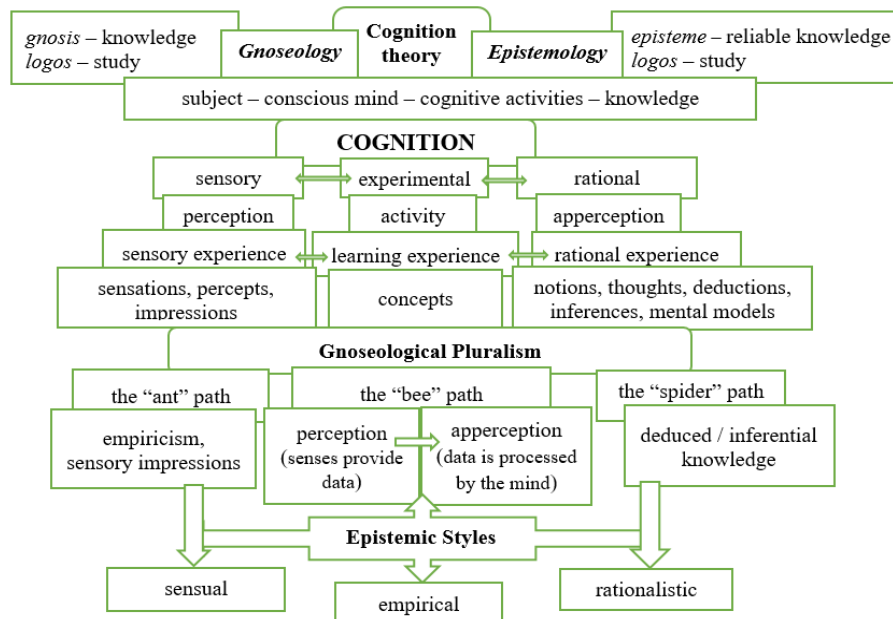


Figure 1. Framework of Multi-Paradigm Cognition

**Results.** The findings seem convincing that a combination of scientific paradigms in the process of cognitive activity contributed to the emergence of new epistemological problems, for example, the problem of the social and personal nature of cognition. Due to this fact, the complication of ideas about the processes of cognition generated the formation of cascade “waterfall models”, in which the acquisition of knowledge resembles a flow, successively passing through the phases of analysis, design, implementation, testing, integration, and support. Withal, cascade models combine images of the gradual and incremental accumulation of knowledge with concepts of a sharp change in axiological and value-normative systems (T. Kuhn), and delineate the evolution of knowledge as a change in historical formations of knowledge (“epistemes”, in terms of M. Foucault). On that assumption, an important problem arises out of the interaction of various formations and paradigms of cognition, one of the probable solutions to which is the way to create “multi-paradigm” epistemological systems (Ananyin et al., 2021, p. 92), which would contribute to acquiring multiple types of knowledge, such as emotional and rational, empirical and theoretical, fundamental and applied, philosophical and scientific, natural and humanitarian, scientific and extra-scientific.

The aforementioned indicates that the process of cognition has its own specific characteristics, among which the following may appear most illustrative (New Philosophical Dictionary, 2002, p. 111):

- identification of objective laws of reality, knowledge itself, thinking, etc.: hence, the orientation towards exploring and establishing general properties and characteristics of an object and their expression via ideational objects;

- predictions of the future aiming at further evolution of reality grounded on the knowledge of laws designating how studied objects function and develop;

- systematicity implying that a body of knowledge is arranged in an orderly fashion following definite principles that combine units of knowledge into an integral organic system;

- methodological reflection, which presumes that studying objects and identifying their specific properties, connections, relations, etc. are always accompanied by an awareness of methods and techniques (both rational and irrational) by dint of which objects are studied;

- objectivity and orientation towards finding the true, since the scientific true “survives centuries and millennia” (Vernadsky, 1988, p. 181); at that, the activity of a cognizing subject is the most important condition and prerequisite for cognition;

– continuous self-renewal of the individual's conceptual arsenal: cognition is a complex process of reproducing knowledge that makes up an integral system of concepts, theories, hypotheses, laws and other ideational forms, fixed in natural or artificial language;

– utilizing in the research process both material (scientific equipment and technique) and ideal means and methods, such as dialectics, logic, conceptual modeling, mathematical, statistical, synergetic, cybernetic, system methods, etc.;

– evidence, validity of the results obtained and reliability of the conclusions made: here become important the logical and methodological training of a researcher, their philosophical culture, continuous improvement of their scientific thinking, and the ability to realize the meaning and goals of their existence under the influence of knowledge;

– shaping the scientific worldview – an integral system of ideas about general properties and patterns of reality, stemming from the synthesis and generalization of fundamental scientific concepts and principles.

The present study is also premised on the idea that the process of cognition is conjectured to be carried out in three ways – *inductive* (making inferences based on specific observations or evidence), *deductive* (making inferences based on widely accepted facts or premises) and *abductive* (making a probable conclusion from what one knows) – which conduce and contribute to both the expansion and the discovery of new knowledge. The evidence is strong that such knowledge tends to accumulate and grow. According to the British Philosopher K. Popper, *the model of knowledge growth* may be represented as a set of cognitive procedures that assume the following (Popper, 2005, p. 325–376):

1) becoming aware of the problem, which is the starting point of knowledge construction;

2) advancing hypotheses that might enable solving the problem;

3) refuting the hypothesis ensuring the elimination of identified errors and fallacious assumptions;

4) conducting a critical discussion resulting in an in-depth examination of the problem aimed at making new assumptions;

5) increasing scientific knowledge through the criticism of advanced hypotheses.

Following his logic, K. Popper developed the concept of the so called “third world” – “the world of language, predictions, theories and reasoning” (Popper, 2005, p. 370). In fact, the philosopher distinguished *three worlds*: the first world is the objectively existing reality; the second world is the ideal structures of the mind, its states and activities; the third world is “the world of the objective content of thinking, first of all, the content of scientific ideas, poetic thoughts and works of art” (Popper, 2005, p. 370). The third world is created by human beings, but the results of their activities live their own lives. It is a “universe of objective knowledge”, autonomous from other worlds. The increase in knowledge in the “third world” is described by K. Popper by the following formula: P – TT – EE – P (Problem – Theory – Evaluation – Problem), where P is the original problem, TT is a theory that claims to solve the problem, EE is an evaluation of the theory, its criticism and elimination of errors, and P is a new problem.

O. Vovk deems it plausible to surmise that in the formula devised by K. Popper (as well as in the model of knowledge growth) one link is missing – in fact, it is the stage of solving the problem per se (Vovk, 2013, p. 46). Therefore, provided that this link is added or rather reconstructed (for it is obvious that the philosopher had it in mind), it will turn out that K. Popper's model and formula ensure a spiral path of knowledge growth, where the final stage, that is the process of resolving the problem, concurrently becomes a new problem and a start of a new round of the cognitive process. In this case, *the spiral process of cognition* may embrace the following framework (Vovk, 2013, p. 46–47):

1) the first round implies getting familiarized with the problem, identifying intermediate tasks that need to be completed, and assuming possible options of the solution to the problem;

2) the second round presumes the activation of “cognitive schemes” in the mind of an individual necessary for completing intermediate tasks;

3) the third round is aimed at a critical discussion of the proposed solutions to the problem, their refutation or proof, discerning conceivable side effects, advantages, disadvantages, and contradictions, advancing new assumptions – in fact, an in-depth multi-perspective consideration of the problem;

4) the fourth round is the implementation of the advanced assumptions with regard to the new ways of resolving the problem, generalization and elaboration of conclusions, and derivation of new knowledge.

Accordingly, the solved problem and the derived knowledge are the beginning of a new epistemological issue, resolving which will require the application of the same algorithm.

In addition, the process of solving the problem in the course of cognitive activity may also entail the employment of definite *mental operations* among which the most specific are as follows (New Philosophical Dictionary, 2002, p. 333; Khanstantynov, 2017, p. 41–42; New Philosophical Dictionary, 2002; Vovk, 2013, p. 48–50]:

a) *reflection* – a form of theoretical activity targeted at understanding both one’s own thinking and actions as well as thinking and actions of other people, utilizing such cognitive methods as synthesis, analysis, comparison, definition, inference, generalization, explication, etc.;

b) *speculation* (or abstraction) – making judgments about the real world, its objects and processes using rationalistic techniques based on the laws of logic; “illogical” or irrational techniques based on an intuitive vision of an idea; contemplative, empirical, and intellectual “construction” of an idea through productive imagination and creativity grounded on interdisciplinary sciences;

c) *intellectual intuition* – the process of interaction between the subjective and objective, sensual and rational, obligate and accidental, informational-contemplative and evaluative;

d) *heuristic* – a method of discovery and solving the problem involving the use of creative and intuitive approaches rather than logical ones, which is reflected in unpredictable solutions;

e) *interpretation* – a procedure for establishing the content of concepts or the meaning of knowledge elements, “reconstruction” of meanings by applying them to a particular subject area, as well as the result of such a procedure.

**Conclusions.** To summarize, the evidence seems to be strong that cognition is an active, dynamic, constructive, and rewarding process resulting in a developed conceptual system, knowledge space and intelligence. Knowledge accumulation and growth occurs spirally and presumes incremental progressing through an established algorithm

or model of cognition. Spiral cognition enhances cognizing subjects’ mental maturation alongside their conceptual system or worldview, which is open to continuous development and elaboration. At each new turn of spiral cognition, an individual solves problems in a new way, in compliance with their cognitive profiles, mental representations of the world, epistemic styles, types of thinking, etc.

The indications are therefore that the process of cognition does not imply relying only on one definite paradigm but rather on a combination of multiple paradigms. The foundation for multivariate cognition may be epistemological pluralism, which postulates the idea of equal, independent forms and sources of knowledge, functioning according to their own laws and embodied in different types of worldview. That given, Gnoseology / Epistemology and methodology of cognition are targeted at creating a more flexible theory of intellection that would avoid absolutization and dogmatization of one established long-standing model of cognition, affirming the cumulative nature and multi-variance of knowledge increase.

**Further implications.** Cognition is beneficial not only for intellectual ontogenesis of a cognizing subject but also for their communicative progression, which opens new perspectives of resolving the issue of gnoseological pluralism and multi-paradigm intellection in relation to individual knowledge acquisition and mental development.

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### МУЛЬТИПАРАДИГМАЛЬНЕ ПІЗНАННЯ: ФІЛОСОФСЬКІ ЗАСАДИ

**Анотація.** У статті розглядаються особливості інтелектуального розвитку індивіда та розробляється структура мультипарадигмального пізнання, спрямованого на отримання, накопичення та зростання знань. Зокрема, зосереджується увага на рівнях і шляхах пізнання та роз'яснюються розумові операції, за допомогою яких може здійснюватися складна пізнавальна діяльність. Крім того, у статті досліджуються умови когнітивного зростання суб'єктів пізнання, що потрапляють в аспекти їхніх індивідуальних профілів, концептуальних систем, світогляду, епістемічних стилів, типів мислення тощо. У статті також визначається пріоритетність епістемологічного / гносеологічного плюралізму та поєднання раціональних, чуттєвих та експериментальних складників у пізнавальному процесі та пропонується ідея взаємодії між різноманітними парадигмами пізнання, що може привести до появи мультипарадигмальних епістемологічних систем і каскадних моделей, які сприяють інтелектуальному розвитку особистості.

Метою цієї праці є розкрити суть пізнання, схарактеризувати його з різних перспектив, висвітлити етапи пізнання та з'ясувати й висвітлити його спіральну структуру, розширюючи та розвиваючи модель розвитку знання, розроблену К. Поппером.

Результати. Використовуючи методи теоретичного позиціонування, порівняльного та якісного аналі-

зу, у статті пропонується та інтерпретується спіральна модель пізнання, яка передбачає відкриття, накопичення та розвиток знань у ході багатогранної розумової діяльності.

Висновок. Процес активного пізнання, результатом якого є побудований простір знань і концептуальна система особистості, відбувається за встановленим алгоритмом, який має спіралеподібний характер. Означений алгоритм передбачає поступове інтелектуальне прогресування чітко визначеними етапами, кожен з яких спрямований на виконання конкретних проміжних завдань, які приведуть до остаточного вирішення проблеми. При цьому, суб'єкти пізнання, як правило, інтелектуально дозрівають разом із самим процесом вирішення проблеми, а відтак, цей процес є корисним для їхнього пізнання. Можливе вирішення проблеми може залежати від когнітивних профілів індивідів (їхніх світоглядів, епістемічних стилів, типів мислення, обсягів знань тощо).

**Ключові слова:** пізнання; рівні та шляхи пізнання; зростання знань; багатопарадигмальне пізнання; епістемологічний плюралізм; епістемічні стилі; спіральна модель пізнання.

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