What is the relationship between information and knowledge? Recently (Floridi [forthcoming 2], Floridi [2011]), I argued that semantic information—understood as well-formed, meaningful and truthful data—upgrades to knowledge if and only if it is correctly (Floridi [forthcoming 1], Floridi [2011]) accounted for. The basic idea is rather simple. Each piece of semantic information (e.g., “the beer is in the fridge”), is constituted by a Boolean question and answer (“Is the beer in the fridge?” + “Yes”), which, as a standalone item, does not yet constitute knowledge, but poses further questions about itself. Such further questions require the right sort of information flow in order to be answered correctly, through an appropriate network of relations with some informational source. If all Mary can do, when asked why she holds that the beer is in the fridge, is to repeat that is the place where the beer is to be found, the fact that the beer is actually in the fridge only warrants the conclusion that Mary holds the information about the location of the beer, but nothing else. For all we know, Mary might have uttered “the beer is in the fridge” as the only English sentence she knows, or she might have dreamed or guessed correctly the location of the beer. Indeed, the beer that she reports to be in the fridge might have been removed by John, but then more beer might have been placed in the fridge by Peter, making Mary right, yet only accidentally. The result of such analysis is an informational definition of knowledge according to which a knowing subject $S$ knows that $p$ if and only if:

1. $p$ qualifies as semantic information;
2. $A$ accounts for $p$, that is, $A(A, p)$;
3. $S$ is informed that $p$; and
4. $S$ is informed that $A(A, p)$.

The articulation of this analysis in terms of a network theory of account and its defence, especially against a potential Gettierization, are explicit tasks I have dealt with in Floridi [forthcoming 2]. In this paper I would like to explore an important consequence of the informational definition of knowledge: if knowledge is accounted information, what happens when we apply this definition to the analysis of perceptual knowledge and knowledge by testimony?
REFERENCES


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