

Suggestions for reading Bolzano's *Wissenschaftslehre*

For our purposes, the key sections are §154-§159, where Bolzano's definitions of consequence and incompatibility in general are expounded.

In order to understand the concepts deployed there, it will be helpful to read:

§§1, 3, 6, 12, 16. §19 (propositions), §25 (truth), §34 (judgment), §§48-50, §§66-73, §§91-96, §102, §105, §108, §§123-4, §127 (structure of propositions), §133, §147-8.

Some developments of the key ideas are to be found in:

§162, §179, §196, §§199-200.

For comparison, here are two other suggestions as to how to build down these four volumes (the first being from Bolzano himself):

In Bolzano's letter to Romang he gives advice concerning the reading of W.L. After advising Romang that he can lay aside the fourth volume, he continues "You can omit the entire book titled Heuristic in the third volume, and the lengthy part on arguments in the second book. It will perhaps be sufficient if you read in the first volume §§ 19, 25, and 26 (on the concept of propositions and truths in themselves) 48, 49, 50 (about ideas in themselves) 55, 56, 57, 58, 63, 64, 66, 67, 68, 70, 72, 73, 79 (time and space), 85 (sequence) 87 (where you find the concept of infinity which I put in the place of the self-contradictory Hegelian absolute). From the second volume §§ 125, 127, 133, 137, 148 (analytic and synthetic propositions), **154-58 (propositions with variable parts, where I define the relation of deducibility: whenever $A, B, C, \dots$ are true, then M is also true)**, 170 (propositions of the form 'a certain a has b '), 179 (propositions with if-then), 182 (the important concepts of necessity and possibility), 183 (time determinations), 197 (analytic and synthetic truths), 198 (concept of ground and consequence between truths), 201, 202, 214, 221 (basic truths). From the third volume all you need to read is what I say about the concepts of clarity and distinctness (280, 281), and then you may lay the entire logic aside, provided only that you look up one or the other item as the occasion requires; the index in the fourth volume will simplify this considerably."

The eminent Bolzano scholar Jan Sebestic recommends: vol. I, §§54–108, vol. II, §§132–68 and §§195–223 (§220 contains derivation trees), the heart of the matter being §§154–68.