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HUSSERL'S SEMANTICS: MENDING HUSSERL WITH HUSSERL

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ABSTRACT. The paper argues for a way of bringing Husserl's semantics in *Logical Investigations* up to date by drawing on a variety of critical tools gleaned from his later writings. My argument proceeds in two steps. (1) I offer a summary of the main ingredients of Husserl's theorization of natural language, with an emphasis on his description of linguistic meaning as a Platonic ideal species. (2) The paper gathers a number of concepts from Husserl's later works up to *Experience and Judgment* for the kind of repair work that could make his semantics once more a competitive candidate in the arena of natural language semantics. I do so by reformulating Husserl's approach in terms of a 'semantics of imaginability'.

Keywords: essentially occasional expressions, modality, non-verbal mental materials, non-essential typifications, imaginability, linguistic linkage compulsion

I call for lucidity regarding the differences
between mere equality and full identity
which are lost in the abstraction process.
(Claire Ortiz Hill 2000: 68)

1. Introduction

In the West, the theorization of natural language can be viewed as divided into two broad camps, one pursuing Aristotle's invention of propositional truth (*Categories* 4b, 8f.), the other remaining committed to Aristotle's *pathemata* (affections of the soul) as *homoiomata* (resemblance relations) of *pragmata* (actual things) and their mental variations at the centre of their investigations. (*De Interpretatione* 1, 16a, 3–8) In sharp cultural contrast, Chinese views of language have been consistently anchored to this day in what one could call 'normative nominalism' and the tradition of the 'rectification of names' from Confucius to Xunzi and beyond. Given the two points of departure in the Western tradition, it should not be surprising

to find one branch, from Frege to current writings in hyperintensional semantics, favoring formalization as capturing best the propositional principles discoverable in or impossible on language, while the other branch, exemplified most prominently by Locke, Kant and Husserl, has remained committed to the way our shared *pathemata* about the world are transformed in language. In this paper, I take two steps to show (1) where Husserl's theory of language, as we can glean it especially from the *Logical Investigations*, remains unconvincing and (2) what tools in Husserl's later work up to *Experience and Judgment* are available for mending those flaws and bringing his theory up to date and, by so doing, make it competitive once more in the sharply contested arena of natural language semantics. (Cf. Lepore and Smith 2006; Devitt and Hanley 2006; Davis and Gillon 2004; Lamarque 1997) My research hunch is that such a revision will of necessity end in a *semantics of imaginability*.

Before embarking on an analysis and critique of Husserl's natural language semantics I would like to give a very brief and polemically schematic picture of our dominant explanatory paradigms in semantics. We can distinguish at least the following nine major approaches. (1) *Formal approaches* which are based on the assumption that natural language works like any sequence such as ' $x = m \times y$ '. This amounts to a reduction of language to defined relations amongst signifiers with neither *aboutness* nor *modality*. Formal analogies also fail to come to grips with Husserl's 'situations of affairs', to be discussed later. (2) *Applied formal approaches* (the tape measure approach) result in a reduction of language to language-to-world relations. They fail natural kind terms and other expressions which display world-to-language relations. (3) The assumption that natural language functions like *technical language* (e.g. welding instructions) is flawed since it caters only for *aboutness* and requires that modality remain neutralized. (4) *Truth-conditional theories* fail because they presuppose meaning and are restricted to realist contexts (cf. undecidable expressions, e.g., 'God is omniscient', which is meaningful on account of coherence of *Vorstellungen* without truth being available or necessary; cf. also Kafkaesque scenarios). (5) *Syntactic explanations* are parasitic on both semantics and on pre-predicative *protosyntax*. Based on the 'chess fallacy', syntactic approaches presuppose and hide 'meaning'. (6) *Radical arbitrariness*, as proposed by Saussure, cannot account for the 'motivated signified', in which Aristotle's *pathemata* resurface and for which both Locke and Husserl attempt their different explanations. (7) Approaches restricted to '*observables*', as behaviorist theories and the later Wittgenstein, illegitimately reduce *aboutness* and fail both Russell's 'propositional attitudes' and, more broadly, *Vorstellung*. (8) Theories stipulating a '*language of thought*' as semantic base (e.g., Fodor's LOT) generate infinite regress without ever arriving at 'meaning'.

(9) Arguments in favor of *neural concepts*, finally, commit the ‘genetic fallacy’ of confusing the functioning of language with its origins, while failing to address the all-important social nature of language. It is against this background that I offer my analysis of what Husserl had to say and should have said about language.

I. Problems in Husserl’s Natural Language Semantics

1. Husserl’s Ideality of Meaning

Rising toward the sun of ideation, it is the way of Icarus, one could say with a nod to Derrida. But what precisely is ‘ideation’ in Husserl’s description of linguistic meaning? An answer to this question cannot simply be given by quoting his many descriptions of linguistic meaning, but also demands that we pay attention to the various other features of his semantics that contribute to meaning. Unlike Frege’s account, Husserl’s is a complex web of a large number of components as it first appears in the *Logical Investigations*. I sum these up, as much as possible, as Husserl’s ‘essential, primary distinctions’. (*LI I* §10) First we have expressions (syntactic ordered sequences of signifiers) uttered and experienced as an ‘articulate sound complex’ which is to be distinguished, though not separated, from its associated ‘mental states’, as well as meaning as a Platonic species locatable in the ‘timeless realm of ideas’. (Cf. Mulligan’s distinction of six meanings in Husserl, Mulligan 2011: 273) For Husserl, meanings are ‘ideal unities’ characterized by ‘identity’. (*LI*, p. 149) They are *starre Einheiten* (rigid unities). (*LI I* §28) Expressions, in contrast, are a ‘part of speech’ with or without ‘communicative intent’. (*LI I* §5) If ‘communicative’, they are ‘always bound up with’ an ‘indicative relation’. (§2) For simplicity’s sake, I leave aside expressions that are *unsinnig* or nonsensical and *widersinnig* or self-contradictory, the former being declared by Husserl as not well formed, the latter as possibly well-formed but lacking in self-consistency, such as ‘round squares’.

When language is used either in communication or in internal soliloquy, meaning is generated in such a way that it functions as ‘a *class* of universal objects’ (*LI I* §33) or an *ideal species* under which the various necessary mental acts performed by speakers and hearers are particulars united to guarantee *semantic identity*. (e.g., in ‘quadratic remainder’, §11) Husserl distinguishes his Platonic ideality of meaning from ‘meaning’ in the restricted sense of merely ‘indicating’. (§5) The ideality of linguistic meaning as species is part of Husserl’s larger frame of inquiry into how ‘the real world’ is ‘spread out before us’, as well as ‘all “ideal” worlds’ and becomes ‘in-

telligible as transcendental correlates'. (*Ideas*, Author's Preface to the English Edition, p. 20) Husserl's conviction of linguistic ideality is rooted in his notion of 'essence' as 'an ideal conceptual totality of possible particulars to which it can be related through a thought that is both eidetic and universal'. (*Ideas* §13) From the beginning in the *Logical Investigations*, however, the commitment to 'transcendental phenomenological Idealism' in relation to language is more easily demonstrated by recourse to formal entities than by natural language examples. In turning 'from the real relation of acts to the ideal relation of their objects or contents', he does so not only with reference to geometrical figures and other formal notions where 'something objective and ideal is brought to expression' as an illustration, but also transfers the formal to natural language itself. 'The same holds', Husserl writes, 'of the other parts of our statements, even of such as do not have the form of propositions'. (§ 11) Thus has he closed the all-important gap between language as 'universal medium' and 'calculus', (Kusch 1989) between natural language semantics and his 'pure morphology of significations' (*reine Formenlehre der Bedeutungen*).

Now and then in the *Logical Investigation*, however, Husserl deviates ever so slightly from identifying linguistic meanings with their formal cousins, for example when he writes, 'the intentional essence of the act of intuition gets *more or less perfectly* fitted into the semantic essence of the act of expression'. (*LI* II, §8) Qualms about his radically abstractive semantics also surface in his qualification that meaning ideality is not so much 'normative' as 'practical', qualms overridden though by the fear of loss of *semantic identity*. (*LI* I §32) Yet when identity is stipulated via 'ideal objects' which, for Husserl, 'exist genuinely', it is illustrated by 'the number 2, the quality of red, the principle of contradiction'. (*LII* §8) Note here how the 'fuzzy' ideality of 'the quality of red' is embedded in arithmetic and logical expressions, as if Husserl sensed that his meaning identity needed shoring up by formal notions. This suspicion is strengthened in the Introduction to *LI* II, where he writes, 'when we mean Red *in specie*, a red object appears before us'. (*LI* II, p. 337) This is so even if 'mental imagery lies outside the essence of an expression' performing no more than a 'fulfilling role' of a 'provisional character'. (*LI* I §10)

Several kinds of mental acts are distinguished in Husserl's account of natural language. 'What marks off an expression' from mere word sounds is the 'meaning-intention' in which the expression 'undergoes an essential phenomenal modification'. (*LI* I §10) This 'act of meaning' (*Bedeutend*) in turn is differentiated from 'meaning' itself (*Bedeutung*). (*LI* VI §8) The 'act-complexes' of '*sense-conferring acts*' and '*sense-giving acts*' are further to be set apart from the acts of the 'intimation of mental states' both in 'speaking and reception'. The 'intimating function', as Husserl calls it,

consists in the way 'inner experiences' are conveyed to the hearer. Husserl uses 'intimation' in two different senses: a narrow one as 'acts which impart sense' and a wider one as 'all acts that a hearer may *introject* into a speaker on the basis of what he says'. (*LI I* §7) This is an early instance of his later notion of *appresentation* or *co-presenting*, mental acts that fill out by way of *Vorstellung* what is not immediately given. Yet 'intimation' is not to be confused with 'indication'. By 'indication' Husserl means strictly the mental act conveyed by an expression 'in its relation to the object it stands for or that it is to signify'. (§2) In 'communicative speech' all expressions 'function as indications'. (§7)

On the side of semantic uptake, 'the hearer intuitively takes the speaker to be a person who is expressing this or that' or 'perceives him as such'. (§7) Intuition here likewise requires acts of *appresenting*. It is already clear at this point that in the kind of semantic schema Husserl is constructing, linguistic comprehension could not be argued without a firm commitment to *Vorstellung* and *Vorstellbarkeit*, or *imaginability*, or perhaps 'intelligibility' in Sokolowski's sense. (Sokolowski 2008: 167) Nor is this mental activity restricted to the hearer of an expression. At its heart is reciprocity. 'Mutual understanding', says Husserl, 'demands a certain correlation among the mental acts mutually unfolded in intimation and in the receipt of such intimation, but not at all their exact resemblance'. (§7) Here already, a fundamental dilemma reveals itself in Husserl's account of natural language, a dilemma that is to remain unresolved, though by no means unresolvable, to the end of his career: the competing notions of *resemblance relations* and *semantic exactitude*. The principle of the reciprocity of mutual mental acts is resumed in Husserl's distinction between 'meaning-conferring acts' and 'meaning-fulfilling acts', the former being defined as 'meaning intentions', the latter as a necessary receptive condition of comprehension. (§9) As Wittgenstein is to observe half a century later, in language, 'an expectation and its fulfillment make contact'. (*PI* §445) But Husserl is much more specific on the kind of interaction he observes between intention and uptake in reconstructive acts in *Vorstellung*, producing as it does an 'intimately fused unity' of 'meaning-intention' and 'meaning fulfillment'. Because of his emphasis on *Vorstellung*, Husserl rejects the formulation of an 'expression expresses its meaning'. (*LI I* §9) Expressions by themselves do nothing. Rather, what is required for meaning to occur is the mental act of 'understanding' which 'shines through the expression', lending it 'meaning and thereby relation to objects'. (*LI I* §18)

Important outcomes of this part of Husserl's analysis from the perspective taken in this paper are his notions of '*exclusive directionality*' and the '*steering of attention*'. 'The function of a word', writes Husserl, 'is to awaken a sense-conferring act' in order 'to point to what is intended', an 'intuitive

fulfillment' and 'to guide our interest *exclusively* in this direction'. In the same section he speaks of 'the steering of attention' from 'name to the thing named', from 'expression' to 'what is expressed'. (§10) Linguistic directionality, then, is not merely suggestive and haphazard but compelling. As I shall argue later, the concept of 'exclusive directionality', defined by Husserl also more sharply as 'determinate direction to objects', can be used to tighten the relation between speech community and meaning-fulfillment. (§13) I have done so elsewhere under the notion of 'the linguistic linkage compulsion'. (Ruthrof 2011c)

So far we have dealt with linguistic expression, intimation, indication, meaning-conferring and meaning-fulfilling acts, the steering of attention and exclusive directionality and the ideality of meaning. What is still missing is extensionality, in the Leibnizian sense of extension in contrast to intension, the former pointing beyond the expression to *aboutness* and *reference*, the latter to the mode in which the extension is presented, its definitional coherence or, in Husserlian parlance, perhaps its 'noematic nucleus'. Husserl addresses extensionality in two ways. It appears in the *matter* of a meaning act in contrast to its *quality*. It also appears in what an expression says *of* something, by way of 'the objective correlate of an expression', defined as 'the objective correlate meant by a meaning' in distinction from any actual object. (§12) Here, exclusive directionality results in our attention being pointed to something outside the mental acts which we cannot but perform in the event of meaning, that is, what an expression is about or, in more recent phrasing, *aboutness*. (Woodfield 1997: 55) The point Husserl is stressing here is that 'the object never coincides with the meaning'. (§12) Husserl does not, however, distinguish between *aboutness* and *reference*, the latter being defined as the directionality of an expression 'to certain objects'. As such it appears in the well-trodden examples of 'The victor of Jena' which is about, and can be used to refer to, the same object as 'the vanquished of Waterloo', (§12) an illustration that may very well be a Fregean residue in Husserl's theorization, which otherwise deviates markedly from Fregean semantics. It is preferable, I think, to run with P.F. Strawson on reference as the 'referring use' of expressions (1950) and the detailed analysis of reference in *Varieties of Reference* by Gareth Evans. (1982) The distinction between *aboutness* and *reference* as a special kind of language use has the explanatory advantage of showing that the former is part of meaning and so semiotically homogeneous as intentional object, while the linking of meaning and objects outside the meaning acts is semiotically heterogeneous. In this sense we can rephrase Husserl's observation that 'statements' can be 'different in meaning while referring to the same object' (§12) by saying that statements with different meanings can have the same *aboutness* and can also be used to refer to the same objectivity

(*Gegenständlichkeit*). This of course prevents us from going along with Husserl's formulation 'to use an expression significantly and to refer expressively to an object (to form a presentation of it) are one and the same'. (§15)

If Peter Simons is right in saying that 'Husserl pursued philosophy of language not for its own sake but mainly to support his conception of logic' and to 'refute psychologism', (Simons 1995: 106) then this would explain why radical forms of abstraction inform his early description of natural language. What drives Husserl towards the idealization of meaning, backed up by formal illustrations, is his assumption of the necessity of semantic identity as 'identical sense'. (*LI VI*, §4) Where he comes from, as do many of his contemporaries in this quest – mathematics – identity is an essential component of the axiomatic foundations of the sign system. Identity is a *sine qua non* of stipulated formal signs, although even identity in this sense has not remained uncontested. (Haddock 2000: 42ff.) Husserl's affinity with formal identity and meaning ideality pervades the *Logical Investigations*, where 'pure logic' remains his point of orientation because it 'is exclusively concerned with the *ideal* unities that we here call "meanings"'. (*LI I* §29) This expectation is transferred to 'the essence of meaning' in natural language, 'not in the meaning-conferring experience, but in its "content", the single, self-identical intentional unity set over against the dispersed multiplicity of actual and possible experiences of speakers'. (§30) Either, then, we have 'self-identical' singularity or 'dispersed multiplicity'. What is missing in the early Husserl is the in-between of *graded typifications*, a notion that neither requires identity nor dissolves into private singularities.

In any case, to recognize identity as indispensable for logic and mathematics is one thing; it is quite another to demand it for linguistic meanings. Granted, identity is a powerful lure. Wittgenstein criticized this move in his *Philosophical Investigations* when he notes that 'we are dazzled by the ideal' which 'absorbs us' to such a degree that it "'*must*" be found in reality ... we think we already see it there' and so 'we must find ... the ideal ... in our actual language'. (*PI* §100ff.) Although Wittgenstein rejects the '*pre-conceived idea* of crystalline purity', (§108) he is still looking for identity in the relation between language and perception when he asks later in the *PI*, 'what criterion of identity *do we fix*' in order to compare different experiences of 'understanding'. (*PI* §322; cf. also §§404; 580) And since we can't guarantee identity for *Vorstellungen* in general, Wittgenstein comes to the conclusion that 'nothing is more wrong-headed than calling meaning a mental activity'. (*PI* §693) Even in his *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein remains in this regard a victim of Frege's point of departure. To Husserl's credit, in spite of his flirtation with meaning as a Platonic species and the lure of the formal, he never gave up on *realist mentalism*

as an essential part of a comprehensive theorization of language. (LI II §11) The problem for this sort of mentalism is how to reconcile it with the public nature of language.

As to meaning identity, Husserl was and still is in good company. From Frege to Montague and further to hyperintensional logic, ‘identity’ both in its numerical and qualitative senses has been part of the staple diet of the philosophy of language. When it is imposed on the description of language we always note these three moves: (1) The collapsing of natural language sense into formal sense; (2) the elimination of *Vorstellung* from *meaning*; and (3) the elimination of linguistic *modality*, especially its *implicit* variety. In *Sinn und Bedeutung* (1892) Frege had paved the way for this procedure. Without theoretical justification, the sense of ordinary language terms is equated with geometrical and arithmetic magnitudes, *Vorstellung* is declared private and so banished from meaning, while modality vanishes as a result of move (1). All three moves are questionable. (Ruthrof 1997)

How do identity and ideality relate in Husserl’s writings? ‘Identical sense’, says Husserl, ‘does not become particular in individuals; the generic universal in coincidence has particulars under it, but the sense does not have particulars under it’. (*Experience and Judgment* 64(d), pp. 261ff.; cf. also *Formal and Transcendental Logic* §57(b)). Presumably this is so because of the ideality of sense (*Sinn*) or, as Haddock suggests, ‘noematic nucleus’, in distinction from *Sinn* and *Bedeutung* in ‘meaning conferring acts’. (Haddock 2000: 38 n2) ‘Only as a species, can ... meaning embrace in ... and as an ideal unity the dispersed multiplicity of individual singulars’ which are ‘the corresponding act-moments of meaning, the *meaning intentions*’. (LII §31) Identity in Husserl is conceivable as a characteristic of a species, while ‘aliqueness’ is reserved for things, objects, or members. Yet, as Husserl, remarks, ‘*identity is wholly indefinable, whereas “aliqueness” is*’. (LI II, §3; my italics) Worse, identity as a result of Platonic idealization proves not only indefinable but *indemonstrable*. This may very well be the main reason why Husserl invariably turns to formal examples when he wants to illustrate the ideality of linguistic meaning. A further, serious complication in Husserl’s analysis arises in that having declared meaning an ideal species he has blocked its description in terms of *degrees of generalization*. Meaning as ideal Platonic species prohibits what Husserl is to theorize in *Ideas* under the heading of generalization on the ladder of specification and de-specification, leaving formalization or de-materialization to take the place of ideality, where identity is axiomatic. (*Ideas* §13)

Ideality also plays a role in Husserl’s contribution to *compositionality* or Frege’s law, according to which, crudely put, the meaning of a sentence is a function of the meanings of its parts. Or, in more recent phrasing, ‘The meaning of a compound expression is a function of the meanings of its

parts and of the syntactic rule by which they are combined'. (Partee, ter Meulen, and Wall 1990: 318) That the notion of 'syntactic rule' is more basic than its customary linguistic usage would suggest can be gleaned from the following remarks. 'If we ask why our language allows certain verbal combinations and disallows others, we are to a large extent referred to contingent linguistic habits ... which develop in one way in one speech-community and another way in another'. We also discover 'the *a priori* laws of the combination and transformation of meanings, laws which must be more or less revealed in every developed language, both in its grammar of forms and in the related class of grammatical incompatibilities. (*LI IV* §12) Well before Wittgenstein and Chomsky, Husserl is reviving the notion of a 'logical grammar' underlying all natural languages, an ideal grammar, writes Sokolowski, 'to be pursued by mathematicians by compiling all existing syntactic rules'. (Sokolowski 1977: 99) In this context, Wittgenstein's search for 'the logic of our expressions' even in 'the vaguest sentence' comes to mind, (*PI* §345; §98) as well as Chomsky's 'deep structure' consisting of 'a system of propositions' suggestive of 'certain language universals' setting 'limits to the variety of human language' such that 'the general features of grammatical structure are common to all language'. (1966: 34ff.; 59f.) Assertions of this kind are of course no more than retrospective projections, however plausible, of linguistic abstractions into pre-predicative reality. They do not provide logical necessity for the choice of ideality in matters linguistic, as James Edie's defense of Husserl's *apriorisches Bedeutungsgesetz* would have it. According to Edie, 'the *a priori* law of signification ... normatively determines and guarantees the possibility and the unity of a given independent meaning'. (Edie 1977: 161) The enterprise of idealization applied to meaning as much as to universal grammar is a freeze-frame superimposed over the changing *Lebenswelt* and its contingencies, as for example 'semantic drift'. How in such a dynamic system would singular *a priori* meanings arise? This is easily answered for formal systems: by axiomatic decree. The semantic anchor in natural language is to be sought elsewhere. As Hilary Putnam proposes, instead of being tethered to ideality language is like, 'a great balloon, anchored to the ground of non-linguistic facts only by a number of widely scattered and very thin (but all-important) ropes'. (Putnam 1979: 4f.) And, I am inclined to add, by millions of fine threads of *Vorstellung*. I will have occasion at the end of the paper to return to Putnam's comparison to see how it would fare in Husserl's *Lebenswelt*.

In actuality, what can and what cannot be said in a language faces two major constraints: the world of *Anschauung* and its myriad variations in *Vorstellung*, on the one hand, and, on the other, community sanctioned idiomatic phrasing. As far as the world is concerned, it has a degree of say

in natural language not matched in artificial sign systems. For example, contrary to some claims in the literature, *predicability* is not as much a result of grammar as of extra-linguistic relations in the perceptual world. (Keil 1979; Bickerton 1981) That ‘a tree cannot give legal advice’, or ‘a tiger disagree with Kurt Gödel’ is not the result of grammar. Nor is the fact that our natural kind terms describe the world the way they do. If we take the *Lebenswelt* as our starting point, it is not the ideality of meaning or grammar but much more likely a certain degree of schematization in relation to their existential ground that determines their role in language. As Husserl came to see in his late writings, here too the *a priori* is the *Lebenswelt*.

Nevertheless, Husserl’s stipulation of identity and ideality as necessary features of linguistic meaning has been strongly defended, as for example by Mohanty in ‘Husserl’s Thesis of the Ideality of Meaning’, an analysis that deserves closer inspection. (Mohanty 1977: 76–82) Mohanty opens his paper with an all or nothing contrast. Either we cater for identity of meaning as a triple requirement for (1) the retention of sameness of meaning in varying contexts; (2) sharability of meanings in communication and (3) the repeatability of meaning by one and the same speaker in different speech acts and contexts, or else we reduce meaning to ‘the private experiences of the speaker or the hearer’, a charge commonly leveled against Locke. (76) Mohanty frames Husserl’s ideality of meaning in terms of ‘identity, context-independence, intersubjective sharability and communicability’; the fact that meanings ‘stand internally related to the mental life’; that they ‘serve as mediums of reference to things, events, persons, places, and processes in the world’; and that ‘they are incarnated in physical expressions’. (77) Meaning or sense, then, remains at the level of ideality in any application. As Mohanty reads Husserl, ‘The idea of sameness here needs the concept of ideality. Only what is unreal can defy individuation by spatio-temporal location, and can maintain identity in multiplicity’. (78f.) What is open to question is whether Platonic ideality is the best way of explaining communicability, whether the notion of ‘identity’ can be coherently argued and demonstrated, and whether it is needed at all. My answer is ‘no’ to all three options.

Because in Husserl meaning is always an intentional act rather than part of an expression, Mohanty rejects the parallel with ‘*vouloir dire*’ or an Austinian ‘illocution’. And even if, as does Dag Føllesdal, we were to regard Husserl’s meanings as ‘intensional entities’, like Frege’s *Sinne*, intensionality itself ‘derives from intentionality’. For ‘an act is intentional’ if its intended object is intended ‘in a certain manner as being such and such: this is to ascribe to it a sense or a meaning and a reference’ or, preferably, *aboutness* and, I am inclined to add, always also a *modality*. (79f.) The point to

remember here is that one of the reasons why Husserl introduced the notion of noema in *Ideas* was to distance himself from the radical emptiness of Frege's *Sinn*. Nevertheless, a serious tension remains. If 'meanings are contents of acts' and meaning is 'an ideal content', in what form does any such specific ideality cater for the features of acts? Has ideality not fully de-specified the act of meaning? If, as Mohanty says, linguistic ideality is not 'a real component of an experience', nor 'a species', nor indeed 'an essence', what sort of abstraction then is Husserl's idealization? (80; 78) Though Mohanty's position is a plausible summary of Husserl's position in the *Logical Investigations*, classically supported earlier by Dorian Cairns in 'The Ideality of Verbal Expressions', (Cairns 1941) the *Lebenswelt* declares semantic identity via ideality an unlikely candidate for a persuasive description of linguistic meaning. Something quite different is needed, something Husserl was to begin to argue for in *Ideas I*.

2. Cave Exempla:

Husserl's Triangle and Other Formal Escape Routes

As we have already noted, when identity and ideality are to be demonstrated in the *Logical Investigations*, Husserl does not hesitate to leap to formalization: 'The three perpendiculars of a triangle intersect in a point'. Indeed, here we have, as Husserl says, 'an identity in the strict sense, one and the same geometrical truth'. (*LI I*, §11) Yet the formality of geometry cannot be equated with what goes on in natural language; less so the laws of arithmetic which 'tell us nothing about what is real'. (*LI*, Prolegomena to Pure Logic §46) So if Husserl is correct in saying that 'temporality is a sufficient mark of reality', (*LI II* §8) then Frege's equivocation of arithmetic and geometrical expressions with those of 'evening star' and 'morning star' is disallowed. And while there is still a minimum of *aboutness* in geometry, there is no *modality*. Consider the following example. 'The transnationals are beyond the control of elected governments', spoken by a major shareholder of BP with the implicit modality of 'Thank God', after President Obama was pulled back by the Supreme Court, preventing him from putting an embargo on off-shore oil drilling. Pragmatically, the sentence is fundamentally different from the same sentence being uttered by an environmentalist scraping the oil of a seabird in the Gulf of Florida. The signifier 'Europe' does not have the same signified or meaning, only the same *aboutness* and *referring use*, when spoken by a BBC journalist and by President Nicholas Sarkozy. Husserl tries to resolve this issue under the heading of 'essentially occasional expressions', to be discussed below.

The point I am making here is that thou shalt recognize a theory by its exemplification. It highlights both a theory's strengths and blind spots. 'The

present King of France is bald' is not viewed by Russell and his successors from the perspective of the fictions which philosophy employs in order to make its propositional points about meanings. (Slater 2011; forthcoming) The same can be said about the discarded modalities in Montague grammar and hyperintensional logic. (Montague 1970; Duzi et al. 2010) The Husserl of the *Logical Investigations* does not entirely escape this criticism. If for 'The vanquished at Waterloo' we substitute 'constitutional monarchy' in two different utterance situations, one in which the speaker is a member of the 'People's Congress' of China, the other in which the expression is used by Prince Charles, features of language emerge that remained hidden in Husserl's early account. Nevertheless, because of his close phenomenological attention to the acts we typically perform in linguistic communication, Husserl did note 'intimation' as an essential part of language.

Why the distinction between *aboutness* and *modality* is so important in natural language is that there is no *logical* barrier to be discovered between where the 'definite description' of the sentence ends and its deictic modifications kick in. On this point Husserl's critique of the Millian distinction between 'denotation' and 'connotation' is instructive'. (*LI I* §16) For the analysis of natural language the distinction turns out to be no more than one between small and large dictionaries. Here, *aboutness* and *modality* are inextricably intertwined. Because of this lack of a demarcation we can say that 'in natural language, modality often overrides propositional content'. Formal sign systems were invented precisely for the reason to prevent this relation and its ensuing fuzziness. The topic of *modality* as an essential feature of natural language will be taken up again later under the heading of 'Essentially Occasional Sentences'. Suffice it here to say that the illustration of linguistic meaning by formal examples at best captures only a part of what is going on when we speak. Indeed, Husserl's own definition of 'logical meanings' as an 'ideally closed set of general objects' disallows the analogy with formal stand-ins. (*LI I* §35) This much has been conceded even from within the ranks of analytical philosophy by such prominent philosophers as Alfred Tarski, the later Wittgenstein and W.V. Quine.

3. Identity, Cognitive Equivalence, Vagueness, and Haziness

In *The Pursuit of Truth* Quine apologizes for the 'platitude' of 'there being no entity without identity' and asks 'might we not likewise recognize meanings without identity?' The firm answer from within a strict form of semantics is a definite 'No'. (1993: 52 n8) Quine's rigor has to be understood in light of his uncompromising view of analyticity. As to natural language, he cannot see how one could argue semantic identity at all. But he offers a way out. 'Lowering our sights and giving up on "propositions" as language-

transcendent sentence meanings', Quine explores the possibility of what he calls 'domestic meanings' which would not demand strict identity but could instead be based on 'cognitive equivalence'. (53ff.) 'Sentences are *cognitively equivalent*,' he writes, 'if putting one for the other does not affect' their 'empirical content'. (53) Neither for Quine, nor for Husserl can 'equivalence' mean 'identity'. (Husserl *LI* II §39) If we were to accept rough 'cognitive equivalence' as characteristic of linguistic meaning, the question arises how we can ever achieve precision in the use of natural language. I suggest that we typically employ two strategies, one a process of negotiatory approximation, the other the import of technical language into ordinary discourse.

Quine is not alone amongst analytical philosophers in his caution. The relative vagueness of 'domestic meaning' had been touched on much earlier by Bertrand Russell. In his paper on 'Vagueness' of 1923 Russell offered a notion of natural language meaning that was more compatible with the *Lebenswelt* than Husserl's semantic idealization presupposed in the *Logical Investigations*. 'The meaning of a word is not absolutely definite', Russell writes, it always has 'a greater or less degree of vagueness'. Comparing linguistic meaning with an 'area' and a 'target', he says that 'it may have a bull's eye, but the outlying parts of the target are still more or less within the meaning, in gradually diminishing degree'. For Russell, meaning always has 'a doubtful region'. (Russell 1923: 84–92) This characterizes well the concept of semantic *aboutness* as essentially fuzzy and invites a theorization of natural language concepts as 'soft-core' compared to the 'hard-edged' concepts of formal sign systems and the 'soft-edged' concepts of philosophy. (Ruthrof 2009) Linguistic meaning, then, is better viewed as horzonal than as definitional. And what goes for *aboutness* also goes for *modality* in both its explicit and implicit forms. (Ruthrof 2000: 48ff.)

It comes as a bit of a surprise, then, that we find buried in the ideality and identity driven *Logical Investigations* that in principle Husserl had Russell's insight two decades earlier. '*Most* expressions used in ordinary life', Husserl writes, 'such as "tree", "shrub", "animal", "plant" etc., are *vague*', their meaning 'oriented towards *types*, only partially conceived with clearness and definiteness'. He deplors that 'the *haziness* of such expressions' is not conducive to 'definite identifications' because they reflect 'phenomenal properties' which '*shade continuously into one another*, producing 'fluid' relations and 'vague borders'. (*LI* I §27; my italics) A fundamental tension then exists between Husserl's observation that the majority of natural language expressions falls under this kind of description and his insistence on the ideality of meaning and semantic identity. When he places 'type' and 'typification' at the center of his investigation towards the end of his career he encourages us to resume his theme of semantic vagueness in order to revise his semantics accordingly.

An altogether different perspective from which we can view the *myth of semantic identity* is the evolution of language. Placing language speculatively in the evolution of human consciousness suggests that natural language is precariously balanced between several million years, give or take a few, of gestural communication on the one hand and, on the other, the development of syntactically defined sign systems, that is mathematization, including all forms of logic, to the Boolean code, so far. Complemented by modern forms of sign language, remnants of gestural communication have survived to this day, enriched by rude nonverbal indicative intimations. None of these, however, could be argued to require *identity*. All that is needed here for communication is an approximating directionality. We could call such nonverbal meanings socially sanctioned nonverbal schemata at varying levels of generalization. So the idea that communication in general requires identity is not tenable. But does this apply equally to communication in verbal exchanges? Are we not better served by the stipulation of identity than by a merely rough directionality and vague cognitive equivalence?

As the nonverbal precursors of language suggest, it is only the ‘rear-view-mirror’ approach to natural language via mathematization that produces identity as a ‘requirement’. Identity is ‘like a pair of glasses on our nose through which we see whatever we look at. It never occurs to us to take them off,’ says Wittgenstein. (*PI* §103) Given the evolutionary position of its birth between gestural communication and the formal derivatives of language, it stands to reason that the linguistic transformations of gesture left their traces of non-verbal directionality: approximating *indication*. (*Deuten – Bedeutung*; pointing – meaning) Furthermore, it is most likely that language has inherited from its perceptual and gestural forerunners not only the way it names the object world by ‘indication’ and communicates internal states by ‘intimation’, it has also inherited and then refined the basic matrix of what one could call a gestural *protosyntax*. (Ruthrof 2010b:163) To guarantee survival, the pre-predicative *Lebenswelt* had to be replete with its own ‘web of belief’ in the regularities of up and down, now and then, as well as conditional relations. The perception of the low sun had to be recognized as a sign for the need of shelter and the *Vorstellung* of a leopard hidden behind foliage must have proven an advantage over seeing it at the last moment. That this would have had to be, as Saussureans believe, a ‘foggy’ world because of the absence of language is preposterous. (Ruthrof 2010b) It was a different world with its own precisions, but a *Lebenswelt* nevertheless, where resemblance relations were communicated effectively to guarantee communal survival under the rule of *sufficient semiosis*. (Ruthrof 1997: 48f.; 292) In *Experience and Judgment* it is the pre-predicative world experienced as passive synthesis that still supplies us with the rudiments of attribution and predication, the ‘passive protodoxa’, (Husserl 1973b: 65) a

perspective that can be argued only by taking the social into account. So I ask, where in the *Logical Investigations* is what Husserl is later to call 'the community of life' which, as speech community, sustains language? (*Crisis* §36).

4. The Speech Community: The Missing Component

While Locke had granted the speech community a prominent place in his empiricist semantics, though not being able to forge convincingly the vital link between subjective meanings and communal control, Husserl's semantic ideality makes the speech community superfluous. The speech community here has no stewardship over meanings. And yet, without a speech community, there is no such thing as a language. The latter presupposes the former, while the former could not be called what it is without a language. Speech community and language evolve as one. Husserl escapes both speech community and its role in meaning by recourse to ideality and internal soliloquy. While the commitment to ideality can be found in many accounts of semantics, the notion of soliloquy is out of sync not only with the majority of natural language theorists but also with the principles of the *Lebenswelt*. So we ask 'How solipsistic is soliloquy?' In Husserl's solitary internal performance of language, 'expressions function meaningfully' without serving 'to indicate anything' (*LI I* §1). Nor is there any 'intimation', (§8) because 'the soliloquizing thinker "understands" his words, and this understanding is simply his act of meaning them'. (§23 n1) If soliloquy were to be viewed as an instance of 'private language' use, then Wittgenstein's well-rehearsed arguments would be devastating to Husserl's account, with soliloquy being no more than a *de facto* private use fully determined by communicable rules. Accordingly, we could ask whether we could do all the things in silent soliloquy that we can do publicly and do things that we could not do in public performance. The answer would show that such things as internal role playing are inescapable, including question and answers and especially the performance of modality. For once we perform linguistic irony and other enunciative spins, the fundamentally dialogic (or poly-logical) nature of language comes to the fore. In any case, in a philosophy which is to 'satisfy the *principle of freedom from presuppositions*' the assumption of ideality at the price of omitting the role of the speech community must look odd. (*LI*, vol. II, Introduction §7) Once we reach the *Crisis* and *Experience and Judgment* where the *Lebenswelt* has been declared the ultimate *a priori*, intersubjectivity looms large and the speech community is able to play its appropriate role.

5. Two Kinds of Noema, Modality and *Sachlage*

Husserl's definition of formalization as the empty end point on the axis of mental 'dematerialization' in contrast to generalization on the axis of de-specification provides a useful tool for inquiring whether ideality and formality are not preferably replaced by degrees of generalization. (*Ideas* §13) Mirroring this distinction, Husserl allows for an argument in favor of the distinction between two kinds of noemata, the formal noema, which remains congruent with Husserl's demand for meaning identity in the *Logical Investigations*, and a non-formal noema which anticipates his later notion of 'non-essential typifications'. (*EJ* §83) Such a reading of Husserl's overall endeavor is borne out by the fact that as early as in the *Ideas* the noema is presented as remaining linked to intuition and so cannot be regarded as 'empty' as Frege's *Sinn*. In agreement with Robert Sokolowski (2000) and Lenore Langsdorf (1984), to name just two Husserlian scholars, this amounts to a strong rejection of reading the noema as formal, as it has been influentially argued by Dag Føllesdal. (Føllesdal 1969, 1990, 2004; cf. also Smith and McIntyre 1982) Nor does Husserl's description of the internal structure of the noema alter this fundamental distinction. (Cf. Bernet 1990)

For our purposes, the sharp distinction between two kinds of noema is essential, bearing in mind that only non-formal noemata have the capacity to transfer resemblance relations from the nonverbal aspects of the *Lebenswelt* into natural language, its dominant sign system. This is so on the proviso that we understand that neither noemata themselves nor their linguistic signifiers are agents; it is the speakers of a language who have been trained to accomplish such a transfer by means of expressions. They do so under the gun, as it were, of the 'linguistic linkage compulsion'. That is to say, at the moment of comprehending an expression, Reinach's 'punctual act of meaning', (Reinach 1989: 103) speakers are not able to substitute for their habitual meaning-acts any alternative, private ones. If this is so, as I have argued elsewhere, then meanings must be *indirectly public*. (Ruthrof 2010a: 146) Husserl's emphasis on mental acts in the performance of linguistic meaning, then, remains indispensable, though it cannot be argued via subjective ideality.

In *Logical Investigations* Husserl draws another influential distinction, spawned as it probably did such notions as Russell's 'ego-centric particulars' (*An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth*, Chapter 7) and Adolf Reinach's speech-act phenomenology of 1913, an important precursor of Wittgenstein's 'multiplicity of the tools in language', (*PI* §23) as well as its uptake in the speech-act theories of John Langshaw Austin and John R. Searle. I am referring here to Husserl's definition of 'essentially occasional expressions'. As Husserl writes, 'we call an expression essentially subjective and occasional' if its

meaning depends on ‘occasion, speaker and situation’ and if it displays ‘universally operative indication’ such as I, you, etc. (*LI I* §26) Using his distinction between ‘act character’ and ‘ideally unified meaning’, Husserl reasons that while the former differs from case to case, the sense of the sentence ‘should remain identical’. (§31) In Husserl’s own terms, one could agree that its ‘indicated meaning’ does not change, while its ‘intimated meaning’ introduces a principle of modification, part of linguistic *modality*. Husserl insists however that such modifications do not affect the meaning itself but only ‘the act of meaning’. (§28)

Husserl’s ‘*wesentlich okkasionelle Ausdrücke*’ have been well rehearsed by Aaron Gurwitsch in ‘Outlines of a Theory of “Essentially Occasional Expressions”’, which I will briefly take as my stalking horse to argue a radical correction, namely that in natural language *all* expressions are *essentially occasional* as a result of *implicit deixis*. According to Gurwitsch, ‘a theory of such expressions must fulfill two requirements: (1) it must account for their essential ambiguity and (2) it must take the circumstances of their occurrence into account’. (Gurwitsch 1977: 117) Gurwitsch resolves the first requirement by saying that meaning is often specified by way of perception or its equivalents in *Vorstellung*. (119) Yet, since ‘the meaningfulness of essentially occasional expressions’ according to Husserl, ‘does not derive from any specifying act but resides entirely in these expressions themselves as bearers of meaning functions’, perception and other mental representations can only be viewed as ‘meaning-specifying’ but not as ‘meaning-bestowing’. (120) Yet it is only once the meaning-specifying circumstances of utterance are taken into account that the expressions themselves can be disambiguated. After all, says Gurwitsch, ‘the singular status of the essentially occasional expression derives from the particular organizational aspect with which the perceptual world presents itself’. (121) In other words, *modality* affects *aboutness*.

In light of my extension of the features of essentially occasional expressions to all sequences of signifiers in natural language, I take issue with the assertion that their ‘meaningfulness’ is supposed to reside ‘entirely in these expressions themselves’. Expressions by themselves are meaningless unless they are pragmatically activated in linguistic use, a process that can be distilled into an *a posteriori* semantics in contradistinction to the *a priori* semantics of formal systems. We should take Husserl’s mentalism of meaning acts seriously by asserting that meanings reside not in signifiers but in the minds of the speakers of a language as a result of pedagogy. Nothing can ‘reside’ in a signifier. It is only the trained individual-as-social use of signifiers that produces meanings. In habitual speech, which constitutes the vast bulk of language use, the ‘linguistic linkage compulsion’ can be viewed as socially controlled, instantaneous and tightly circumscribed se-

mantic ‘appresentation’ or ‘co-presentation’ as meaning-fulfillment or ‘the bestowal of meaning’ in response to the sounds of expressions. (*Ideas* §85) This would allow for Husserl’s observation in *Logical Investigations* that ‘in the act of meaning we are not conscious of meaning as an object’. Awareness in this respect is a matter of theorization. (*LI I* §34) This is my first objection to the Husserlian position on ‘essentially occasional expressions’.

My second objection is that the special status which Husserl bestows on ‘essentially occasional expressions’ rests on the assumption that linguistic modality occurs only when it is explicitly marked. To be sure, Husserl is not alone in holding this view. In linguistics, it is common practice to deal with such expressions under the notion of ‘deixis’ as marked reference to speaker and speech situation. Only when it is signaled in a sentence are we supposed to be aware of its ‘enunciative modalities’, to use Foucault’s broader term. (Foucault 1986: 55ff.) Yet there is no language usage whatsoever without speakers and utterance situations, even if they are not specifically foregrounded. And without use, language does not exist *as* language. When it does exist in a social setting, all language carries, at least for the native speaker, the *manner of its utterance*. This we could call the fundamental *modality* of natural language or, in linguistic terms, its *implicit deixis*. All expressions of natural language, then, must be comprehended in terms of the double construction by the user of their *aboutness* and *modality*. One could say that there is no meaning without *spin*. Consider the term ‘evil’. Uttered from a secular perspective in its sense of heartless, brutal, vicious, necrophilic, etc., it suggests a sick or very nasty person. As part of a mythological web of belief, as in texts grounded in the bankrupt ideology of ‘good and evil’, such as the Harry Potter narratives, *Star Wars*, or Tolkien’s fantasies, the term ‘evil’ is not easily replaced by alternative terms *salva veritate*. Husserl himself provides encouragement for this kind of argument when he distinguishes *Sachverhalt* (state of affairs) from *Sachlage* (situation of affairs), the former being grasped as what an expression is *about*, the latter requiring interpretive reconstruction of the kind of situation within which a particular *Sachverhalt* makes sense. (*Experience and Judgment* §59) An alternative reading is given by Guillermo Haddock who distinguishes ‘states of affairs’ as the ‘referents of statements’ from ‘situations of affairs as a sort of referential basis of states of affairs’. (Haddock 2000: 208; cf. also pp. 255ff.) Alternatively Haddock defines the difference as one between ‘a categorial objectuality that is the correlate or reference of one or more propositions’ and ‘receptively apprehended objectualities that serve as basis of two or more states of affairs’. (Haddock 2000: 65 n25)

Husserl's important distinction strikes me as anticipating the kind of work Paul Grice introduced under the heading of 'presuppositions'. (Grice 1989) What sets Husserl's enterprise sharply apart from Grice is that it involves nonverbal *Vorstellung* as variation of perception and as a necessary feature of the interpretive process, whereas Grice conceives 'presuppositions' within the narrower frame of propositional logic. What Husserl allows us to do is to say that if the presupposed *Sachlage* changes, so must its *Sachverhalt*, as well as meaning. As our examples suggest, what is characteristic of *essentially occasional expressions* is part and parcel of every linguistic expression, suggestive of a relevant *Sachlage*, whether its *modality* is immediately marked or not. Having argued this way, however, we now have pushed the distinction Husserl and linguists are making down to a more specific level where we must separate *explicit* from *implicit deixis*, or marked versus unmarked modality. On a closer reading of the *Logical Investigations*, though, we discover that in a way Husserl has anticipated my criticisms when he says in the 'Foreword' to the second edition, that 'in strictness, all empirical predications belong' to 'occasional meanings'. Here again Husserl himself provides the means with which to repair his natural language semantics where it is viewed exclusively from the perspective of 'the ideal nature of the meaning-realm'. (LIIV §11)

If language has indeed inherited resemblance relations *about* the world and *the way* they were communicated in the pre-predicative community as speech *modality*, our dominant discourses in linguistics and the philosophy of language do not handle these two features well. Let me emphasize here the merit of Husserl's tightrope act of not letting go of the mental acts he saw as necessary components of language while at the same time avoiding what has been called Locke's psychologism. For such an enterprise there appear to be three distinct solutions: (1) to declare meanings a Platonic *ideal species* or some other kind of universal entity; (2) to make them *formal*, that is syntactic relations governed axiomatically by definitions; and (3) to *socialize* them. At the beginning of his career Husserl was firmly committed to the first option, while at times collapsing solutions (1) and (2), whereas towards the end of his career he shifted the *a priori* to the *Lebenswelt*, without however being able to revise his natural language semantics accordingly. It is the purpose of this paper to suggest ways of facilitating some such revision, with an emphasis on *Vorstellung* and socially controlled schematization.

II. Revising Husserl's Natural Language Semantics

1. Resemblance Relations and Degrees of Schematization

If semantic ideality and formal identity can only be stipulated but not demonstrated for meanings in natural language, where in Husserl's oeuvre do we go for a more satisfactory explanation? Unlike formal signs, the signifieds of natural language expressions somehow carry *resemblance relations*. That much we must be able to account for. Locke tried to argue this insight but found it difficult to escape solipsism in spite of his invocation of a speech community, because he insisted on the privacy of *Vorstellung*. In Kant, *Anschauung* was transformed into *Vorstellung* and the *Einbildungskraft*, in order to prevent the loss of *iconicity*, by way of a species specific schematism. Husserl's ideality of meaning, especially when it is argued by way of formalization, poses a hurdle to resemblance relation since we cannot have it both ways, secure radical identity amongst the meanings of an expression and at the same time retain traces of the historicity of the *Lebenswelt* 'encrypted' in expressions. In formal sense, the *aboutness* of meaning dematerializes to empty place-holders, while *modality* dematerializes to zero, leaving behind a syntactic string in which the relation between terms is no longer grounded in the *Lebenswelt* but in one of its specialized ontological domains, the domain of *a priori* definitions. For an argument in favor of resemblance relations in a phenomenology of linguistic meaning, Husserl himself provides a number of footholds, such as certain mental acts we cannot but perform when we use language: the transformation of perception in non-formal noemata, profiles, *Anschauung*, *appresentation*, *Vorstellung*, 'differences in vitality', (2005: 373) 'analogical representation', (*LI VI* §21) retentions and protentions, exclusive directionality, 'gradations of fullness', 'richness', 'liveliness', 'vivacity', '*Realitätsgehalt*', (*LI VI* §23), 'combinatory forms' (*III* §21), 'abstractive percept' (*VI* §48), 'semblance acts', (2005: 710) habitual 'circles of resemblance', 'differing resemblances', (*II* §36) and above all the *a priori Lebenswelt* and its *typifications*. As recipes for social action, in Schutz's sense, *typifications* do not require the domain of ideality, as do triangles, but can be argued as generalizations at differing degrees of abstraction without ever altogether losing their mental material content. This is uncontroversial with respect to perceptual expressions. Here, 'the whole sense of the statement finds fulfillment through our underlying percept', the whole statement giving 'utterance to our percept'. (*LI VI* §40) At least in such cases, resemblance relations are preserved in linguistic meaning, even if 'we cannot suppose that perception is the act in which the sense of a perceptual statement, its expressive intention, is achieved'. (*LI VI* §4) In another passage in the *Logical Investigations*, Husserl deviates

from semantic ideality, noting that the ‘generality of words’ belongs ‘to an endless array of possible intuitions’. (*LI VI §7*) One may wonder why Husserl did not stumble more fruitfully over the discrepancy he had created between the relation of ‘meaning-intention’ and ‘corresponding intuition’ on the one hand and meaning ideality, on the other. To his credit, in an ‘*Addendum*’ Husserl writes,

I cannot here suppress a difficulty connected with the otherwise illuminating notion of the unity of identity or recognition ... Shall we say that an emphasis of attention decides the matter? Or ought we not rather grant that there is not here a fully constituted act of identification: the nucleus of this act, the connective union of significant intention and corresponding intuition is really present, but it “represents” no objectifying interpretation. (*Auffassung*) (*LI VI §8; Addendum*, p.697)

Another promising avenue to explore from the *Logical Investigations to Experience and Judgment* is Husserl’s concept of ‘profiles’. In perception, material objects are realized in consciousness as a synthesis of visual, tactile, gustatory, and other heterosemiotic profiles. As Sokolowski sums it up, ‘a profile is a moment of a thing-synthesis’. (Sokolowski 1977: 102) In this sense ‘profiles’ belong to Husserl’s theorization of ‘parts and wholes’ where he distinguishes two kind of parts, ‘pieces’ and ‘moments’. Profiles are instances of the latter. Though in the *Logical Investigations* Husserl mentions profiles together with ‘aspects’ of an object, the concept of profile seems to me to emphasize more the outline of things rather than their adumbrational sides. As such, the notion of profile is reminiscent of Kant’s transcendental schema of a dog: ‘The concept of a dog is a rule according to which my imagination is able to sketch in a general manner the shape of a certain four-legged animal, without being restricted to any singular and specific shape, given to me by experience or any possible picture that I could represent *in concreto*’. (*CPR A141/B180*) Importantly, Kant draws a sharp distinction between *mental schematization* and *mental image* in that images are facilitated by the ‘*empirical* capacity of our productive imagination’, as part of *Vorstellung*, whereas ‘the schema of sensible concepts (as figures in space) are a product and as it were a *monogram* of our pure imagination *a priori*, by which and according to which images become possible in the first place. Yet they are to be connected with the concept only by means of the schema, which they indicate, and with which they are not entirely congruent’. (*CPR A141f./B181*) By contrast, schematizations of pure concepts of the understanding cannot be pictorially represented at all. Kant then proceeds to discuss the schemata of increasingly abstract categories, an exercise that has largely been howled down in the literature. In spite of the bad press the schematism chapter has had to endure, it may yet prove as one of the most fruitful avenues for the description of natural

language semantics. Certainly, the doctrine of ‘profiles’ in its relation to the notion of schematization offers another way out of Husserl’s early commitment to semantic ideality and formalization in the sense that as generalized abstractions, that is, de-specified perceptual grasp, profiles can be held in *Vorstellung* as *schemata* bearing reduced and yet still sufficient resemblance relations for recognition ‘in a flash’, to use Wittgenstein’s phrase. (*PI* §§139; 191; 318f.) A similar comparison between Husserl and Kant has been drawn by Dieter Lohmar in ‘Husserl’s Type and Kant’s Schemata’ resulting in the conclusion that apart from their different genesis the two notions are ‘functionally almost identical’. (Lohmar 2003: 93)

If linguistic meanings are to be able to carry social and historical ingredients, as I think they must in contrast to formal signs, then we require not only the notion of *schematization* in some shape, but also *degrees of schematization*. And if we follow Lohmar and take schematizations in the sense of ‘typifications’, then degrees of generalization or de-specification can be argued within Husserl’s own parameters. (*Ideas*, §13) We can furthermore draw on Husserl’s concept of ‘grades of evidence’ in the *Cartesian Mediations* (§6) where he distinguishes ‘apodictic’ from ‘adequate’ and ‘certain’ evidence. Since neither ‘absolute indubitability’ nor ‘idealization’ without lacunae of indeterminacy apply to linguistic meanings, we have to lower our sights to degrees of certainty of evidence according to which speakers of a language do not doubt that a signifier like ‘envious’ directs us towards a certain mental disposition consisting in a certain range of mental materials regulated by its concept. At least in habitual speech, then, evidential certainty could be said to characterize relevant degrees of schematization. In interpretive and problematic meaning constructions, as described by Alfred Schutz in his last manuscript, Husserl’s tripartite division of ‘evidence’ would have to be complemented by a more fluid notion of schematization. (Schutz 1970) The use of natural language in hermetic poetry, as for example in the late poems of Paul Celan, may serve as a case in point. What is missing in both the Kantian and Husserlian accounts is how semantic schematization functions in the relationship between speakers of a language and the speech community. Instead of seeing Husserlian ‘profiles’ as idealized species or as schemata dictated by human biology, they should also be investigated as intersubjectively shared rules monitored by a community, facilitating approximate semantic agreements. Indeed, such rules may be shared to the extent of sameness as a result of ‘exclusive directionality’ in the sharpened sense of ‘linguistic linkage compulsion’ which rigorously curtails meanings in individual semantic events. The linkage of resemblance relations and language is hinted at by Husserl in his observation that ‘with each circle of resemblance a particular name is associatively linked, so that the inner reflection, together with its characteristic “angle” of treatment, also

fixes the general name'. (*LI* II §36) What is remarkable here is that in one sentence Husserl appears to intimate an entire non-essential approach to natural language capturing both linguistic *aboutness* ('inner reflection') and *modality* ('angle'). Followed to its logical conclusion, it would seem that here once more Husserl is pointing us towards a *semantics of imaginability*.

2. Nonessential Typifications, *Vorstellung*, and Appresentation

By the time of the posthumous *Experience and Judgment*, Husserl has quite dramatically changed his description of the way we grasp the world by means of 'typifications', a change that has profound consequences for the revision of his earlier natural language semantics. Now he distinguishes between 'essential' typifications as they function in science and 'nonessential typifications' characteristic of understanding in the *Lebenswelt*. (*EJ* §83) Both kinds of typification not only display differing levels of generality but, in agreement with distinctions drawn early in *Ideas*, are also marked as 'formal' and 'material' generalities, respectively. (§85) For both, Husserl stipulates that the greater the extension of an expression, the higher the level of generality. What is central to our argument here is that 'similarity ... has a gradation', such that 'the levels of generality are conditioned by the degrees of likeness of the members of the extension'. (§84) Here, then, we have degrees of resemblance relations built into non-formal typifications. I suggest that typifications understood in this way furnish precisely what is required to fit the bill also of meanings in natural language. Instead of meaning viewed as formal or ideal species, 'complete likeness' is now no more than a limiting case, 'the limit of similarity'. (§84) Identity is now reserved for 'essential' typification, as it should be, while natural language has its semantic anchor in similarity or resemblance relations generalized to appropriate degrees. As Natanson writes with reference to the *Lebenswelt*, 'typification is the generic term for an abstractive process, one whose central accomplishment is the experience of the familiar'. (Natanson 1973: 140) To retain a sense of any such experience in language, we are bound to stipulate degrees of schematized resemblance relations as part of signifieds in the form of mental materials and their regulation by concepts. Only in this manner, I suggest, can the '*Totalitätstypik*' and '*Habitualität*' der *Lebenswelt* be rendered linguistic. (Husserl 1973b: 36, 52)

In the *Logical Investigations*, Husserl raises the question, resumed prominently by Wittgenstein, whether the meaning process 'necessarily involves ... an act of fancy, or whether, on the other hand, mental imagery lies outside of the essence of an expression, and rather performs a fulfilling role, even if only of a partial, indirect or provisional character'. (*LI* I §10) 'There is a lack of clarity about the role of *imaginability* (*Vorstellbarkeit*) in our in-

vestigation' says Wittgenstein, 'namely about the extent to which it ensures that a sentence (*Satz*) makes sense'. (*PI* §395) And elsewhere, 'the language of imagining does not allow us to imagine anything senseless'. (*PI* §512) But while Wittgenstein relegates the contribution of the imagination to language to the incidental play on the *Vorstellungsklavier*, (*PI* §6) Husserl rightly retains *Vorstellung* as an indispensable component of the semantic process, in that it is responsible for 'quasi-perceiving', 'quasi-judging', 'quasi-wishing', and a myriad other mental quasi-acts. (Husserl 2005: 413) Indeed, his very concept of 'appresentation' that plays such an important role in the *Cartesian Meditations* is all about *Vorstellung* and its function in the constitution of everyday reality. Not only does 'reproductive consciousness' belong to every act of perceiving, as a possibility. (Husserl 2005: 369) 'Every memorial as-if' is a sort of 'transforming fiction' (Husserl 2005: 700f.) and 'every experience has as its counterpart a phantasy (a re-presentation) corresponding to it'. (707)

The current scientific 'best predicate' of the neural asymmetry in dramatic favor of internal neurons over cells dedicated to perception in the human brain tells us that mental monitoring outstrips perceptual input by at least a ratio of 1000:1. If so, it stands to reason that *Vorstellung* in its *productive* form must play the lead role in our functioning in the *Lebenswelt* as 'inactuality modification'. (Husserl 2005: 436) Even in fantasy can 'I feel "real" desire'. (Husserl 2005: 447f.) As to language, the vast bulk of our linguistic performance does not draw immediately on perception but on reproductive and productive *Vorstellung*, defined by Husserl as 'semblance acts' and 'as-if-modification'. (2005: 709f.). The point is how to bring Husserl's insistence on *Vorstellung* to fruition with respect to meaning in natural language without collapsing it into the private meanings of psychologism. As already suggested, we can do so by describing *Vorstellung* not in general but in Husserl's terms of 'exclusive directionality', revised as community sanctioned combination of the sounds of expressions and meaning at the moment of the event, subject to the 'linguistic linkage compulsion'. Here, far from being anything private, *Vorstellung* is functionally reduced into an intersubjectively shared and so *indirectly public* schematization.

3. Language and *Lebenswelt*

Given Husserl's starting point in the description of the acts of consciousness an individual is bound to perform differently in arithmetic, geometry, logic, perception, linguistic meaning, *Vorstellung*, and other ontological domains, how does he finally arrive at the *a priori* of the *Lebenswelt*, and does so in such a forceful manner? How does Husserl transform his first-person perspective into the third-person perspective of intersubjectivity?

How does the *Lebenswelt* arise in Husserl as his overriding ontological commitment? The short answer seems to be that having described acts of consciousness for almost a lifetime, all of which left dangling the Kantian question of the condition of possibility of such individual acts, the *Lebenswelt* began to loom increasingly as a massive and pressing *inference* of a necessary ground. If our subjective acts are indeed such and such, then only a radical intersubjectivity can answer the question of their genesis, an answer postponed for roughly half a century. Husserl's long-sustained first-perspective perspective turns into the epistemic and methodological device for the third-person perspective of the 'intermonadic community' of the *Lebenswelt*, Husserl's final ontological commitment. (*Cartesian Meditations* §56)

In the *Crisis* Husserl offsets the 'formula world' sharply from the *Lebenswelt*. (§9) In the former, nature is seen through the lens of formalization and 'numerical magnitudes', its 'meaning' lying in 'idealities; in the latter, intuitive grasp, *Gewohnheit* (habit) and familiarity determine our 'non-essential typifications'. The 'formula world' thrives on 'prediction to infinity' and confuses its method of measurement with what the world is actually like, forgetting that its tools of predictive inference are in reality derived from 'ordinary inductive knowledge': scientific prediction is the forgotten *Vor-meinen* (meaning in advance) that has always characterized the *Lebenswelt*.

Although initially, the *Lebenswelt* was a 'scientific critical, not a social-philosophical concept', (Held 2003: 50) its social implications were unavoidable. We could sum up the characteristics of the *Lebenswelt* thus: intuitive 'pre-giveness as existing for all in common'; 'normality' and 'habit' in a 'horizon of familiarity', underestimated by Bourdieu and Habermas, as Dermot Moran has pointed out, experienced as *Heimwelt* versus any *Fremdwelt*, characterized by a foreign tongue; (Moran 2011: 67f.) a certain 'naivety (partial, personal, and non-technical) and 'taken-for-grantedness ... rich modes of mundanity ... experiential density ... familiarity and [its] fundamental historical and cultural horizons', familiarity being defined by Natanson as the 'monothetic result' of 'the capacity of consciousness' of setting aside the history of polythetic acts of perception'; (Natanson 1973: 127; 133) and in Husserl's own words, 'the historical communal life' and the *Geltung* of 'its various subjective ways'. (*Crisis*, p. 152)

In Husserl's holism of the *Lebenswelt*, language does not simply occupy a clearly demarcated domain. Once language has been invented, it is not possible to separate it from the *Lebenswelt*. Whatever meanings we are able to produce non-verbally can also be covered by language, even if not at the same level of specificity. Furthermore, we cannot describe the world we live in without recourse to language either as *definiens* or *definiendum*.

This means that Husserl's view of the *Lebenswelt* as the ultimate *a priori*, the transcendental ground of all human endeavor, which includes science, is always already saturated by natural language. This is not to say, however, that language has fully replaced non-verbal meaning acts. What it does mean is that language as the main vehicle of predication, having transformed *S as p* into *S is p*, has inherited and incorporated its nonverbal precursors perception and *Vorstellung* in a way concealed by idealization and formalization. Much of *predicability* exhibits the same relation. This suggests that what Husserl deplors in the *Crisis*, the non-reflective mathematization of the world, is what prevented him in *Logical Investigations* from seeing that natural language semantics in some way 'contains' and so preserves the *Lebenswelt*. The *Heimwelt* has its specific 'language practices' (Moran 2011:68) reflecting of what is specific about any particular *Lebenswelt*. It is not in propositional generality, but only from within a 'thick' conception of the *Lebenswelt* that such features as Grice's 'presuppositions', 'conversational maxims' and 'cooperative principles', or Austin's 'felicity conditions' can be argued. The question to be asked, then, is what language must be like to be so intimately enmeshed in the *Lebenswelt* rather than in the 'world' of science. Above all else, such a description must grant centre stage to *perception* and its variants in and by *Vorstellung*, which are indispensable for *Meinen* and *Vor-meinen*, *meaning and meaning projection*. In this sense, the following definitions attempt to remedy Husserl's early semantics by drawing on his later insights.

- (1) Language is a set of instructions issued and monitored by the speech community to speakers for *imagining*, and acting in, the *Lebenswelt* and its various ontological sub-domains.
- (2) Linguistic meaning-acts *instantiate* the social rules of the *Lebenswelt*.
- (3) Meaning is the necessary activation of expressions, meaningless outside a specific *Lebenswelt*, by non-verbal mental materials (*aboutness*) regulated by concepts according to 'exclusive directionality' (indication and intimation), quality (act-quality; *modality*), quantity (amount of act-matter), and degree of non-essential typification of resemblance relations, under community guidance (*sufficient semiosis*). In this sense, meanings are socially sanctioned schematized *Vorstellungen* in response to signifiers. As such, meanings are *indirectly public*.
- (4) Signifiers are arbitrary, while all natural language signifieds are *motivated* by virtue of carrying resemblance relations.
- (5) Linguistic concepts appear in at least three different versions: as 'hard-edged concepts' in formal systems; 'soft-edged' concepts in non-formal theorizing; and 'soft-core' concepts in the bulk of natural language use.

(6) In natural language, meaning ideality and identity are replaced by the fuzzy concept of *typified intersubjective meaning agreement* guaranteed by the ‘linguistic linkage compulsion’ which determines every meaning as a consequence of pedagogy exerted by the speech community.

(7) Formal meanings remain well described by the definitional ideality of syntactic relations and identity conditions and the reduction to zero of mental material *aboutness* and *modality*.

What this amounts to is a *semantics of imaginability*. If I can imagine what you are talking about, then meaning occurs. If I cannot, it does not. In contrast, in a scientific view of natural language, of the kind held by Putnam, language is like, ‘a great balloon, anchored to the ground of non-linguistic facts only by a number of widely scattered and very thin (but all-important) ropes’. (Putnam 1979: 4f.) Apart from its unwarranted optimism of entrusting scientists with the stewardship over language, Putnam’s comparison suffers from what Husserl was at pains to rectify: a failure to account for the infinite potential of perceptual variation in *Vorstellung* at the heart of natural language and the *pars pro toto* fallacy of telescoping the complexity of the *Lebenswelt* into one of its areas of specialization, natural science.

Conclusion

By way of conclusion I illustrate my definitions with the following examples of typical natural language expressions as they appear in our *Lebenswelt*. A wine label advertising a Sauvignon Blanc, instead of giving us a series of idealized chemical formulae, reads ‘... with sweet-fruit delights and intense, vibrant gooseberry, melon and lime flavors ...’. A bottle of Shiraz has its contents display a ‘delicate dusty tannin ... creamy cherry and shaved chocolate’; while a Merlot is praised for its ‘red plum and fresh raspberries ... complicated by restrained vanilla oak, vibrant cherry and black currant ... balanced by a soft velvety chocolate finish’ and other Husserlian ‘non-essential typifications’.

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HISTORICIZING SUBJECTIVITY IN CHILDHOOD STUDIES

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ABSTRACT. Standard approaches to the philosophy of childhood frequently begin by problematizing the child as object of study and then tacitly follow a chronology that embraces historical developments emphasizing theories of cognitive and moral development, children’s rights, agency of children, the good of childhood, philosophical thinking in children, and children’s literature. We argue that there is an ambivalence in the childhood studies as well as in our life with children. Despite the efforts to turn to childhood for inspiration and to give children rights there is a sense in which modernity implicates a kind of “adultism” (in line with racism and sexism), an oppression of children, rendering them voiceless. By following different philosophical, political and legal accounts of childhood we suggest that a philosophical study of children and childhood should be historicized and subjectivized. We claim that such an approach to childhood serves as a philosophical and political equivalent to feminism, queer-theory and post-colonialism in childhood studies. We further suggest a point of departure for this approach to childhood in Foucault and Wittgenstein’s work on seeing aspects.

Keywords: childhood studies, philosophy of childhood, adultism, historicise, subjectivize

Introduction

Standard entries on philosophy of childhood (e.g., Matthews, 2005; Matthews, 1994) begin by problematizing the child as object of study and then tacitly follow a chronology that embraces historical developments emphasizing theories of cognitive and moral development (after Piaget and Kohlberg), children’s rights, agency of children, the good of childhood (focused on aesthetics), philosophical thinking in children, and children’s literature. Mat-

thews' (2005) conception that is the entry for the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* is motivated by an Aristotelian reading and, despite his earlier criticism of Piagetian accounts of childhood, tacitly accepts a chronology that flows from Piaget's theory without elaborating the ways in which these approaches are different or, indeed, 'philosophical.' It does not mention historical approaches except for Philippe Aries's work. Nor does it say much on the influence of Freud, psychohistory, and psychotherapeutic accounts of childhood, or more recent social, cultural and political accounts. Michael Pritchard (2009) writes the entry for 'philosophy for children' that again begins with Piaget to focus on the empirical account of Gareth Matthews, Matthew Lipman, McPeck and others, before profiling The Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC).¹

These standard or received views are predominantly psychological in the broad sense of the term and also cognitive, following a chronology shaped by Piaget's work in child psychology. While these approaches are undeniably significant in the history of the study of childhood they have been supplemented and some would say, eclipsed, by new approaches that draw much more of cultural and political analyses, viewing childhood less as a stand-alone empirical and universalist account of 'development' shared by all children, and rather more as reflecting the new postcolonial emphasis on cultural difference and the fashionable historicism in the human science that tends to challenge developmentalism as an ideology.

Also, philosophers since Plato have had an ambiguous relationship to children and childhood. On the one hand many philosophers have seen the importance of childhood to their philosophical positions; on the other hand there are very few philosophical accounts devoted to investigations of childhood and children in its own right. This ambiguity corresponds with tendencies in the ideologies tacit in our many different approaches to children. On the one hand this ideology is very attentive to children and childhood: we care about children and try to understand them socially and psychologically; children's education are often debated issues among politicians and children's political, legal and moral rights are widely discussed; on the other hand, children rarely are understood on their own terms and children tend to be seen as cultural others in societies where the terms for the good life are set by adults. Despite our care for our children we may even speak of this tacit ideology as a form of racism, or in David Kennedy's words, a form of 'adulthoodism.'

The history of adulthood in the west – in the privileged, patriarchal West anyway, which is mostly what we have a record of – is characterized by an attitude toward children and childhood that I have called "adulthoodism." Like racism, ethnocentrism, and sexism, adulthoodism is based on what appear to empirical differ-

ences – in anatomy, neural development, ego-structure, psycho-culture, size, and physical strength. These “real” differences very often lead to “subspeciation,” or the tendency to regard treat certain human others implicitly as if they were members of a separate human species (Kennedy 2006, p. 63).

If there is some truth in this description of our lives with children it is well worth investigating how, when and if, ‘adulthood’ works out in different accounts of children and childhood. In this paper we briefly explore how adulthood may distort philosophical and psychological accounts of children and childhood, despite other strengths of the accounts. We investigate and profile a range of different accounts without claiming to cover all that philosophers have said about children and childhood that may be relevant to our claims. However, the examples we have chosen shows that Kennedy’s worry of adulthood may be as much a worry in philosophical accounts of children as in more everyday approaches to children.

Though all these accounts provide some important perspectives on childhood we conclude by sketching out what is lacking in these accounts or approaches to children and childhood and what kind of philosophical works may remedy this. We suggest that what is needed is a philosophy that (i) can reveal where and when ‘adulthood’ takes place (i.e. a philosophical cultural critique); (ii) a philosophy that can present ideological alternatives to the ‘adulthood’ tendencies we find in some of the philosophical accounts here; and (iii) a philosophy that can account for how positions on childhood is dependent on our previous and current ways of talking and thinking about, and interacting with, children. Accordingly we need a philosophy of childhood that is both historicized and which provides ways for us to work on our subjective experiences of children and childhood. We find that one point of departure for such a philosophy may be in Wittgenstein’s discussions of seeing aspects. We suggest that Wittgenstein’s considerations sustained by Foucauldian historicized accounts can help to establish a discourse concerning children and childhood that brings awareness of children similar to how postcolonial theory, feminism and queer theory has affected our experience in their respective areas. This is a move from an ahistorical and psychologized account of childhood to a historical and subjectivized account.

1. Philosophical and Psychological Views of Childhood

1.1 Rousseau, Romanticism and Childhood

No doubt, we find grounds for both hope and despair in many philosophers’ accounts of childhood. In Rousseau we find this as a general char-

acteristic of his whole philosophy. “For Rousseau, nature is a wise guide, man is an open question, and history is a tale of horror” (Kelly 2001, p. 8). Rousseau believed natural state of man was inheritably good, but that man and his social institutions, though necessary, tends to spoil everything. Rousseau’s hope is instead directed to the birth of the child as a new beginning (see e.g. *Julie, or, The New Heloise* V, 610 & 740–41). Accordingly, for Rousseau the child represents a return to nature.

This appears to have been a major theme in Rousseau’s *Émile*, which can be seen as Rousseau’s answer to his discouraging view of history, of his understanding of the paradoxical condition of man as both a moral and historical agent, as both responsible and victimized. *Émile* is Rousseau’s attempt to show how nature, as a new beginning, may work its way into society “without the awful wrench that most men suffer” (Kelly 2001, p. 25). It is not difficult to see why the child is of great importance to Rousseau’s philosophical, political and literary project in general. However, we must remember that this turn to childhood seen in the light of Rousseau’s other works is a means to manifest how man can exist both for himself and others, which makes *Émile* a pivotal work of Rousseau’s.²

Interestingly many of Rousseau’s views on children predate modern psychologists such as Piaget and Vygotsky in that it presents children’s development through different stages, the first significant stage for Rousseau being the age of twelve. Before that stage education, he suggests, is to be purely negative in that consists in keeping the child from harming itself, letting the child discover nature by itself (Rousseau 1979, pp. 93 & 171). This is developed in his discussions on infancy and childhood in *Emile* (Book I and II). Here the tutor simply sets the scene in which the child is faced with the necessities of nature. The next stage between childhood and puberty the child is presented with what is useful (Book III) and from there moral notions and distinctions (Book IV). Despite its similarities with modern psychology we must keep in mind that *Émile* differs from Piaget and Vygotsky in that it in some sense is neither history nor theory. Clearly, *Émile* is not only a pedagogical treatise it is also a work of literature, something Rousseau seemed to have been very much aware of (O’Hagan 1999, pp. 59–60). Thus we can read the work as a narrative, telling a story about the growth and development of a particular child. Rousseau addresses the problem of how an individual can resist dependence on society by going through a particular kind of education, which must, according to the story in *Émile*, consist in Émile’s own discoveries of nature. The boy Émile is led by his tutor to see particular aspects of nature that will help him find his way around his natural surroundings without imposition from the rest of society. In reading this as literature we are led to discover the nature of the child Émile.

Like the children of Arendt's (1961) "The Crisis in Education" *Émile* was to be kept and protected from society until he had the tools to approach public life. Although this aspect of *Émile* may seem somewhat limiting for the child it is a way in which Rousseau wants to keep the child independent. In *Émile* we are continually reminded that the child needs time to develop according to its own pace (Parry 2001, pp. 252–255). Which means that the child both is in need of protection and someone in which we put our hope for a free and just society in the future.

This may seem as a very reasonable idea. However, the view is far too idealistic. The focus on protecting children seems blind to children's actual circumstances. We live, and have perhaps always lived, in a world where children are introduced to society long before they are prepared to resist the pressures of society, not even the most horrific ones. In addition children have very few opportunities where their voices can have the bearing necessary to be fully involved in society. Thus children has neither protection nor freedom and Rousseau's *Émile* is in danger of just being a beautiful story, and perhaps even useless as a tool to give children both protection and a voice in society. As long as the *Émiles* in our post-modern world are involved in society, we rather need a philosophy that calls our attention to what captures children in society and liberates them from societal oppression. In short Rousseau's views are too romanticized and abstract to be plausible since it doesn't deal with our realities where children already are deeply embedded in society (Simon, 1998).

Rousseau's turn to childhood was both criticized and praised by other romantic thinkers. Schiller, for example, thought of childhood as an innocent state to which, the poet, the individual and society should return. Childhood becomes at once a goal and a point of departure. Still this is no backward movement to Schiller. The romantic poet and philosopher always lead us forward and thus to a new state of innocence reached through a returning to an ideal state. As in Rousseau this is a return to a state of nature. However, unlike Rousseau, the romantic ideal of childlike state of nature, as it is conceived in Schiller, is an ultimate end. Also this ideal is not depicted as a frictionless move from childhood into adulthood and towards a new childhood. Rather, Schiller thinks of this progression as something like a Hegelian struggle. David Kennedy writes,

For Schiller the human ontological vocation is to build – in a dialectical overcoming of the polarization of spirit and matter, of reason and the sensuous – a "third joyous kingdom of play and of semblance, in which man is released from all that might be called constraint, whether physical and moral" (Kennedy 2006, p. 54).

This is a state where the many antitheses of human life may be synthesized. It is a new way of living where children's play represent a harmonious interaction between the self and the world, not subject to the outer world, but at the same time interacting with it. "Man plays only when he is in full sense of the word a man, and *he is only wholly a man when he is playing*" (Schiller 2004, p. 80).

The appeal of the romantic vision of childhood is that it recognizes that even the child is faced with a dialectical struggle between the world and the self. Education is thus conceived as a revolutionary process in which adults return to a state where they can have a playful interaction with the world. This return to childhood is not for the adult to become a child, but for the adult to reactivate her childhood in herself. The Romantics, like Rousseau and Schiller, seems to secularize the Christian idea that entering into heaven requires that we become like little children (Kennedy 2006, p. 52). Still, such a philosophy of childhood is fruitless unless it pays attention to our historical and present day conceptions of childhood, children's play and our interactions with children.

1.2 Genetic Epistemology, Piaget and after

Jean Piaget explained in the first lecture of *Genetic Epistemology* (1968) that it 'attempts to explain knowledge, and in particular scientific knowledge, on the basis of its history, its sociogenesis, and especially the psychological origins of the notions and operations upon which it is based.' Using this method Piaget contribution to our understanding of human development and children's thinking is inestimable. Piaget himself noted that it is not possible to understand the psychology of human development without making epistemological assumptions which includes an understanding of the flawed nature of the central ideas of empiricism, nativism and functionalism. By contrast, Piaget adopts a form of constructivism that suggests that knowledge develops through the child's actions on the world and is tied to a particular structure that emerges as the knowing subject interacts with the world. Influenced by the French structuralist group of mathematicians called Bourbaki, Piaget identifies three cognitive structures that characterize children's thinking as it develops: sensorimotor, concrete operational and formal. While he provides formal and logical descriptions of these structures he also denies that there are any general stages or single structure governing all thought, emotion and action (Muller et al., 2009). Psychologists and educationalists have failed to understand Piaget's theory because they have not grasped the epistemological core of his research program (Marshall & Peters, 1986). His work was thus much influenced by prevailing ideas of structuralism and hermeneutics and, indeed, he publishes a book entitled

Structuralism (1968) where he discusses the three key components of the concept of a structure: the view of a system as a whole instead of so many parts; the study of the transformations in the system; and the fact that these transformations never lead beyond the system but always engender elements that belong to it and preserve its laws. He also illustrates how this concept appears in mathematics and logic (group theory, general algebra); physics and biology (structural models of causality, homeostasis); psychology (the laws of Gestalt, the structure of intelligence); linguistics (synchronics, generative grammars); social sciences (analytic, global and anthropological structuralism); and philosophy (dialectic, epistemology). Piaget's cognitive structuralism has influenced many philosophers including Thomas Kuhn's paradigms, Jürgen Habermas' reworking of historical materialism, and Lawrence Kohlberg's stages of moral development.

Piaget's theory of the qualitative changes in representation and understanding that constitutes development has come in for criticism on the ground that many basic features of understanding are present at birth or shortly after and that stages are not invariant or indeed dependent on one another. Neo-Piagetians now tend to examine a wider range of behavior including the emotions even though they hold to the core of the research program which is anchored in a sensitivity to numbers, a reflection of the Bourbaki group's influence on Piaget. There is no doubt that Piaget is one of the central figures in the cognitive revolution that took first an 'information-processing' and then a 'discursive' turn to close out the twentieth century. The new cognitive science initiated by Jerome Bruner and G.A. Miller and P.N. Johnson-Laird developed from computation as the prime example of mental activity leading to an understanding of the brain as hardware. It was based on the revival of mentalistic concepts in psychology and Rom Harré charts the rise of 'discursive' psychology based on Wittgenstein's critique of Cartesian picture of understanding as a set of inner processes and the assertion of the central place of discourse. The main principles of the second cognitive revolution understood psychological phenomena to be features of public discourse, where 'individual and private uses of symbolic systems, which in this view constitute thinking, are derived from interpersonal discursive processes that are the main features of the human environment' and 'the production of psychological phenomena, such as emotions, decisions, attitudes, personality displays, and so on, in discourse still depends upon the skill of the actors, their relative moral standing in the community, and the story lines that unfold' (Harré & Gillet 1994, p. 27).

Wittgenstein's philosophical critique of Descartes' mentalism helps to enable a discursive shift in psychology that leads to the fundamental recognition of the centrality of language and discourse (and also of narrative in narrative psychology) and what Harré calls 'positioning theory' that empha-

sizes the moral contexts of intentional action (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999, Harré et al, 2009; see also Howie & Peters, 1996; Peters & Appel, 1996).

1.3 Children's Rights

Much has been written about children's rights, both by philosophers (Archard, 1993) and within other disciplines treating more legal and political aspects of children's rights. To some extent UN's Convention of the Rights of the Child has resulted in a particular attention to this issue. In the U.S. a movement concerned with children's rights have to a large extent emerged out of the attention to unprivileged groups that can be traced back to the Civil Rights movement of the sixties. Similar movements were growing in Europe at that time which culminated in the 1970's (Archard, 1993 pp. 45–51). Still those movements may be said to have started much earlier in Europe. One example is the writings and works of individuals such as Janusz Korczak who struggled against governments to help orphan children. Those individuals, at least in Korczak's case, seemed to take upon themselves the endless task of giving relief to children in societies where few cared about them. Korczak believed that this was the result of a tacitly learned attitude towards unprivileged groups. He said that we "teach indifference towards the weak by our own example" (Korczak 1992, p. 162). Korcsak's foremost example of such unhappy teaching was the lack of legal rights of children. We can hear the Korczak anticipating this declaration and UN's convention in his major text *How to Love a Child* (1920).

For years I have been observing the quite sadness of sensitive children and the brazen antics of grownups. The child has a right to be himself, has a right to respect. Before you make revolutions, before you make wars, think first of these proletarians with short legs, think first of the child (Korczak, in Kulawiec, 1992, p. xiv).

Even earlier in the constitution for his Jewish orphanage he writes about the children has "the right to be loved, to be right to be listened to, the right to respect, the right to past and present and to a future" (Kulawiec 1992, p. xiv). This invocation of the discourse of rights from individuals such as Korczak seems to have been a result of the frustrating insight that the work of one man or woman or group of people is not only insufficient, but incapable to promote lasting change. As so many feminists realize, to protect and empower children when need changes in both the mentality of the public and in the societal practices that make children particularly vulnerable.

Another European example, perhaps with a stronger impact on policy with more lasting effects, is the founding of Save the Children in the U.K. in 1919, its twin organisation Rädda Barnen (Save the Children) in Sweden later that same year and, together with other local organisations, the organizing of the International Save the Children Union in Genève 1920. Though at first the organisation's primary focus where on professional charity for children (and mothers), the focus slightly evolved to promoting the establishment of laws and policy documents to protect children, which resulted in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted by The League of Nations in Genève 1923. These are responses to more practical issues concerning the rights of children and the use of the discourse of rights is to make claims for children. These efforts of course culminated in the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) ratified by all UN nations except United States and Somalia (http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-11&chapter=4&lang=en 2010 May 11), with additional protocols added to respond attention to further protection of newly recognised violations against children.³

Indeed not only the rights discourse in general have been challenged, but also the idea of children's rights. Some argue that a rights approach seems too oriented around western institutions and practices and that is not as applicable in other contexts. Accordingly the level of commitment to the CRC differs radically between different nations. Others argue that the rights discourse is misleading when applied to issues concerning children. Although one may recognise that giving children rights is useful for protecting children, it can be argued that giving rights also result in obscuring children's need for protection by leaving them with the responsibility to claim their rights and thus conceiving them as independent and capable of governing their own lives to further degree than they actually are (Benporath, 2003). This however confuses the use of the notion right as referring to CRC and similar documents, and moral rights as philosophers discuss them.

Philosophers such as Locke, Mill, Kant, Bentham have all attended specifically to questions of the moral status of children and in such discussions worked on the notion of children's rights long before any of the discussion of children's rights responded to the need for conventions to protect children. The emphasis by all those philosophers was quite different. Locke, Mill and Bentham wished to qualify their different conceptions of freedom and claimed that freedom was dependent on having certain capabilities (though there opinions differed somewhat on what those capabilities where). The moral status of children is, they agree, a matter of paternalistic protection until children mature in the relevant capabilities (Turner & Matthews, 1998).

Kant had a somewhat more complicated view, at least if we turn to where he discusses moral rights within the family. To him it is impossible to fully conclude when children, or anyone, become free. Freedom, in ourselves and others, is just something we have to presume in moral discourse. We may then consider children as free and as such possessors of rights. Accordingly Kant acknowledges a tension between the rights and responsibility of the parent and the rights of the child and we are forced to consider both as having rights. Kant does not do a lot with these ideas, but he does point towards what seems to be at stake here. Giving children moral and legal rights inflicts on the right of parents, which are rights that gives them paternal responsibilities to protect children – i.e. the conflict between the rights of child and the child's need for protection (Kant 1996, 6: 280–82). This tension appears both in considering children's legal and moral rights.

Concerning legal rights it is quite clear, assuming the law is well formulated, what the right consists in, who it involves and whose responsibility it is not fulfilled. In the CRC this is quite clear. The ratifying nation and its institutions have taken the responsibility to fulfil the convention and it concerns children, defined as individuals under the age of eighteen unless the age of majority is reached earlier in the considered nation. Such legal approach to rights, depending on the right under discussion, must not involve any particular capabilities on the child's part and it is not up to the individual child to claim its rights (though many countries laws include formulations that support the idea that children's capabilities should be taken into account). The legal approach to children's rights is instead subject for investigation a criticism of another kind. Do these rights really protect the child? Are they too controlling and limit the freedom of the child? Do they correspond with our moral responsibilities?

If children are taken as possessors of moral rights the role of individual child's capabilities are somewhat different. Locke, Mill, Bentham, and to some degree Kant, require some capability on part of the child (e.g. rationality or certain sensibilities). Nonetheless, if our conception of childhood is historicized and if our conception of children's moral status is constitutive of what we see them as – i.e. our (inter)subjective understanding of them – another approach to philosophy of childhood is possible. We need a philosophy of childhood that, without confusing the issues at stake, can reconcile the activism of Korczak and the legal and moral tendencies in the discourse children's rights. We believe that this is possible through working through a historicized and subjectivized form of philosophy we find in Foucault and Wittgenstein.

2. Historical Views on Childhood

2.1 A Cultural History of Childhood

‘the history of childhood is a nightmare from which we have only begun to awaken. The further back in history one goes, the lower the level of child care, and the more likely children are to be killed, abandoned, beaten, terrorized, and sexually abused’ (de Mause 1974, p. 30).

In *L'Enfant et la vie familiale sous l'Ancien Régime* (published in English in 1962 as *Centuries of Childhood*) Philippe Ariès (1960) documented the view that childhoods in Europe's Middle Ages and early modern period were not a happy time of transition and by contrast with contemporary childhood, these periods lacked sentiment either in their preparation for adulthood through education or in terms of domestic affection within the family and household. Children were miniature adults and the notion of childhood was a social construction that appeared some time after 1500. Ariès detected the change in paintings of the seventeenth century. After Ariès and particularly in the 1970s the history of childhood was pursued assiduously by an army of researchers that took issue with Ariès.

Ariès' work on the purpose of the school and the social production of the child foreshadows an approach developed by Michael Foucault (1977) in *Discipline and Punish*, and work by his student Jacques Donzelot. Thereafter historians entered into a debate with Ariès. Some argued that Ariès did not take seriously enough the growth of welfare agencies that removed aspects of child welfare from the home. Others argued that the focus should be the growth of individualism central to the development of capitalism.

Ariès was taken to task on the ‘discovery of childhood’ emphasizing a history of continuity and uneven change. Materialist historians argued that Ariès did not emphasize economic change strongly enough (see Frost, 2005).

Lloyd deMause (1988; see also 1974) maintained that ‘the history of childhood had showed slow and steady progress over time, and that it was an evolutionary process which was determined mainly by psychodynamics within the parent-child relationship, rather than primarily by economic factors.’ Reflecting on writing childhood history deMause (1988) argues that it has just begun and employing the approach of psychohistory, a field he helped to invent, he writes:

If childhood history – and psychohistory – means anything, they mean reversing most of the causal arrows used by historians to date. Rather than our historical model being one where an overpowering world inexorably impresses itself upon the tabula rasa of the mind, the world itself will instead be viewed as a tabula rasa which is only given meaning and form by each new gen-

eration by an evolving mind (and an evolving brain) (119) whose structure is formed by parent-child interaction. Such a paradigm shift will not be easy to accomplish.

The next paradigm shift was not psychohistorical but rather discursive, after Michel Foucault who also provided new insights into the regulation and control of young children through the analysis of disciplinary power and governmentality. Foucault's studies were relatively slow to impact the field of education (Peters & Besley, 2007; Besley & Peters, 2008; Peters et al, 2009) and only recently beginning to be taken up by those in early childhood education (Gibbons, 2007; Fenech et al, 2008; Cohen, 2008).

2.2 Foucault, Donzelot and the Politics of Childhood

In 1966 Foucault's *Les Mots and les choses* (translated as *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, 1970) was published. As he argued in that text: 'Structuralism is not a new method; it is the awakened and troubled consciousness of modern thought' (Foucault 1973, p. 208). Yet in the Foreword to the English edition, Foucault also remarked:

The problem of the subject. In distinguishing between the epistemological level of knowledge (or scientific consciousness) and the archaeological level of knowledge, I am aware I am advancing in a direction that is fraught with difficulty... I do not wish to deny the validity of intellectual biographies, or the possibility of a history of theories, concepts, or themes. It is simply that I wonder whether such descriptions are themselves enough, whether they do justice to the immense density of discourse, whether there do not exist, outside their customary boundaries, systems of regularities that have a decisive role in the history of the sciences (Foucault 1972, pp. xiii–xiv).

The Order of Things proposes an archaeology of the human sciences based upon discovering the laws, regularities and rules of the formation of systems of thought which emerged in the nineteenth century. Foucault distinguishes three epistemes or systems of thought, each with its own distinctive structure: the Renaissance, the classical age and the modern age. Strongly influenced by Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals* (1887) and his 'critique of humanism,' Foucault embraces a variation of the 'death of God' when he suggests: 'In our day, and once again Nietzsche indicated the turning-point from a long way off, it is not so much the absence or death of God that is affirmed as the end of man ...' and continues 'As the archaeology of our thought easily shows, man is an invention of recent date. And one perhaps nearing its end' (Foucault 1973, pp. 385, 387).

The shift from the archaeological to genealogical investigation in Foucault's writings is well represented in *Discipline and Punish*, a work that

has direct relevance to educational theory. Like *The History of Sexuality, Discipline and Punish* exhibits a Nietzschean genealogical turn focused upon studies of the *will to knowledge* understood as reflecting both discursive and non-discursive (i.e., institutional) practices and, in particular, the complex relations among power, knowledge and the body. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault is concerned with the body as an object of certain disciplinary technologies of power and he examines the genealogy of forms of punishment and the development of the modern penal institution, discussing in turn torture (beginning with the gruesome account of Damien the regicide), punishment (with clear echoes of Nietzsche's [1956, pp. 213] famous list of meanings in the *Genealogy*), discipline, and the prison.

The section on 'discipline,' organized into three sections, respectively 'docile bodies,' 'the means of correct training' and 'panopticism,' includes an account of the ways during the seventh and eighteenth centuries the disciplines became general formulas of domination. Foucault claims that this new political anatomy was evidenced in a multiplicity of often minor processes at different locations that eventually coalesced into a general method: 'They [i.e., disciplinary techniques] were at work in secondary education at a very early date, later in primary schools; they slowly invested the space of the hospital; and, in a few decades, they restructured the military organization' (Foucault 1991, p. 138). Foucault talks of disciplinary techniques in terms of 'the art of distributions,' (the monastic model of enclosure became the most perfect educational regime and "partitioning" (every individual had his or her own place)). 'The rule of functional sites' refers to the ways that architects designed space to correspond to the need to supervise and to prevent 'dangerous communication.' Foucault argues 'the organization of a serial space was one of the great technical mutations of elementary education' (ibid., p. 147) that made it possible to supersede the traditional apprenticeship system where the pupil spends a few minutes with the master while the rest of the group remains idle.

Foucault also details 'the control of activities' including the timetable, what he calls 'the temporal elaboration of the act' (e.g., marching), and the correlation of the body and the gesture (e.g. 'good handwriting... presupposes a gymnastics'), as well as other aspects. He writes:

To sum up, it might be said that discipline creates out of the bodies it controls four types of individuality, or rather an individuality that is endowed with four characteristics; it is cellular (by play of spatial distribution), it is organic (by the coding of activities), it is genetic (by the accumulation of time), it is combinatory (by the composition of forces). And, in doing so, it operates four great techniques; it draws up tables; it prescribes movements; it imposes exercises; lastly, in order to obtain the combination of forces, it arranges 'tactics' (Foucault 1991, p. 167).

He discusses the means of correct training in terms of ‘hierarchical observation’ as he suggests ‘the school building was to be a mechanism for training ... a “pedagogical machine,” (ibid., p. 172) normalizing judgement, and the examination. The examination “transformed the economy of visibility into the exercise of power,’ introduced individuality into the field of documentation,’ and ‘surrounded by all its documentary techniques, ... [made] each individual a “case”’ (ibid, pp. 187–88). Most famously, Foucault discusses ‘panopticism’— a system of surveillance, based on Jeremy Bentham’s architectural figure, that operates by permitting the relentless and continual observation of inmates at the periphery by officials at the center, without them ever being seen.

Discipline and Punish is concerned with the operation of technologies of power and their relations to the emergence of knowledge in the form of new discourses, based around modes of objectification through which human beings became subjects. It is a theme that Foucault develops further in his work on the history of sexuality. Foucault asks:

Why has sexuality been so widely discussed and what has been said about it? What were the effects of power generated by what was said? What are the links between these discourses, these effects of power, and the pleasures that were invested by them? What knowledge was formed as a result of this linkage? (Foucault 1979, p. 11)

It is in the course of his inquiries into sexuality and the proliferation of associated discourses that Foucault coins the term ‘bio-power’ considered as a kind of anatomo-politics of the human body and control of the population at large.

In his so-called final “ethical” phase, Foucault is said to move “back to the subject,” to the ethics of self-formation considered as an ascetic practice. Foucault argues that “work” done on the self is not to be understood in terms of traditional left wing models of liberation but rather as (Kantian) practices of freedom, for there is no essential, hidden, or true self, for Foucault, “concealed, alienated, or imprisoned in and by mechanisms of repression” (Foucault 1997, p. 283) that is in need of liberation but only a hermeneutics of the self, a set of practices of self-interpretation. Foucault emphasises that freedom is the ontological condition for ethics and, in his works on the history of sexuality, he returns to the Stoics to entertain the notion of “care for the self” which has priority over and develops earlier than “care for others.”

In *The Policing of the Family* (1997) originally published in 1977 Donzelot gives us an historical review of the French government’s attempt to engineer society and homogenize family structures. He documents the ‘preservation of children’, ‘government through the family’ (normalization

and moralization), 'the tutelary complex' and the 'regulation of images'. Donzelot traces the transition of control from the Church where priests constructed the images of the 'ideal' family to educational, judicial, medical and psychiatric constructed images of the ideal family. In his Preface 'The Rise of the Social' Gilles Deleuze describes the forcefulness with which Donzelot reconstructs the genesis of 'the social' in the 'juvenal court' and in the 'whole circle of tutors and technicians who press closely in upon the shattered or "liberalized" family' (p. x). As he also explains 'Donzelot's method is genealogical, functional, and strategic which bespeaks his considerable debt to Michel Foucault and also to Robert Castel' (p. xi). He speaks of three lines of mutation in the French family: first the criticism of wet nurses and servants and a bad public economy that encourages the poor to leave their children to the State; second, the way in which marital values detach themselves from familial values; third, the conjugal family frees itself from the head of the family that is illustrated in rising divorce, increase in abortion and loss of paternal authority; fourth, the new alliance between medicine and the State.

In the Preface to the English Edition Donzelot recounts how the book was addressed to three discourses: Marxism, feminism and psychoanalysis. 'The family' he suggests, 'is the concrete locus where these discourses implicitly converge' (p. xix). As he goes on to explain 'For Marxists, the family is an apparatus indispensable to the bourgeois order' and its function is to reproduce the ruling ideology; for feminists, history is weighed down by the patriarchal domination essentially unchanged for centuries; for psychoanalysts, the Freudian theory of sexuality provides a pseudo-scientific explanation of sexual racism yet it was the only discourse that could help resist the fascist discourse of eugenics. Donzelot uncovers in each the hard core of ideology and its limitations in representing the family. He also take issue with Aries and others and by contrast to the attempt to reconstitute the reality of the traditional family he details governmentality as the method that makes the family intelligible only by studying 'the system of relations it maintains with the sociopolitical systems' (p. xxviii) thereby gaining an insight into the changing form of the 'liberal family' or rather the family form in liberal societies. He also forecast the changing center from laws reorganizing family life at the end of the nineteenth century to those pertaining to labor and he asks 'how did we pass from a usage of 'the social' understood as the problem of poverty, the problem of others, to its current definition in terms of a general solidarity and the production of a life-style'? (p. xxvii).

3. Towards a Historicized and Subjectivized Philosophy of Childhood

The historicized approaches to children that we find in part II clarifies that childhood and children are subject to how we see them. The ways we live with, think of, talk about and treat children (the grammar of “child”) manifest what a child is and what the word “child” means to us; as Wittgenstein says: “Grammar tells what kind of object anything is” (1953, § 373).

One problem with the romantic philosophy of childhood was that it instead of investigating the grammar of “childhood” assumed an ahistorical ontology of childhood that served as a guide to how to approach children and their education philosophically. The Piagetian approach and the rights approach also seem insensitive to how we actually live with children and in particular to the role our interactions for understanding children. This is deeply problematic since although children may not have many opportunities for expressing their voices in those interactions by not paying close attention to those interactions philosophy cannot be sensitive at all to how children give voice to themselves and how they construct themselves in those interactions. Philosophy, instead of liberating children, runs the danger of reducing them to complete silence. Philosophy of childhood may be as adultist as the adultism it attacks.

Accordingly to introduce a philosophy of childhood that can have the same kind of bearing as, for example, feminism we need to see our social worlds differently and this vision needs to be based on our actual interactions with children. We need to see aspects of our lives and possible lives that we previously been blind to. We should direct our attention towards Wittgensteinian grammar – i.e. how we speak to and about children; and how our linguistic practices themselves gives us views on children that blinds us of further ways to understand and interact with children. Here Wittgenstein’s work on seeing aspects is helpful.

In many ways we speak of children as a special kind of human being. We see some human beings as children who in many of our institutions are treated as human “not-yets” (Ohlson 2009). As our institutions are constituted children are “not yet” ready to participate in political deliberations, to vote, to drive a car, to work, to make certain decisions about their lives. They are “not-yets” because our attitude towards them is different than our attitude towards other beings we interact with. We do not expect animals to ever be involved in deliberations the way we expect children to.

In Wittgenstein’s analysis of seeing aspects there is no necessity in seeing a certain aspect of something. Wittgenstein distinguishes between two ways of seeing or two different uses of the word “seeing”. We say, “I see that man” and refer to our perception of that man, but we can also say “Oh, now I see a resemblance between those two faces.” The latter is matter of

seeing a certain aspect and is according to Wittgenstein not “a part of perception.” Rather than being a perception of something, seeing an aspect, or seeing something as something, is shown in our attitude towards what we see (Wittgenstein 1953, p. 152, 175, 182). Our attitudes to a face that we come to see as smiling is very different from the attitudes to the same face if we do not recognise its expression as a smile.

Similarly it is a certain attitude towards children that give us the impression that they are “not-yets.” As Cavell says in giving an example of a slave-owner who is able to see some human beings as slaves, we have that kind of power over the other (Cavell 1979, p. 377 cf. Johansson, 2009). This power is not only conceptual, it’s not only about grasping something, to see something as something, a human as a slave, or as a child, is as much about our sensibilities and attitudes towards a certain object (we behave differently towards a human that is a slave or a child), it is a thinking with the body, or perhaps better put, “the conceptual is at the same time, and sometimes primarily, sensible and mimetic” (Krebs 2010, p. 127). To see our power relations with children differently consequently means to live our lives very different; it means that we feel and response to children to children differently; and it means that our institutions must allow us to interact with children as something else than “not-yets.” Thus philosophy of childhood must not only be historicized, but also subjectivized. It must work on our sensibilities as much as our minds.

The accounts of the romantics, in psychology, in the rights discourses quite clearly have had an impact on our lives and views of childhood; and the historical accounts clearly shows that the grammar of childhood has evolved and gone through several dramatic changes. Our attitudes towards children have changed in the past and are likely to change in the future and there is hope for what a historicized and subjectivized approach to philosophy of childhood can accomplish.

NOTES

1. In this regard we can mention also the journal *Childhood and Philosophy* at <http://www.periodicos.proped.pro.br/index.php?journal=childhood&page=index>. The focus and scope of editorial policy makes interesting reading as the following excerpt indicates: ‘Childhood and philosophy is a journal which has been waiting to be born at least since Socrates sat down in the unique (at least for us) shelter of the 5th century BC polis and founded a discipline. The journal’s conception lies much, much later, in the fateful historical meeting between childhood education and philosophy. This meeting, in turn, had to wait for Rousseau’s mantic pronouncements of the Emile, sent like a letter in a bottle to the approaching revolution, and for the slow development, over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries, of a kind of adult actually capable of listening to children, much less of hearing them. This,

in turn, required the romantic deconstruction of that very enlightened (male) adult whom, we must admit, made revolution possible.’

2. In the *Confessions* (pp. 529–30) Rousseau admits that he considers *Emile* to be his most important work.

3. One example of this is the protocols added 2000 on children in armed conflicts and (see United Nations Treaty Collection: *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict*. http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-11-b&chapter=4&lang=en & United Nations Treaty Collection: *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography* http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-11-c&chapter=4&lang=en).

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JAMES'S THEORY OF UNIVERSALS: AN APPROACH FOR LEARNING

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ABSTRACT. Most philosophers and educators are not familiar with James's theory of universals, especially how it applies to learning concepts. His theory is an integral aspect of his epistemology, which is useful for understanding how children and adults learn and remember new concepts. James discusses and refers to his theory of universals throughout his career, but he never fully develops it. This paper defends the view that conceptualism is most consistent with his basic empiricism, developed from his *Principles of Psychology* and is his true position. Some critics argue that nominalism or Platonic realism are closer to his position, but this paper rejects those views as atypical or unrevised ideas of James's thought. Bruner's theory of concepts is also considered.

Keywords: concepts, conceptualism, realism, learning theory, universals, images

Most educators are unfamiliar with William James's contribution to educational and learning theory which is developed primarily in the classic *Principles of Psychology*. James's ideas concerning the existence of universals originate from his empiricist theory of knowledge and pragmatism first explained in the *Principles*. It occupied his attention throughout his life and has an integral role in his philosophy as a whole. His position on universals, though not well known, develops logically based on experience, and provides cogent perspectives for understanding new concepts. I shall show how his position somewhat changed, and also why it is applicable for classroom learning. Finally, one can see that James's conceptualism is the most useful theory of universals and enables us to better understand how people learn new concepts.

As an adamant empiricist, he argued that conceptualism is the most appropriate theory of universals consistent with the psychology in the *Principles*. Yet in his later *Pragmatism* he briefly suggests nominalism, though it is

not a definite position, and in his final unfinished book *Some Problems of Philosophy*, he suggests that realism is the best theory.¹ Some philosophers state that nominalism and realism are the only alternatives open but this is a false dichotomy. This paper argues that conceptualism was his true position with which he intended to integrate realism. For this reason, it is necessary to explain his two positions, starting with conceptualism, which holds that universals are only subjective or a function of consciousness and do not exist in external reality.

He defines his meaning of the term “universal” in relation to conception in the *Principles*. “An individual conception is of something restricted, in its application, to a single case. A universal or general conception is of an entire class, or of something belonging to an entire class, of things. The conception of an abstract quality is, taken by itself, neither universal nor particular.”²

Concepts are mental representations which classify resembling entities or particulars, guiding and organizing experiences and thoughts. Conception is the relation between a mental state and what it signifies, or its function to give meaning to particulars. It is a conceiving *process*, not strictly a concept. Conceptualism holds that when one focuses on something from experience, understands and processes it, then a general conception (universal) is created in the mind. (Like most philosophers, James primarily uses colors for examples). The universal of red extends to or includes all particular instances of red, and the universal of triangle includes all similar instances or particular examples. The value and purpose of universals is to enable people to reason well about particulars.

However, consciousness is very fluid like a stream because it is always changing and never precisely the same. Every thought of a particular fact or idea is strictly unique and bears only resemblance to other thoughts of them. When the same fact or idea recurs, people will have a different point of view or understanding toward it because no two brain states can be identical. Here he agrees with Hume that an identical permanently existing idea is a fiction. The nature of brain states and our everyday experiences show that we always think of the same fact somewhat differently. For example, every experience each person has toward sunsets or a particular chair is slightly different than the last time, though we may think they are the same; similarly, no two ideas are precisely identical. Indirectly, then, this also implies that the general conception of a subjective fact, such as fear, changes over time, and that successive feelings and thoughts bear only *resemblance* to it. People then formulate a concept about it which may gradually change significantly over time. Moreover, to remain consistent, his conceptualism would deny that these universals have an objective real existence in the external world. This looks intuitive because all people share

at least some universals in common, but scientists disagree whether or not they truly exist objectively. This is true for perceptual universals such as colors and sound as well as other universals. The appearance of permanence, then, seems to imply a realist theory of universals, but in the “Stream of Thought” chapter in the *Principles*, James does not argue from this position.

He also opposes nominalism, which denies the existence of universals and holds that only particulars exist, e.g. *this* and *that* red, denoted by general words. George Berkeley’s faulty position, referred to as “nominalistic Platonism”, (which sounds like an oxymoron) denied the existence of abstract ideas that were held by Locke. James never really argues for nominalism, contrary to the claims of Charles Pierce. James’s focus on the reality of particulars does *not* necessarily imply nominalism. Moreover, he rejects Mill’s conceptualism which he says is weak nominalism in disguise, and argues it is fallacious in order to adopt his own theory of conceptualism. Here he tells us why. “But Mill and the rest believe that a thought must *be* what it means, and mean what it *is*, and that if it be a picture of an entire individual, it cannot mean any part of him to the exclusion of the rest. I say nothing here of the preposterously false descriptive psychology involved in the statement that the only things we can mentally picture are individuals completely determinate in all regards.”³

James holds that the image, *per se*, is the least important aspect of thought, unlike Piaget and Sartre’s theory in *The Psychology of the Imagination*. These images of individual persons are not always determinate and fixed in all their aspects – they may be vague and abstract. However, as Bruner speculates, consider imagining a friend, Mr. Jones: which Jones would we picture in our minds? The older or younger – and how would he be dressed or undressed? He might be 25 and in great health or 70 in poor health. His appearance may have changed significantly over time, so that any of the images may be correct, and because of memory lapses, they could all be incorrect. Jones may change all his physical attributes and still be the same person. If this kind of concrete proper name noun has difficulties, more abstract examples will be much more challenging for an imagistic theory of meaning and learning,⁴ but still useful as this paper shows. Based on my experience, images are extremely important for learning and remembering in the long-term future. Words and letters can be imagined for spelling, and we can also conjure images of familiar concrete nouns from one’s past. Although they may be fuzzy and unclear, it can be an effective method for remembering new words. For James, the sheer power to think things and

attributes, separate and drawn from the experience in which they appeared is the most indisputable function of thought.

To distinguish his position from Mill and Locke's conceptualism, he affirms that images and meanings can be distinct, and that the change in one's meaning of X is not connected to the change of the image. Instead, it is connected with the vague consciousness that surrounds the words and concepts.

Piaget argues that the image is an important aspect of the child's learning process; the word may be equivalent to an image. Merely because a child knows a word does not mean or imply that he understands it. In *The Early Growth of Logic in the Child*, he says,

Thus, the generality of a word (i.e., a noun or an adjective) may be very weak for a child, so that symbolically the word is closer to an image than a concept, or it may approximate to a true conceptual generality...the fact that a child calls a cat a cat does not prove that he understands the "class" of cats. The name is borrowed from the language of adults...but to a child, it may be the schematic equivalent of an image, which is halfway between the individual and the generic.⁵

He agrees with James that the child (and adults) classify and categorize objects, arranging them by resemblance with members of the same class and by dissimilarity. He then claims that because language is not the essential factor for building the child's cognitive logical structures, we should look toward their perceptual and sensorimotor functions which are prior to language development. James strongly claims, based on observation and speculation, that perception is prior and primordial knowledge. Research by philosophical epistemologists would be much more noteworthy by utilizing Piaget's empirical studies.

Interestingly, Bruner suggests that "the person knows he has learned the concept when he feels he is able to predict the status of new instances with a sufficiently high degree of certainty."⁶ However, this strategy varies by the person: some people continue to explore more attributes of an object, say members of an animal family or genus, while others are more easily satisfied. He is right that it is not always easy to know exactly how a person decides that he has learned a new concept. He uses the example of finding influential people by their common attributes, but there is no set number of successive attempts to determine whether a person is influential. Children will use various behavioral responses from their parent(s) and family members to decide whether they shall be rewarded or punished, and in this inductive method, try to predict future instances of their behavior. This Concept Attainment Strategy emphasizes the meaning or understanding of a concept rather than what it is called, as Boulware and Crowe state. "Using inductive reason-

ing, students are allowed to generalize to other similar and nonsimilar examples before the concept is given a name...students develop comprehension of words through the use of a structured thinking and reasoning process that involves confirming or altering their views in ways that are meaningful to them.”⁷

In this way, Bruner’s concept learning strategy is very consistent with James’s conceptualist position in theory and application. James would agree that students (and non-students) should practice with concepts that are important to them in their lives, those words that make an actual difference, thus having “cash-value.” After this comprehension, they should grasp the meanings of concepts and universals of less relevance and interest to eventually include a vast systematic array of knowledge. Boulware and Crowe focus on techniques for elementary education, but the theory can be applied at all educational levels, including abstract concepts (and universals) as well as concrete nouns. They note that gifted students and those with special needs among English language learners benefit especially from this strategy. The emphasis here, then, is on inductive generalizations from observation, rather than learning definitions of concepts.

However, James’s position on universals varied over the years and appears ontologically inconsistent. Moreover, he does not claim to understand totally the epistemological character of universal meanings. Since Plato, philosophers have tended to “worship” universals over particulars when the reverse should have occurred, he argues. Besides, James does not entirely decide whether universals are objective or subjective – merely a function of consciousness. Certainly, his argument implies that they are only subjective, but rather than clearly state his position, he skirts the question.

In his later radical empiricism, James also argues that percepts are the primary source of knowledge, and concepts are secondary and presuppose perception. As mentioned, concepts are learned from experience and in a secondary way from definitions. Moreover, sometimes concepts falsify and omit important content. People must experience parades or soccer fields to truly know their meanings, but obviously this does not apply to all new knowledge. (One should not experiment with firearms to know their potential danger.) In this way, some particular *this* or *X* is experienced, and merely thinking about a definition of a soccer field is insufficient. New concepts are created from older ones. A new concept of noisy parades arises from an earlier one, perhaps originating from talk about the subject. So, the more one relies on definitions for conceptual knowledge, the more one mistakenly removes oneself from real experiences. This faulty and uncritical habit is the source of intellectualism, he argues. Very abstract and abstruse concepts

become problematic when philosophers and others forget that they are merely words which do not refer to observable particulars. (See also Hobbes' *Leviathan*.)

Perceptions are primordial, then, but pragmatically, concepts guide our thinking to enable us to understand new learning situations. When concepts are sufficiently deepened, they introduce and enliven new values and provide new knowledge. A youth's deeper appreciation of art, originally rather vague and general, when combined with positive personal experiences, motivates him to become a more sensitive and careful artist and student. As Kant said, concepts without percepts are empty and abstract, and percepts without concepts are shallow or meaningless. James states that both must work together like scissors and neither can function alone.

Furthermore, this paper contends that while the experience of particulars varies greatly, the name itself (red triangle) as a bare concept remains the same. In reality, this self-sameness may really be nothing in cases in which even the definition will not be in common among all the languages. If we disagree on the basic definition, then only the word in various languages remains and that is merely a linguistic universal without significant semantic denotation. A triangle is defined as a closed plane figure having three sides and three angles but this, in itself, cannot describe the variations of triangular shapes, and all the shades of red (or redness) must be imagined. An equilateral triangle is meant to represent all or any triangles as a general term. Generally, James rejects the classical empiricist positions because of their emphasis on mental images which he believes are unnecessary for learning concepts. From this empirical case, we might consider and compare the wide disagreement regarding the definition of justice or courage.

Although James does not refer to moral universals,⁸ we can infer that imagistic thoughts of moral concepts may refer to broader and/or deeper ambiguous meanings than the specific image. Moreover, James believes it is possible to fix mental pictures that are fuzzy or indeterminate. A simple thought experiment confirms that. Picture yourself bravely dodging an oncoming car without thinking of its name, body shape, street, time of day, and other particulars. This idea represents the subjective universal virtue of courage without any real ontological status, existing solely as a shared concept. When a child witnesses a fire fighter going into a building, she will probably infer or *interpret* this act as courageous, possibly because she heard others say so. Someone else might not interpret this action as courageous, but rather simply as a man doing his job. Then she will retain that memory as an instance of courage, and use and include it in the future in her concept of this virtue. The moral feeling or emotion is physiologically based like all emotions, he argues, and bodily feelings are totally necessary for them to exist. Courage is the overcoming of fear (bodily feeling) and the cognitive

perception when faced with a frightening event or object. In fact, the empiricist's 'swarm of ideas' and their common universals can be translated into cerebral terms. Interestingly, he consistently identifies mental processes with physiological events, a sort of precursor to the Identity Theory and modern physicalism.

Yet according to James, even moral concepts for which we may not have a particular emotion, originate from a nascent nerve process that might have a conscious fringe which would include all possible particulars of the class. His use of 'might have' suggests uncertainty or the possibility that the psychic fringe does not have a universal meaning. However, James does not realize that this physiological account cannot adequately explain the origin, meaning, and use of universals, including the moral kind. Indeed it may be impossible to hold a general mental image of a moral concept that is totally indeterminate.

James's thought develops closer to realism in his final book. Curiously, he claims that the conceptual map, framed by the mind, has an independent existence. "The eternal truths it contains would have to be acknowledged even were the world of sense annihilated."⁹ His radical position he calls logical realism which is inconsistent with his conceptualism. This is the view that eternal truths or universals still exist even without human sense perception of their objects or referents. It is likely that he was influenced by his friend, Charles Peirce, who first advocated realism in 1868, then developed it more fully in his Berkeley review, according to Max Fisch.¹⁰ In the 22 years between this review and the publication of the *Principles*, it seems probable that James and Peirce discussed the merits of realism, even if Peirce was almost silent about it until 1890, according to Fisch. In this way, James would attempt to develop a bridge between their two philosophies.

Logical realism is true for conceptions and universals, but in *Some Problems of Philosophy*, he states that nominalism is consistent with pragmatism, and true only for objects of perception. In his ontological survey of pragmatism, Richard Prawat argues that "James was a hard-core nominalist, evidenced by his assertion that 'all experience is particular.'"¹¹ However, this assertion definitely does not imply or show that he endorses nominalism. James read and approved of John Boodin's interpretation of pragmatism in *Truth and Reality* (1911) where nominalism is totally rejected.

We can see that nominalism, in the bald sense of absolute dis-parateness, would make truth impossible. In such a world there could be no concepts and no inference, as each particular content must be taken as unique. Nor is it necessary to go the opposite extreme, and speak of universals or identities as existing prior to

the instances ... Nominalism, by confusing thought with language
– reducing concepts to mere terms...makes thought seem artificial and arbitrary.¹²

It is unknown whose theory of nominalism that he is attempting to refute, but it is clear that this James protégé and friend strongly rejects it in itself and in conjunction with pragmatism. However, he appears to misinterpret the general idea of nominalism as it is usually understood. Certainly, nominalism does not make truth impossible, and I know of no interpretation which would exclude concepts and inferences, which are an integral aspect of thought.

Moreover, James is not a metaphysical realist either. He admits, rightly, that the combination of Platonic logical realism with radical empiricism might be regarded as eccentric. A.J. Ayer argues that this is an idle issue that doesn't amount to much, and is primarily a denial of extreme nominalism, which holds that things with the same quality predicate have nothing in common except their name. In *The Origins of Pragmatism*, he argues, "When he speaks of physical realities as being constituted by the various concept-stuffs of which they partake, I think that, in spite of the Platonic phraseology, he in fact means percepts, and that what the construction puts together is a set of sensory qualities."¹³

Nevertheless, because this ontological issue is basically unlike James's major ideas, it is not an idle issue at all and deserves closer understanding. Ayer reduces this seeming confusion to simply percepts or rather a set of sensory qualities. This set of qualities cannot be everything James refers to here because it would not explain why he uses such Platonic phrases. Some commentators will wish to ignore this Platonic (or Kantian?) thinking in order to reconcile their interpretation of James's ontology (or their own), but this would not be fair to him. Interpretation is made more difficult because James does not explain the term 'concept-stuff,' yet I assume he intends to include concepts, ideas, certain mental functions and some universals.

In the *Principles* and later works, he argues that (*bare*) concepts are unchangeable. They can cease to be or remain static but there is no middle point. They form a discontinuous system that translates the fluctuating process of perception into a set of defined meaningful concepts. Each conception eternally remains what it is and cannot become another. The mind (consciousness) may change its states and meanings at different times; drop one conception and take up another, but the dropped conception can in no intelligible sense be said to change into its successor. The world of conceptions, or things intended to be thought about, stands stiff and immutable, like Plato's Realm of Ideas.¹⁴

This reference to Plato does not necessarily imply that the conception as a universal is truly eternal, but rather in the sense that the concept white cannot change into the concept black. Only the objects themselves change in consciousness as it focuses on a new object. Rather than adopting a Platonic theory, he argues that concepts and universals are inferior to percepts, the true primordial ingredients of things. Concepts are as real as percepts, though they are static and schematic. But pragmatically, it is inconsistent to hold that eternal truths possess independent objective status because, arguably, those propositions would also possess an eternal sort of being and that seems counter-intuitive. "Cats and leopards are felines" is a true proposition but not ontologically eternal. Yet pragmatism holds that the meaning of truths is relative to the individual, situation, and practical consequences that follow. This is much closer to James' thinking than any Platonic type of truth.

If the truths are eternal, it is in the sense that those concepts are unchangeable *a priori*. Yet philosophers must wait on facts, not *a priori* truths. However, James never carefully defines this *a priori* truth or eternal notion of conception. Richard Gale confirms that he leaves the argument open-ended and unresolved. "James's waffling on the realism-nominalism question is only a special instance of his general waffling about the ontological status of Platonic abstracta."¹⁵ In an earlier article (1996), Gale refers to James's attempt to reconcile his different world-views as Ontological Relativism which implies that no true final ontology exists; each one is relative to another but not unified together. This is a misleading term, however, because James's change of position does not imply relativism, nor would he agree that ontologies are equal in truth-value. Gale states, "In fact, James himself seemed to balk at drawing ontological conclusions from his concept empiricism in respect to both scientific objects and platonic abstracta. Scattered throughout his writings are remarks that seem to endow them with a self-subsistent existence... (and on the next page) there are unmistakable commitments to Platonism."¹⁶

This is an odd contradiction because a commitment suggests that it is at minimum a conclusion. If I am committed to a point of view, then I have concluded (or assert a conclusion) that this belief is likely true. However, stating belief in a position, such as realism, does not necessarily imply a commitment to it. James, and other philosophers, can maintain beliefs without firm commitments, and James was not committed to platonism. A philosophical commitment implies a strong actual defense, or at least willingness to defend, usually with logical argument. This is distinguished from the technical semantic sense of the word. Gale also claims that James was a "full-fledged mystic" in his last two books, *A Pluralistic Universe* and *Some Problems of Philosophy*. This peculiar statement, which I think is unsupported,

is partly due to Gale's highly (and excessive) analytical approach to James and metaphysics.

Furthermore, James's pragmatism avoids ontological relativism because it attempts to show that truth depends on its real consequences in the world. As J. Rosiek rightly states, "By putting an emphasis on the consequences of human belief – a position inspired by the success of the scientific modes of inquiry – James avoided advocating both epistemological and methodological relativism. Multiple beliefs are justifiable, but not all beliefs and modes of interpretations are equal, because their conceivable consequences are not all equivalent."¹⁷

This paper argues, as mentioned, that conceptualist thinking in and outside the classroom has more useful and practical consequences than realism or nominalism. Rosiek's pragmatic approach complements James's ontology. Rather than a language-game as Gale suggests, borrowing from Wittgenstein, James is attempting to reconcile at least two separate ontological views, which was a daunting challenge that he could not finish before his death. Nor did he distinguish between the different types of universals, and thus James's final conclusions about universals can only be inferred in his later work. Perhaps that was his intention in the unrevised *Some Problems of Philosophy*.

However, tentative conclusions from this final work can be stated. James clearly affirms that this empiricist view holds and that conceptual knowledge is inferior to the empirical type. Moreover, he states that a circle is always a circle, white always white. This meaning is a *bare* white in name only, not the white wall or white papers. All whites differ slightly, as nominalists and painters know, but the name or mere concept 'white' remains the same. This has an 'eternal' character. White, in a sense, is forever, like circles but perceptions of the color or shape will always change.¹⁸ The concept becomes real after it is framed in the mind. If no one has perceived a particular object X, then it has no concept or universal, but after it is perceived several times, the concept gradually develops in the mind, is given a name and is remembered. From that point, this particular color, shape or physical relation exists indefinitely into the future. Thus, there will always be the idea of circle or white somehow even if there were no sentient beings. It is difficult to argue that circle or white exists without a knower, and James does not sufficiently develop his argument in that direction. This unknowable primordial world without humanity must remain a mystery, and James's realism possesses a strong epistemological skepticism. Skeptics should (and would) question the knowledge or meaning of this logically possible world. The view also seems counter-intuitive in that humanity would have *discovered* and not invented circles and color because they would have always existed. Oddly, this fuzzy view is a kind of cross between concep-

tualism and realism. Bruner disagrees with James on this ontological issue.¹⁹ He argues as a realist would, that prime numbers, animal species, the huge range of colors, circles and squares are human *inventions, not discoveries* and they (categories) do not exist in the environment, but he does not refer specifically to universals, and besides, his claim is weak with missing premises.

James's Platonic realism is reaffirmed in "The One and The Many", where he compares water to the world of sensible facts, and the air to the world of abstract ideas. These real worlds interact only at their boundary.

We are like fishes swimming in the sea of sense, bounded above by the superior element, but unable to breathe it pure or penetrate it. We get our oxygen from it, however, we touch it incessantly, now in this part, now in that, and every time we touch it, we turn back into the water with our course re-determined and re-energized. The abstract ideas of which the air consists are indispensable for life...²⁰

James would not easily emerge from this metaphysical swamp, this aporia. However, we can still hold that conceptualism is consistent with empiricism, as endorsed in the *Principles*, and is the best theory in that it explains the most, assuming ontological truths are not merely relative. With his early conceptualism, one need not succumb to Platonism in any way, nor are universals excluded from human mental life as nominalism maintains. Furthermore, universals hold a more important permanent status from his realist perspective. James knew that learning cannot occur without concepts, and universals are basically magnified concepts that are indispensable to thought. In this way we can more easily understand and apply the basic elements of human learning. This is a position I am prepared to defend in another paper.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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THE SEMANTICS OF RACIAL SLURS: USING KAPLAN'S FRAMEWORK TO PROVIDE A THEORY OF THE MEANING OF DEROGATORY EPITHETS

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ABSTRACT. In this paper I adopt Kaplan's framework for distinguishing between *descriptive* and *expressive* content. Racial slurs are an especially difficult challenge for truth-conditional semantics because of their projection behaviors. That is to say, the offensive content of slurs "scopes out" of logical operators. I argue that racial slurs express contempt and lack descriptive content, so that many sentences containing slurs are not truth apt. My theory accounts for the intuition of the ordinary speaker who refuses to assent to the truth of a sentence containing a slur, but accepts the same statement made using a neutral counterpart of that slur. Weaknesses of rival theories (including those of Williamson, Hom, and Richard) are briefly discussed.

Keywords: slurs, expressivism, David Kaplan, semantics, epithets, projection

1. Preliminaries

Before we get started, I'd like to just remind ourselves that, as we all know, slurs are offensive words that can hurt people, and as we'll discuss later, their offensiveness projects through almost any type of linguistic construction. In fact, not only would I rather not *use* any slur words, but I'd rather not even *mention* any. In the past I've used less offensive slurs as examples, but part of the problem with that tactic is that the more odious examples are actually better at priming the kinds of intuitions that I rely on. So I'll use a capital 'S' as a schematic letter standing in for a racial, ethnic or religious slur. Since we are all unfortunately aware of many slur words, I invite you to think to yourself of an example that you find particularly offensive, and then make your judgments about that sort of example statement. Also, this paper concerns only *slurring uses* of slur words. There are

other interesting phenomena, such as appropriation – which is where a targeted group takes on a slur word to address other insiders of that particular group – but I won't have anything to say about those sorts of uses in this paper.

2. Truth Conditional Semantics

Semantics is the study of the *meaning* of strings of language. There's a tradition in linguistics and philosophy which places a large emphasis on *truth conditions*. The basic picture, stemming from work done by Frege, Carnap, Kripke, Kaplan and others, is that (since language is compositional) the meaning of a statement is determined by the meaning of its parts. Take, for example

(1) David is intelligent.

The extension of 'David' will be a particular individual, and the thought or proposition expressed by (1) predicates intelligence of David. So, (1) is true just in case David is intelligent, and false otherwise. According to Frege and the tradition following him, the extension of (1) will be a truth value. One popular way of understanding the intension of (1) is as a function from possible states of affairs to truth values. Thus, meaning either is, or is what determines, a truth value. Since extensions are truth values, logical operators function the same way in semantics that they do in classical logic. Thus, for example, someone who asserts (2) also asserts (1) but someone who asserts (3) does not assert (1). This is because the truth of (2), but not the truth of (3), depends upon the truth of (1). (4) is of course false whenever (1) is true.

(2) David is intelligent and Canada is cold.

(3) If David is intelligent, then so is Judith.

(4) It is not the case that David is intelligent.

3. Projection Behaviors of Slur Words

However, the projection behaviors of slur words pose a challenge to truth conditional semantics. That is to say, the use of a slur remains offensive even when that slur word is embedded under negation, as the antecedent of a conditional, in a question, etc. Thus, someone who uttered (5) would be uttering something clearly offensive. In this sense (5) contrasts with (3), because asserting (3) doesn't commit the speaker to predicating intelligence of David or Judith. (3) could still be true even if neither David nor Judith is intelligent. However, someone who utters (5) has still nonetheless said something offensive.

(5) If Obama is an S, then so is his wife.

Still, maybe it's not such a bad thing to expand our semantic theory beyond truth conditions. This approach has arguably worked well for a limited case of expressions – yes/no questions, statements, and commands – but it appears poorly equipped to handle the semantics of other types of expressions. I want to suggest that a framework used by David Kaplan (2005) can be extended to the semantics of slur words (even though in the end I will disagree with Kaplan's specific analysis of slurs).

Kaplan borrows a technique from truth conditional semantics in order to introduce his distinction between two different kinds of semantic content. If two statements are identical in semantic content, then we should be able to make a valid inference from one to the other. For instance, take (6) and (7). Since 'polite' and 'courteous' are synonyms and roughly equal in semantic content (let us assume), we can validly infer (7) from (6) or (6) from (7). However, as Kaplan (2005) notes, intuitively we cannot validly infer (9) from (8). On the other hand, validly inferring (8) from (9) seems ok.

(6) David is polite.

(7) David is courteous.

(8) Kaplan was promoted.

(9) That damn Kaplan was promoted.

4. Descriptive Semantic Content and Expressive Semantic Content

Kaplan explains this difference by arguing that (9) contains the semantic content of (8), but also something extra, viz. a display of an attitude of contempt on the part of the speaker. (8) is composed of purely *descriptive* content – it represents the world as being a certain way, and as such can be either true or false. However, expressions such as 'damn' (used as an adjective), 'ouch' or 'oops', contain only *expressive* content. These expressions merely display an attitude of the speaker, and as such are not truth-apt. When someone utters "ouch," they express (roughly) that they have just experienced a sudden pain, but it makes no sense to say that what was said is true or false.

5. Two Categories of Derogatory Epithets

Armed with this distinction, we can now distinguish two different categories of derogatory epithets in general. As Mark Richard notes, although it may be difficult to specify the content in practice, we all know what it means to call someone an 'asshole.'

(10) My neighbor is an asshole.

To say (10) is to say something *about* one's neighbor. (10) describes the speaker's neighbor as well as expresses a contemptuous attitude of the speaker. On the other hand, someone who utters (11) doesn't describe their neighbor at all, but merely expresses an attitude of contempt towards them.

(11) My neighbor is a fucker.

Although we might disagree here about specific examples, I want to argue that there is at least some sub-class of derogatory epithets which lack any descriptive content whatsoever. One reason I have for thinking this is that some years ago I learned some Spanish by speaking with some co-workers in a restaurant and looking words up in a Spanish-English dictionary. When I would look up certain cuss words I noticed that different dictionaries would give very different English expressions as translations. It occurred to me that a vast number of derogatory expressions (particularly those considered most offensive) don't obviously differ in meaning.

I think that this is because these epithets have the same expressive content, but lack descriptive content altogether. Consider, for instance, the person who, while working on a car, hurls a wrench in frustration and yells "Fuck!" It would be odd to claim that this person has described the wrench or the car as being a certain way. It would be equally odd to say that 'fucker' is semantically ambiguous between a use such as this and the use typified in (11).

Another consideration in favor of this reading is that we have no basis for arguing with someone who utters (11). We may feel that the speaker's hostile attitude is not warranted, but we have nothing to say which is capable of demonstrating that the neighbor is not a fucker. This is because 'fucker' doesn't describe the neighbor or say anything about him. On the other hand, if we know the utterer's neighbor, we could reason that the neighbor's pleasant disposition means that the neighbor is *not* an asshole. The fact that we have a basis for arguing against the claim made by (10) but not the claim made by (11) supports the idea that (10) contains descriptive content but (11) does not. Consider also the contribution made by 'blasted' in (12).

(12) The blasted TV is not working.

(13) The TV is not working.¹

Intuitively, this word doesn't contribute anything to the descriptive content of the sentence, and it doesn't obviously have different truth conditions from (13). What I want to urge is that if we treat slurs in a similar fashion, then this is the best way to account for many of our ordinary intuitions concerning statements containing them. The view here offered for your

consideration is that slurs contain merely expressive content – i.e. they display an attitude of contempt on the part of the speaker toward their targets – but they lack an extension, and hence don't make a truth-apt contribution to semantic content.

For example, we would all assent to the truth of (14). However, since we are not racist, we would feel extremely uncomfortable assenting to the truth of (15).

(14) Obama is the first black President of the U.S.

(15) Obama is the first S President of the U.S.

These sentences differ markedly in their meaning. Frege called the meaning of an indicative statement the “thought” of the sentence. Sentence (14) expresses a thought which is true, and can be accompanied by feelings of admiration and pride, for instance. Sentence (15) expresses a racist thought, which we wish to condemn and which we refuse to agree with. On my view, (14) is true but (15) is not even truth apt, since it fails to offer sufficient descriptive content to predicate anything of Obama.

6. Slurs and Satisfaction Conditions

Next, we shall have to say something about why slurs should have satisfaction conditions if they lack an extension. Consider (16):

(16) That is an elephant.

If someone utters (16) while pointing to a giraffe, then that person has obviously said something inappropriate. This inappropriateness can be explained by the fact that a giraffe does not fall under the extension of the word ‘elephant.’ We might have similar intuitions concerning (17) when S is a slur normally used to target blacks, and the utterer of (17) points to, say, a person of Swedish descent.

(17) That person is an S.

However, notice that this utterance still manages to be offensive, and that a Swede who felt that the speaker was expressing contempt toward him would not thereby be making a linguistic error.

7. Honorific Titles

I think that this can be explained by the fact that slurs are the other side of the coin of what we might call honorific titles, such as ‘sir’ or ‘miss.’ Just as slurs function to display contempt, honorifics function to display respect. Intuitively, honorific titles also lack an extension. For example, if we thought

that all males fell under the extension of ‘sir,’ then we would have to say that Adolf Hitler should be addressed as ‘sir.’ If we said that the extension of ‘sir’ is any male worthy of respect, then we would have to say that Hitler’s generals made a linguistic error when they addressed him as “Sir.” Either of these theories would also have the result that an utterance of (18), mistakenly made by a server in addressing a woman, would thus be a false utterance. None of these results is satisfactory.

(18) Your dinner is ready, sir.

I think we should say instead that ‘sir’ is composed of purely expressive content, and functions to display the respect of the speaker. Hence, an officer who fails to address his superior as ‘sir’ thereby demonstrates a lack of respect, but does not commit himself to an affront to the officer’s manhood.² If this is right, then honorifics and slurs are alike in having satisfaction conditions of a sort but lacking descriptive content. This would mean that honorifics and slurs are opposite sides of the same coin, which also feels intuitive. To sum up our conclusion thus far, the truth about racial slurs is that they are not truth apt.

8. Rival Theories

I’d like to close by briefly arguing against some rival positions put forward by other philosophers. The case of slurs is a difficult problem, and each theory has its costs. I’d like to consider a few costs of other views which I deem too high to accept. First, David Kaplan holds that slurs contain both descriptive and expressive content.³ Since for him a statement is *true-plus* just in case the descriptive content is accurate and the attitude expressed is genuinely held by the speaker, then his theory results in the possibility that statements containing racial slurs are not only true, but true-plus. However, this idea doesn’t conform to ordinary intuitions, as we have already noted. Furthermore, Kaplan’s resultant theory (by itself) can’t explain why slurs shouldn’t be used. (Kaplan already accepts the framework used here and the semantics of honorifics which I use as a comparison, so I think that he should just say what I say.)

I think that logic, which is the basis for truth-conditional semantics, is meant to be the science of reasoning, and should adhere to norms of good reasoning. Part of my motivation for wanting a semantic theory which doesn’t allow racist statements to be true or to be validly inferred from neutral statements is because this amounts to our accepting these sorts of statements and inferences as somehow appropriate. I suspect that similar motivations lie behind the theories of Mark Richard and Christopher Hom (more on their views below).

Descriptive semantic content is evaluated in terms of truth. Since truth does not apply to expressive content, we need to find some other dimension by which to evaluate the appropriateness of expressive semantic content. Kaplan considers expressive content apt just in case the attitude expressed is one which is genuinely held by the speaker. Therefore, the use of a slur will be appropriate on Kaplan's theory whenever the speaker genuinely holds an attitude of contempt. Hence, on his view, many statements containing slurs will be semantically appropriate – or, in his technical terminology, “true-plus.” This is unacceptable.

Christopher Hom (2008) holds that a racial slur means *ought to be subject to the set of discriminatory practices P because of having the set of negative properties N, all because of being F*. Here F designates the appropriate racial, ethnic or religious group, P is specified by the racist practices of a given institution of racism and N is the set of negative properties assigned to F by the racist ideology of the given social institution. Since this predicate won't properly apply to anyone, then any statement of the form 'X is an S' will be false for any name X and any slur S. However, notice that Hom is in an uncomfortable position when it comes to analyzing statements such as (5). If 'Obama is an S' is false, then that makes sentence (5) true, according to classical logic and truth conditional semantics. However, intuitively, uttering (5) is just as offensive as uttering merely its antecedent.

On the face of it, Mark Richard (2008) presents a view very similar to the one offered here. He agrees with what we have said about the truth or falsity of statements containing slurs. On Richard's analysis, slurs represent their targets as *worthy of A because F*, where A is an attitude such as contempt or hatred of the speaker and F is being a member of the racial, ethnic or religious group specified by the slur. However, Richard argues, no one can be worthy of contempt merely because of being a member of such a group. Hence, all statements of the form 'X is an S' are neither true nor false, and ought to be rejected in Richard's technical sense of that term. However, a crucial difference between Richard's view and mine is that on my view 'X is an S' is not truth apt, while on Richard's view it is a truth apt statement which lacks a truth value, comparable to a liar sentence or a statement with a vague predicate (e.g. 'Joe is bald' where Joe's baldness is a borderline case). Hence Richard is committed to truth value gaps, a semantic ambiguity and counter-intuitive reading of standard logical operators, and (ultimately) truth relativity. My view is much simpler and contains a lot less baggage, and does just as well at explaining ordinary intuitions. Everyone has to accept purely expressive language strings such as 'damn' (used as an adjective), 'ouch' and 'oops' anyway. My account also allows us to separate the true, descriptive content from the racist, offensive content in

a statement such as “That S Obama has de-privatized student loans,” which Richard’s theory cannot do.

Lastly, Timothy Williamson (2009) holds that slurs share the extension of their neutral counterparts, but carry a negative conventional implicature about them. Hence ‘Obama is an S’ is true where S just means ‘black’ (for Williamson) but conventionally implicates something derogatory about all blacks. First, we have already discussed why we don’t want a theory which results in such statements being true. Second, note that implicature is a pragmatic feature of speech acts. So even if such pragmatic accounts explain the offensiveness of such utterances, they don’t explain why they express objectionable thoughts or beliefs. Third, if semantics captures *what is said* (as Kaplan and Grice argue), then take the example of a racist professor who says in class “All Jews are S’s.” If I am called upon by a school board to testify as to what the racist professor said, then if Williamson’s account were correct I could accurately report that he said as, “All Jews are Jews.” However, intuitively I haven’t complied with the wishes of the school board if I say this.⁴

Lastly, conventional implicature is a monkey wrench in Grice’s otherwise intuitive and neat distinction between what is said and what is implicated, and is probably therefore best avoided.⁵ However, even if we accept conventional implicature, slurs don’t follow paradigm examples of conventional implicature. To take just one instance, the word ‘even’ is a typical example of conventional implicature. Hence

(19) Even Joe could prove that logical derivation.

says (20) A (and is true/false depending solely upon the truth/falsity of A), but conventionally implicates both B and C:

(20) A. Joe could prove that logical derivation.

B. Other people besides Joe could prove that logical derivation.

C. Of the people under consideration, Joe is the least likely to prove that logical derivation.

According to Karttunen & Peters (1979) and Grice, a felicitous response to a question involving conventional implicature such as (21) assents to the statement semantically expressed but challenges the implicature. However, the same response for Williamson’s analysis of example (22) is not felicitous.

(21) Could even Joe prove that logical derivation?

Yes, but Joe is better at logical derivations than most other people.

(22) Is Obama an S?

Yes, but I don’t think that blacks are contemptible.

Finally, Williamson (2009) and others object to an expressivist account of slurs because they claim that an audience to an utterance including a slur has no basis on which to object if it merely expresses the speaker's own attitude. However, just as an assertion of a belief normally automatically carries an endorsement of that belief as true, we might also say that an expression of an attitude automatically carries with it an endorsement of that attitude. Furthermore, the expression of an inappropriate attitude may also be morally blameworthy. Suppose e.g. that a person in a movie theater viewing a serious documentary about the holocaust was laughing and applauding. Intuitively, that person did something wrong. Interestingly, the thought of such behavior is phenomenologically accompanied by the same queasy sense of unease as one experiences when thinking of a statement containing a slur.

9. Conclusion

Intuitively, "Obama is the first black person to become U.S. President" expresses a *different thought* than does "Obama is the first S to become U.S. President." Furthermore, the ordinary language speaker would not assent to the truth of the second statement, even though the first statement is obviously true. Since a proposition is the part of a statement which is truth evaluable, then the two statements must express different propositions. A correct semantics must therefore treat these two statements as containing different semantic contents, and a correct logic must not allow the second statement to be logically implied nor equivalent to the first. Ultimately, the theories of Williamson, Hom, Kaplan, and even Richard fail because of the insistence that slurs describe or *say something about* their targets. The theory presented in this paper keeps all of our important common sense intuitions intact, offers an explanation for them, and emphasizes the real function of slurs and how they work.

The real value of working on a topic such as this is that once we have come to the end of what traditional truth conditional semantics is capable of handling, we will need to look elsewhere for models which can incorporate more natural language forms. Although it has understandably been of great interest to philosophers, making statements encompasses only a small part of what we do with language. As an initial puzzle case for truth conditional semantics, slurs might be a worthwhile area to begin exploring how we can expand our semantic theories in appropriate ways, in order to get a greater understanding of how language expresses meanings. Indeed, it may be an ideal area to study as an example of meaning that ultimately has little to do with truth. As a model for expressive language, Kaplan (2005)'s framework also looks to be a device worth exploring and expanding. If the sketch I have

provided in this paper looks plausible and interesting, then future work can both sharpen and develop the present theory, and also look to other language forms which may be suitable for a similar treatment. We have already seen some uncontroversial examples of expressions which lack descriptive content, and honorifics may be a class of words which are semantically similar to slurs. Furthermore, expressivist accounts for these categories of expressions don't carry with them the familiar obstacles to other forms of expressivism, such as the Frege-Geach problem.

Admittedly, there are a few minor puzzles resulting from my story which will eventually need to be ironed out. As always, there is more philosophical work to be done. All in all, however, I think that I have provided some reasons to prefer my account to the ones previously presented on the semantics of racial slurs. Not the least of these is that the present theory coheres much better with common sense understandings and intuitions regarding racial slurs. I believe, as Wittgenstein did, that common sense should not be treated like an umbrella, but should be carried into the room as a guiding principle when we philosophize (Diamond 1976, 68).⁶

NOTES

1. This example borrowed from Kent Bach 2006.
2. Thanks to Robin Jeshion for this point.
3. Although not entirely clear from Kaplan (2005), he has confirmed this in personal communication.
4. This points to a general problem for any pragmatic account of slurs: Intuitively, whatever is offensive about a slur is not an aside but part of the "at issue" (i.e. *semantic*) content.
5. This is argued for instance by Kent Bach 1999. Also, I think counterexamples to some of Grice's analyses (e.g. the difference between 'but' and 'and') can be given (see also Kaplan 2005 for a similar argument and putative counterexample which differs from my own, the latter of which is presented in my paper, "The Truth about Racial Slurs").
6. Since I began working on this topic in 2008, I have had the privilege of discussing it with a number of great philosophers. Thanks for helpful conversations and e-mail correspondence with Cheshire Calhoun, Elisabeth Camp, David Curry, John Devlin, Kevan Edwards, Jessica Gelber, Sally Haslanger, John Hawthorne, Mark Heller, Christopher Hom, Robin Jeshion, David Kaplan, Jeffrey King, Bernard Kobes, Gerald Marsh, Thomas McKay, Shyam Nair, Hille Paakkunainen, Ángel Pinillos, Mark Richard, Dawn Starr, Steve Yablo and Timothy Williamson. Portions of this paper were presented at Arizona State University (2009), Syracuse University (2011), SUNY Potsdam (2011), and the 2012 APA Central Division Meeting in Chicago. Thanks are also due to audience members who asked questions and made suggestions.

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THE BRAIN MECHANISMS OF LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT. My analysis complements the growing literature on the neurobiological correlates of words, the mechanisms necessary for grammar processing, the external significance of language, syntactic competence in neuronal networks, and the cortical mechanisms of cognition and language. This research makes conceptual and methodological contributions to functional webs relevant for the processing of words, the representation and processing of words in the brain, the cognitive neuroscience of language, and the meaning of words in ordinary language use.

Keywords: brain, language, neuronal network, meaning, thought

1. Introduction

Over the past decade, there has been increasing evidence describing the putative brain mechanisms of word processing, the neuronal representations of function words, the workings of natural languages, syntactic circuits in the human brain, and the grammatical conception of language. This paper aims to analyze and discuss the organization of language, the relation of neuroscience and linguistics, the external significance of linguistic expressions, the semantic component of language, and the processing of meanings and concepts associated with words. My paper contributes to the literature by providing evidence on the mechanisms underlying language use and comprehension, the understanding of the nature of word meanings, the distinction between language and thought, the functional web model of language processing, and word use in the context of objects and actions.

2. The Cognitive Neuroscience of Language

Frankish emphasizes that self-stimulations cannot generate sustained trains of intelligent thought, and cannot have the cognitive role typical of linguistic thought. The linguistic mind is developed through the discovery and transmission of good tricks, including inner verbalization, and various metacognitive and metalinguistic skills. Frankish asserts that the metalinguistic and metacognitive skills needed to develop a supermind (the product of memetic and cultural evolution) are *the skills needed for engaging in reasoned argument with one's peers*. Metacognitive processes *shape* linguistic thinking.¹ Stapp writes that conscious states are not caused 100% by neurobiological processes in the brain. "Brain dynamics depends crucially upon the motions of calcium ions into nerve terminals, in connection with the release of neurotransmitter molecules."²

Machan posits that knowledge is not to be understood as the final take on anything (stating what knowledge is will, if true, amount to a necessary truth), is just as much part of the natural world as anything else we are familiar with, is found *where we find all those other aspects of reality we want to understand and define correctly*, and is to be construed, in its most general respect, as a natural phenomenon (the conception of knowledge is illegitimately modeled on necessary truth). "While it is true that human beings are concerned to understand reality, to make distinctions and to integrate things in a coherent fashion, reality itself presents for them limits on their options and methods, as regards both what there is to understand and how they can go about doing this task."³ Bell observes that Nietzsche differentiates between *an art that affirms becoming as the source of being and that which denies becoming by reducing it to being a form of being (either/or thinking presupposes identity as an already established reality)*: becoming gives rise to the fiction of beings, and art is best suited to explain the process (there is a form of becoming that gives rise to the creation of beings). Nietzsche's preoccupation with art reflects his effort to think non-dualistically (the value of art is dependent upon whether it is life-enhancing or life-denying). Non-dual thinking affirms becoming in a way that allows for the creation of beings, and is inseparable from the work of artistic creation. Bell claims that Nietzsche points out the necessity and impossibility of thinking becoming, of reducing becoming to being ("being" is inseparable from a form of becoming). Conceptual thought entails thinking in a manner that can be expressed verbally.⁴

3. The Distinction between Language and Thought

Ward and Johnson contend that Wittgenstein denies the reality of the meta-physical self, the thinking subject: the I is not part of the world, solipsism and pure realism coincide, and the meaning of 'solipsism' shows itself. Wittgenstein's atomic facts are the elements of a person's experiences. Pictures/propositions bear some kind of resemblance to what they represent, the saying/showing distinction is the same as the representation/showing distinction, and showing is not a special form of representation. What a representation and its represented fact have in common can only be shown (in the case of symbolic/linguistic representation, this showing happens through application). Representations are pictures of facts, and pictures are themselves facts. Logical propositions are true but carry no substantive information about the world.⁵ Regier et al. say that language affects perception: Whorfian effects of language on perception may be dominant in the right visual field (language may affect perception in the right half of the visual field). Linguistic convention may play a limited role in determining the boundaries of named color categories, the color naming systems of the world's languages correspond to maxima or near-maxima in well-formedness, whereas color naming systems of the world's languages are near-optimal (*linguistic convention may play some role in selecting from among the class of well-formed color naming systems*).⁶

O'Grady holds that language involves a relationship between phonetic forms and semantic representations, and makes use of innately structured semantic representations: the sine qua non of Universal Grammar is a claim about *the nature of the computational system that structures form and relates it to meaning*. "A theory of language acquisition that incorporates some version of the 'innateness hypothesis' is not the same thing as a theory of language acquisition that incorporates a version of UG. And an emergentist theory of language acquisition is not the same thing as a theory of frequency effects."⁷ Wolff and Malt contend that *every language reflects a certain perspective on the world through its inventory of words and encoding strategies*: languages are not entirely neutral with respect to the information they carry, knowledge of words relates to general knowledge about the world, and the differences in word meaning are greater than differences at the conceptual level.⁸ Gleitman and Papafragou maintain that language has specific effects on thought, relies on inferential processes outside the linguistic system for reconstructing the richness and specificity of thought, and can be recruited to help event encoding, *particularly in tasks that involve heavy cognitive load*. On Gleitman and Papafragou's view, linguistic semantics cannot fully envelop and substitute for inferential interpretation (the representations that populate our mental life cannot be

identical to the representations that encode linguistic meaning), *thought processes are not definable over representations that are isomorphic to linguistic representations*, whereas linguistic representations underdetermine the conceptual contents they are used to convey.⁹

4. The Relation of Neuroscience and Linguistics

Pulvermüller holds that the human brain provides the mechanisms realizing language, whereas language mechanisms are organized as nerve cells and their mutual connections (the cerebral cortex is the part of the brain most relevant for language, and the cortex can serve the function of merging multimodal information). Production of a language element corresponds to activation of neurons controlling movements of the articulators, networks made up of neurons can realize important aspects of the serial order of events (functional webs are strongly connected neuron ensembles), conventional grammars cannot be reformulated by a language-specific version of neuronal grammar, and neuronal grammars can compete with traditional grammars in the description of natural languages. As Pulvermüller puts it, *the brain distinguishes between words and similar but novel and meaningless items, the semantic category of the stimulus words is not the only variable determining the topography of brain activation (the overlap of semantic representations should allow for facilitatory priming effects), strong connections are present between all components of a distributed representation of a word, and a neurobiological model can incorporate aspects of visual word processing.*

The point of interest here is that the lexical status of a written or spoken word and aspects of word semantics determine the brain response (the brain response to words and word-like material reflects lexical status and word semantics). Feedback regulation of cortical activity can be implemented in the brain, and syntactically well-formed and ungrammatical word strings elicit differential brain responses. Pulvermüller argues that the term *functional web* refers to networks *that include reverberatory loops and produce well-timed spatiotemporal patterns of activity: neuronal grammar circuits can process relevant syntactic structures in a biologically realistic manner, a certain modification of dependency syntax is equivalent to grammar circuits, whereas neuronal grammar can accept strings by grouping embedded phrases into synchronized assemblies of neuronal sets.* The nondominant cortical hemisphere is activated during language tasks, and is necessary for the optimal processing of language (the cortex allows for the formation of distributed functional webs). For a cortex-like network to operate properly, a regulation mechanism that keeps the activity level within certain bounds should be assumed (coactivation of a pre- and postsynaptic neuron leads to

synaptic strengthening). Structural information about a sentence unfolds over time in the grammar circuit, words closely related in meaning and form can influence or prime each other (the prime word can improve or deteriorate the processing of the target word), and the task of a grammar may be to cover the form of sentences and aspects of their meaning.¹⁰

Mukherji argues that biolinguistics is concerned with the study of grammars, is a clever coverage of data and a search for invariants in nature, extends our understanding of some aspect of the world, establishes sound-meaning correlations in accordance with the native speaker's intuitions (based on the knowledge of language internalized by the native speaker), whereas *the* goal of biolinguistics is to explain how sound-meaning correlations are established in languages: *the most promiscuous use of language consists in talking about the world, language escapes the divide between what does and does not fall under science, and interpretation of a sentence ultimately accrues from the meanings of words*. Mukherji observes that the basic vocabulary and the constructs of linguistics are theoretical devices to give an account of at least part of the human grammatical mind. Grammatical competence is typically put to use without knowing that the user is putting something to use (the principles of universal grammar have a biological basis). In studying the nature and function of human language, linguists are investigating some biological aspect of the human brain.

The preceding considerations suggest that human languages require that an element may be interpreted in a position different from where it is sounded. Mukherji asserts that grammars represent the “syntax” part of languages, where “syntax” contrasts with “semantics.” The traditional distinction between syntax and semantics does not apply to the organization of grammatical theory (grammatical theory contains a semantic theory), whereas problems of lexical semantics may be addressed in a nonlinguistic theory of concepts (where the concepts that are verbalized will belong to semantics proper). “Grammars consist of schematic and computational aspects of the mind/brain. Principles of grammar compute over symbols (representations) that may be used to express thoughts and emotions. [...] Our grammatical – not *linguistic* – capacity is such that we have no firm common beliefs about its nature and function; we just use it to form ‘surface’ intuitions in the form of judgments of acceptability.”¹¹

5. Conclusions

I am specifically interested in how previous research investigated the constructs of linguistics, neuron-based formulations of language mechanisms, the neuroscience of language, the processing of word meaning in the brain, and the knowledge of the cortical basis of language processes. This paper

seeks to fill a gap in the current literature by examining the functional principles governing the neurons' behavior, complex interactions of functional neuronal units, the existence of word representations in the brain, the nature of functional webs, and the nature of the innate endowment for language.

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CHOMSKY'S BIOLINGUISTIC APPROACH TO MIND AND LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT. The paper generates insights about Chomsky's characterization of the language faculty, his reasoning regarding lexical selection, his insistence on economy principles as a valuation measure for derivations, and the Chomskyan notion of semantic representation. Our analysis complements the growing literature on Chomsky's notion of universal grammar, his views on the evolutionary nature of human language, his identification of random-generator algorithmic systems with the human capacity for expressing thoughts, and the Chomskyan view of language.

Keywords: Chomsky, biolinguistic approach, language, grammar, knowledge

1. Introduction

In the present paper, I focus on Chomsky's proposals about the nature of language, his view of language and its functionality in use, his statements on the "usability" of language, his preference for a *random-generator model* of language, and the innateness of syntactic knowledge. This paper aims to analyze and discuss Chomsky's melding of mathematics and linguistics, his notion of universal grammar, his analysis of the conditions of use of human language, his biolinguistic approach, and the Chomskyan view of autonomous syntax. The theory that I shall seek to elaborate here puts considerable emphasis on the biological plausibility of Chomsky's type of minimalist grammar, his notion of modularity, Chomskyan conceptions of grammar, and the neurobiological mechanisms underlying language. The findings of this study have implications for the Chomskyan biolinguistic picture of language, Chomsky's competence–performance distinction, his influence on the cognitive revolution, and his transformational approach to syntax.

2. The Neurobiological Mechanisms Underlying Language

Poepfel links genetic results to component formal operations that underlie processing the comprehension and production of linguistic representations: investigating the mapping from gene to brain circuit to linguistic phenotype at the level of generic computational operations provides a new perspective on the biological foundations in the healthy and challenged brain.¹ Kemmerer and Eggleston highlight some of the specific ways in which typology can inform neurolinguistics, pointing out that grammatical categories (GCs) are identified primarily by the occurrence or non-occurrence of words in the morphological and syntactic constructions that constitute the grammatical systems of languages: examination of verbal constructions in particular languages reveals GCs that exhibit correlations between grammatical properties and semantic properties.² Brennan et al. investigate the localization of syntactic structure building under relatively naturalistic conditions, examining the neural basis of natural syntactic and lexical processing, and correlating the time course of brain activity with the changing linguistic properties of a naturalistic speech stimulus (a measure of syntactic structure building is correlated with activity in the left anterior temporal lobe). Syntactic processing divides into many sub-computations. Syntactic composition is intertwined with the operations that build the meaning of a sentence. Combining words into phrases is pervasive during every-day language comprehension.³

Petersson and Hagoort emphasize the role artificial grammar learning (AGL) can play in unraveling the neural basis of human language: *the nature of the brain's ability for syntax is based on neurobiological infrastructure for structured sequence processing*. Petersson and Hagoort take natural language to be a neurobiological system. Language processing combines information at multiple linguistic levels. Syntactic processing never occurs in isolation from the other linguistic levels. Human brain represents knowledge of syntax in its connectivity.⁴ Marantz claims that experiences no gap between generative theory and psycho- or neurolinguistic experimentation, and re-situates generative grammar within the general program of experimental cognitive neuroscience (mainstream generative linguistics operates at the nexus of computation, philosophy of language, and cognitive neuroscience). The competence/performance distinction emphasizes that a grammar is about the representation and computation of language. "In Chomsky's Minimalist Program and related approaches, the minimal combinatory units of language subject to both semantic and phonological interpretation, traditionally known as morphemes, combine via a recursive "merge" operation, creating hierarchical constituent structures. Each element and each merger involves a promise to be interpreted both phonologically and semantically."⁵

3. The Chomskyan Biolinguistic Picture of Language

Chomsky puts it that language is a window into the mind. Syntax and the possibility of a universal grammar can provide insights into the architecture of the mind. The form of the grammar may emerge from the mental structure afforded by the human brain. Chomsky notes that formal grammatical categories like nouns, verbs, adjectives and so on do not exist (sentence structures of all languages are represented by the same base phrase marker):⁶ *a theory of human language satisfies the condition of descriptive adequacy if it accounts for the properties of the language which a speaker knows.*⁷ Chomsky focuses on the mind of a language learner/user. Universal grammar (UG) is the initial state of the faculty of language, a biologically innate organ, helping the learner make sense of the data and build up an internal grammar. The semantic component expresses thematic as well as discourse information.⁸ Berwick and Chomsky observe that human language is a particular object of the biological world (the core properties of human language differ sharply from animal communication systems). Our shared language capacity enables us to construct and interpret a discrete infinity of hierarchically structured expressions. The use of the symbols of human language and thought is not automatically keyed to emotional states (they do not pick out mind-independent objects or events in the external world). Being reflective creatures humans try to make some sense of experience (humans are in fundamental respects identical). “Communication is a more-or-less affair in which the speaker produces external events and hearers seek to match them as best they can to their own internal resources. Words and concepts appear to be similar in this regard, even the simplest of them. Communication relies on shared cognitive powers, succeeding insofar as shared mental constructs, background, concerns, presuppositions, and so on, allow for common perspectives to be (more or less) attained.”⁹

Chomsky insists that the central problem in generative grammar is to account for the human capacity for language acquisition. Humans are biologically endowed with a capacity to develop a language.¹⁰ Chomsky thinks that the elements of linguistic variation are those that determine the growth of language in the individual: *variation is the result of experience, given the genetic endowment and independent principles reducing complexity.*¹¹ Seuren holds that Chomsky’s conception of language and grammar leaves no room for an account of how language could possibly express thought (the primary function of language is to express thought): *the origin of the potential infinity of language lies in the human capacity to form an infinite array of thoughts that are expressible in language.* Chomsky proposes a new and productive way of thinking about language. The language faculty is “biologically isolated.” The language faculty accounts for the “discrete

infinity” of human language through its assumption of a recursive random sentence generator. Human language is exceptional from the point of view of evolution. The human language faculty is a superb technical achievement in its own right.

All this necessarily leads to the conclusion that all human languages are subject to universal principles (parameters) that allow for different choices (values). Language is more perfect to the extent that it is determined by external conditions of use. Seuren maintains that Chomsky’s notion of a “property of discrete infinity” is one of the properties of a brain/mind resulting from evolution. It is not part of a theory of grammar to specify what a speaker will say. Phonological rules may assign heavy accent to any arbitrary element in the sentence. It is possible to build markers or other structural elements into semantically defined deep structures. Some semantic elements must be regarded as having a surface-driven interpretation.¹² Chomsky contends that humans possess a generative grammar that makes the rapid and universal acquisition of speech by young children possible. The generative grammar is somehow magically hard-wired into the human brain.¹³

4. Chomsky’s Views on the Evolutionary Nature of Human Language

Smith points out that Chomsky distinguishes “grammatical competence” (“knowledge of form and meaning”) from “pragmatic competence” (knowledge of conditions and manner of appropriate use). Chomsky focuses on the indirect nature of the relation between the competence grammatical theory¹⁴ and any model of performance which includes such a theory. Chomsky redirects the focus of linguistic investigation to the individual mind,¹⁵ developing the notion of I-language, in contradistinction to the *external* and *extensional* force of E-language. An I-language cannot exist independently of the human mind (it is a property of the mind–brain).

Smith asserts that Chomsky views linguistics as part of psychology,¹⁶ attempts to understand the workings of the human mind within the framework of the natural sciences, and extends the concept of what falls under “knowledge” to knowledge of language (*there are necessary bounds on our knowledge in general, and our science-forming capacity in particular*). Our knowledge of language can be studied by normal scientific investigation as a part of the natural world (a substantial part of our knowledge is genetically determined). Language is a kind of “mental organ” interacting with other mental organs (it is a “mental” phenomenon), is necessarily internal, is largely genetically determined and our language faculty is to a considerable extent innate.

The findings referred to here suggest that humans need to be free to develop in whatever way maximizes the potential of that innate endowment. Chomsky's economy principles pertain to representations and derivations internal to the language faculty, excluding relations beyond the interfaces. The principles of language and the principles of vision are "entirely distinct." The language faculty interprets everything the external world throws at it. There is a basic distinction in the language faculty between the lexicon and the "computational system."

Chomsky's computationalist commitment entails that the linguistic symbols which feature in descriptions of our knowledge of language, entities like Noun, Verb, Complementizer, and the hierarchical tree structures into which they enter, have causal properties in the sense that they underlie any explanation of the linguistic knowledge and intuitions of native speakers. [...] For Chomsky the interest and importance of analyses of language reside in the implications they have for philosophical and psychological issues.¹⁷

Lycan says that, according to Chomsky, the mind-body distinction has no metaphysical import. Soul or mind is an arrangement of matter in any sense of "matter." human thought and action are properties of organized matter. Biological teleology is straightforward. "By any measure, Chomsky was a leading figure in the victory of cognitivism over behaviorism in psychology. [...] Some of the "mysteries" may be permanently and systematically intractable for us because of innate structure in the human mind."¹⁸

5. Conclusions

The current study set out to identify Chomsky's views on our having knowledge of and using rules of language, his linguistic naturalism, his commitment to the internalism of I-language, and his "parameter setting" theory of language acquisition. The implications of the developments outlined in the preceding sections of this paper suggest a growing need for a research agenda on Chomsky's ideas about the language system as a whole, his transformational syntax, his focus on the cognitively represented competence of (native) speakers, and the Chomskyan view of first language acquisition. Our paper contributes to the literature by providing evidence on Chomsky's "rules and representations" paradigm, his computational view of language processing, his views on meaning, and his development of transformational grammar.

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INTERACTION OF SENSE, REFERENCE AND STRUCTURE IN CONTEMPORARY JOURNALISTIC STYLE

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ABSTRACT. The mainstay of the paper is formed by an analysis of the wide usage of the Internet by news organizations, the complexity of online news consumption, online news economics, and determinants of media consumption. The main objective of this paper is to explore and describe citizen participation in producing news content, the routines and values of journalistic culture, the underlying values of journalism, and the growing importance of social networks to news organizations.

Keywords: online news interactions, social networks, media consumption

1. Introduction

Scholarly research reveals strong correlations between the quality and breadth of news coverage, the experience of online news interactions, the sharing of news content via social networking tools, the blog and its interactivity, and the rise of online news use. In this paper I am particularly interested in exploring news media's use of the Internet, the proliferation of media choices through digital channels, the economics of online news consumption, and continued growth in online usage.

2. News Media's Use of the Internet

Chyi and Lee note that most newspapers have difficulties monetizing online usage¹: users prefer news delivered in print format² (online news is perceived as a less-than-desirable alternative to print newspapers). Gender affects online news consumption, preference predicts online news use as well as paying intent, and online news' print counterpart interacts with different aspects of online consumption. "A holistic understanding of online news consumption must extend beyond news use to include preference as well

as intention to pay. [...] Given free online news offerings in most cases, consumers do not always *use* what they *prefer*. And they are not always willing to *pay* for what they *use*.”³ Domingo et al. put it that *journalism is a social phenomenon with a high level of internal differentiation*: the arenas of public communication are dominated by the media,⁴ whereas the media imply interpretation patterns by providing comments and opinions (mediated and interpersonal communication work together to disseminate news in a society). The development of audience participation opportunities in online newspapers redefines journalistic culture, values and practices (audience participation in the media can take different forms). Computer technology and the Internet allow users to produce and distribute news items on the basis of their observations or opinions.⁵ Chyi and Huang investigate the demand relationship between newspapers’ print and online products, which determines how newspapers prioritize their dual products when engaged in multiplatform news delivery: *online and print newspapers should be examined as product items within one newspaper’s cross-media portfolio* (print newspapers may serve as the content provider for their online counterparts).⁶

3. The Growing Importance of Social Networks to News Organizations

Lowrey conceptualizes blogging as a budding occupational community *that can have an impact on the system of occupations, and which is itself shaped within this system*: bloggers are dependent on mainstream news media⁷ for original reporting, and tend to eschew the professional routines of institutional journalists (bloggers are dependent on journalists for most news information). Lowrey asserts that online journalists’ understanding of the blogging form⁸ serves journalism. Journalism changes because it is shaped by external constraints, whereas decision-makers react to constraints, external objective constraints and benefits may shape journalists’ efforts to change professional knowledge and practice, whereas the journalist’s abstract knowledge is embodied in their news judgment (the inference process for news information work is related to the ability to gather news).

The organization of production is the most fundamental distinction between journalism and blogging. Differences in content, work processes, tone, values and format are symptoms of this underlying structural difference. [...] Journalists shift subjective qualities of their professional process to cover areas that become vulnerable to occupational competition and which challenge their ability to control information work. [...] Bloggers assert that they truly represent the unfiltered voices of audiences who have been disenfranchised by mainstream media and who yearn to be heard.⁹

Newman remarks that new internet tools like YouTube, Facebook and Twitter have changed the way media is produced, distributed and consumed:¹⁰ *the culture of mainstream newspapers is blending with the norms and traditions of the open web, social networks are increasingly where news is broken, whereas traditional news organizations engage in partnership with audiences to tell stories in new ways.* Newman argues that mainstream media organizations try and understand the technical and social challenges raised by the growth of personal and social media,¹¹ and are taking social tools and networks seriously.

One thing that is clear is that social media are influencing the way news is reported, and is a supplementary dimension to the coverage of real-time events. Newman says that social media and user-generated content¹² is moving centre stage. A new style of journalism takes the form of an unfolding conversation in partnership with audiences, the timeline of breaking news is compressed, whereas, in future, news organizations will be running behind the social networks. “The popularity and time spent with social networking sites is changing the way people spend their time online and the way in which they share and interact in their daily lives. This is creating new challenges for the media and advertising industries. Social networks provide competition to traditional publishers for consumer attention and at the same time they are opening up new ways of engaging and connecting with audiences.”¹³

O’Brien explores the interaction between user and system variables¹⁴ and its implications for user engagement with online news,¹⁵ demonstrating the complexity of users’ interactions with information content and systems in online news environments.

According to this discussion, a goal of news may be to appeal to a wide-range of people with different motivations for browsing and reading news, user engagement is a quality of user experience with technology, and online news represents a rich environment for investigating a range of behaviors, cognitions, and affective elements of users’ experiences. O’Brien examines users’ perceptions of system features, such as interactivity, and content¹⁶ in concert with user variables. “User engagement offers a more holistic framework for thinking about users’ experiences with online news and enables us to observe aspects of the interactivity of system, content, and uses and how these shape experiences with information and multimedia-rich systems.”¹⁷

4. The Sharing of News Content via Social Networking Tools

Lewis claims that meticulous information-gathering and editorial quality-control are essential for high quality news (the sheer volume, enterprise and quality of serious news stories have diminished). “With the waning commercial commitment to serious news coverage more dramatic and urgent now than ever, the public need for higher quality reportage and a better informed citizenry has substantially increased.”¹⁸ de Vreese holds that “the media” is a cornerstone institution in our democracies: *generic* news frames may be used to understand cross-national differences in news coverage (framing can be used as a tool to study media content). Communication is a dynamic process that involves frame-building (the factors that influence the structural qualities of news frames) and frame-setting (the interaction between media frames and individuals’ prior knowledge and predispositions).¹⁹

Himelboim focuses on the structure of the international communication network generated by news media organizations, and their use of external hyperlinks (patterns of hyperlinks usage are indicators for the flow of information across geographic and political borders), challenging the egalitarian power of the Internet (*via the Internet, news organizations can overcome some offline drawbacks*). “By using hyperlinks, news organizations can overcome political and financial barriers and present information from around the world. Individuals and organizations can turn public awareness toward their causes if news Web sites link to their information. [...] The Internet provides new means for news media to contribute to informed citizenry by pursuing their social role to disseminate news and views.”²⁰ Mouffe contends that the media play an important role in reproducing hegemony, in its maintenance and production (there is a multiplicity of public spaces). “The role of the media should precisely be to contribute to the creation of an agonistic public space in which there is the possibility for dissensus to be expressed or different alternatives to be put forward.”²¹

5. Conclusions

The results of the current study converge with prior research on the relationship between the dynamics of the relationship between blogging and journalism, technological change in the form of the internet, the strengths of organizationally based journalism, frames in the news, and online content creation and distribution. Our paper contributes to the literature by providing evidence on the nexus between the professional practices of objectivity, balance and news analysis, the blog’s interactive online format, the news selection process, users’ experiences with online news, and online news

consumption. The findings of this study have implications for the current crisis in news coverage, the role of social media, the content generated by mainstream media organizations, and user-generated newsgathering content.

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HUSSERL ON THE WORLD AS AN ONTOLOGICALLY DEPENDENT CORRELATE OF THE TRANSCENDENTAL SUBJECT

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ABSTRACT. The purpose of this article is to gain a deeper understanding of Husserl's distinction between conceptual and empirical inquiry, his method of reduction, his commitment to idealism, his aim of criticizing epistemological naturalism, and his definition of the transcendent world. The paper generates insights about Husserl's prioritization of immanence, his account of the primal impression, his prioritization of consciousness, and his transcendental idealism. The results of the current study converge with prior research on Husserl's philosophical idealism, his realism, his development of transcendental phenomenology, and his project of philosophical reform.

Keywords: Husserl, world, consciousness, transcendental phenomenology, meaning

1. Introduction

I am specifically interested in how previous research investigated Husserl's distinction between indication and expression, his account of the transcendental-constitutive function of intersubjectivity, his description of the concrete experience of the Other, his phenomenology of the body, and his account of internal-time-consciousness. Although researchers have discovered some important findings regarding Husserl's differentiation between immanence and transcendence, his doctrine of intuition, his distinction of meaning from matters of fact, his worldless beginning, and the Husserlian transcendental stream of consciousness, there is still a great deal that is unknown and that requires further empirical inquiry. This paper seeks to fill a gap in the current literature by examining different aspects of Husserl's metaphysical realism, his view on the transcendental ego, his concept of the *lifeworld*, and his analysis of perceptual intentionality. The mainstay of the paper is formed by

an analysis of Husserl's transcendental turn, his infinite stream of consciousness, his account of immanence, and his distinction between factual contingency and meaningful necessity. The theory that we shall seek to elaborate here puts considerable emphasis on Husserl's distinction between philosophy as a priori inquiry and the empirical inquiry of science, his language of sense and meaning, his pure Ego, and his transcendental reduction.

2. The Husserlian Transcendental Stream of Consciousness

Vrahimis notes that Husserl provides an account of how one may distinguish between various kinds of senselessness (meaninglessness is a method for the detection of differences between categories of meaning).¹ Rowlands claims that, for Husserl, the *Auffassungssinn* is the *content* of the mental act: it is something in the act in virtue of which the act is a presentation of an object. Senses should be understood as (i) objective (they exist independently of the mental activity of any subject), and (ii) ideal (they are neither spatial nor temporal entities). The sense of an intentional act is irreducibly transcendental. The experiential *noema* is, whereas the experiential *noesis* is not, an ideal reference-determining content. The *noesis* is the real, concrete, psychic counterpart to this ideal particular. Husserl distinguishes between the *real* and the *ideal* content of a mental act. "Real content is specific to a particular mental act, whereas ideal content can be shared by different acts, whether in the same person or others. Husserl claimed that ideal content is a universal, instantiated by particular mental acts undergone by individuals, but independent of those acts and individuals."²

Alweiss points out that Husserl forgets the question of Being, affirming a philosophy of consciousness which ignores the phenomenon of the world (Husserl prioritizes consciousness over and against the spatiotemporal world). Husserl affirms a philosophy of consciousness: consciousness is an event, should never be confused with an empirical or psychological moment, cannot be an intratemporal event, and exists only as an abiding correlate to experience. Husserl affirms a *self*-temporalizing stream of consciousness that does not appear *in time*, wishes to differentiate consciousness from reality, intimates a dualism by defining consciousness as essentially distinct from reality, reduces all phenomena to the sense bestowal of consciousness, and affirms consciousness as the absolute ground for all appearances. Husserl's transcendental stream of consciousness is an infinite, open stream of possibilities: the priority given to consciousness leads to a radical division between immanence and transcendence (everything that is can be experienced only by the transcendental stream of consciousness).

All this necessarily leads to the conclusion that Husserl's phenomenology finds the principle of all principles in the intentional structure of conscious-

ness. Objects need to conform to the “style” of consciousness, and *every* conscious act refers to an object (it is intentional). Any experience needs to be accompanied by an experiencing consciousness (which is that of the pure Ego). There is never a complete congruence between the experiencing self (consciousness) and that which is experienced. Change or time cannot be perceived only in relation to a timeless, non-changing consciousness, absolute consciousness is active and changing in its unity, the *event* of consciousness can be *seen*, whereas it is possible to disclose an absolute consciousness that is the abiding correlate to all experience. *Though atomistic psychologism is a fiction, there is no consciousness without impression.* Alweiss claims that Husserl reduces the external world to the field of immanence, *makes explicit philosophy’s implicit disinterestedness in the existence of the external world*, lets the world appear in its suspension, acknowledging the bracketing of the world, and describes our propositional attitudes in ways that do not require the existence of any particular objects or properties in the world. Pure truths are ideal (they are not conditioned by the factual world), the stream of the appearing world in its suspension is fully present in its unity, true skepticism does not doubt the world but *our capacity to judge* whether or not there is a world, and the possibility of the annihilation of the world can never be excluded.

What matters for the present discussion is that Husserl’s entire phenomenological project remains concerned with the *idealization* of the world: Husserl turns the problem of the world into an infinite task, lets the world appear in its suspension, acknowledges the bracketing of the world, ensuring that the problem of the world remains the fundamental concern of any philosophical investigation. Alweiss observes that the fictional basis of the world leads Husserl to turn the “fiction” of the world into an absolute eidetic science: so long as the problem of the world is maintained, human knowledge has to acknowledge its inadequacy, the world of things has primacy over the lived pre-theoretical world (we have pre-theoretical experience of the world), and “to be” means not to *be-in-the-world* but to *have-a-world* and to *have-a-body*. The subject always *has* a body. The mode in which we can experience things as outside us presupposes outer sense and a subject that possesses a spatial location. “Husserl argues that there is a distance between the T that experiences and what is experienced. The T that experiences precedes even the subjective time of immanent perception. The ultimate consciousness is therefore timeless and cannot be an object or representation appearing in time.”³

3. Husserl's Account of the Transcendental-constitutive Function of Intersubjectivity

D'Amico characterizes Husserl as an epistemological "internalist:" the task of epistemology is to study the "form of all experience," and intentional analysis serves in the epistemological justification of knowledge (meaning, like epistemology, cannot be naturalized). Husserl defends a distinction between philosophical questions and empirical questions about the natural world, and treats ontological questions as problems relegated to the empirical sciences (naturalism or objectivism is a philosophical position concerning the nature of empirical evidence). "Husserl argues there that the failure to distinguish clearly between what is empirical and what is a matter of a priori necessity concerning knowledge is at the root of both cultural and theoretical confusions, confusions a properly understood philosophy would dispel."⁴

The overall conclusion to be drawn from these and similar observations is that research into the nature of psychophysical being provides information and evidence concerning the natural world. Human beings are natural, psychophysical beings whose psychological states are caused by or realized in their neurophysiological states. D'Amico states that Husserl's introduction of the noematic content of intentional analysis leads to the "phenomenological reduction:" the intentional object is the way of presenting or a way of referring to objects or states of affairs in the world, meanings and essential structures of intentionality are "seen" once reflective attention is directed to them, linguistic meaning is a subcategory of the meaning of intentional content in general,⁵ and factually and conceptually, intentionality (directedness toward objects) is a precondition for the possibility of experience (normally perception cannot be challenged on grounds of consistency or coherence). On D'Amico's view, Husserl's reduction is a device, not a claim about the fundamental nature of the world (the phenomenological reduction is possible because of the noematic correlates of all mental experience): *even a godlike control over the natural world would provide no deeper access to determining the meaning of experience as evidential* (the "lifeworld" is the "straight-forwardly intuited world"). Husserl proposes a theory of meaning that accounts for representation and the systematic relationship between thought contents, and connects the immanent and transcendent worlds (our thoughts refer to the "real world," not merely the contents of our minds). Meaning ought not to be restricted to only linguistic meaning, is not an inner mental experience at all, and is immediately and faultlessly accessible to self-reflection by way of pure intuition (intuitions are "exhibited"). The study of meaning is not entirely a topic of the sciences, "ideal

meaning” is autonomous from its contingent expression in any given thought or experience, and the indicative function of a sign is not a matter of meaning at all. Transcendental idealism properly answers skepticism and supports perceptual realism. The proper understanding of transcendental subjectivity is that of a solitary, reflective inquiry. Objects given in perception are transcendent, immanent mental life can represent objects external to mental phenomena, whereas there is a necessary, a priori, pure relation between a sense and its intentional object (speculating about the nature of cognitive structure is not a properly philosophical concern). “Husserl sought to treat naturalism as a competing philosophical position assessed in terms of its account of the necessary aspects of how the world appears in experience.”⁶

4. Husserl’s Phenomenology of Intersubjectivity

As Zahavi puts it, Husserl understands transcendental *intersubjectivity* as the foundation of worldly objectivity and reality: the objectivity and transcendence of the world is constituted intersubjectively. Self- and world-constitution go hand in hand, whereas the world- and self-constitution take place intersubjectively. Both lifeworld and science are constituted by transcendental (inter)subjectivity, *the transcendence of the world is constituted through Others and through the generatively constituted co-subjectivity*, and full subjectivity is a world-experiencing life. Husserl speaks of the world’s ontic meaning and gives a description of its constitution. Whereas it is possible to imagine the existence of a *worldless* subject, it is not possible to imagine the existence of a *subjectless* world. Mathematical truths are valid regardless of whether or not there exists a world with human beings. We are “zunächst und zumeist” directed at real objects in the world. Questions concerning the existence of a mind-independent world are metaphysical questions that do not belong to phenomenology, the world that appears to us is the only real world, whereas the experience of another as incarnated subject is the first step toward the constitution of an objective shared world. There is a universal and essential structure to every possible lifeworld, every lifeworld is correlated to a *functioning body*, and the lifeworld is characterized by its morphological typicality (I, we, and the world belong together).

Zahavi claims that Husserl is interested in the essential structure of subjectivity, *purified and liberated from any contingent context: Husserl’s concept of evidence is no attempt to absolutize or immunize the private opinions of the subject, but entails a claim about intersubjective validity (a performance of the epoche and a thematization of the phenomenological given should lead to the discovery of transcendental subjectivity)*. Subjectivity is per se self-aware and is a condition of the possibility for manifestation. Reality is a system of validity and meaning that needs subjectivity, can only

appear thanks to subjectivity, and is intersubjectively constituted. The sense and the categories of *transcendence*, *objectivity*, and *reality* are constituted intersubjectively (objectivity and reality cannot be defined in terms of an optimal presence to a self-sufficient subject). Transcendental intersubjectivity possesses a necessary I-centering, my experience of objective validity is made possible by my experience of the transcendence of foreign subjectivity, whereas the analysis of the transcendental ego leads to a disclosure of its *apodictic* intersubjective structure.⁷

5. Conclusions

Over the past decade, there has been increasing evidence describing Husserl's analysis of the body, his concepts of noesis and noema, his distinction between the intentional matter and the intentional quality, his analysis of transcendental intersubjectivity, and his doctrine of immanent transcendence. Considerable research attention has focused on the nature and extent of Husserl's phenomenology of intersubjectivity, his analysis of intentionality, his distinction between the ideal and the real, his description of the object-directedness of consciousness, and his onto-theological understanding of transcendence. As a result of these earlier research findings, this study sought to determine Husserl's concept of the transcendental ego, his analysis of temporality in consciousness, his concept of intentionality, and his theory of meaning. The overall results provide strong evidence for Husserl's phenomenological investigation of intersubjectivity, his account of the relation between self, world, and other, his notion of constitution, his epistemological project of pure inquiry, and his transcendental theory of knowledge.

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MERLEAU-PONTY'S UNDERSTANDING OF INTENTIONALITY

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ABSTRACT. The main objective of this paper is to explore and describe Merleau-Ponty's account of motor intentionality, his full phenomenological account of object perception, and his account of seeing things. The paper generates insights about Merleau-Ponty's account of object transcendence, his full-blooded phenomenology of perception, and his understanding of the category of the indeterminate.

Keywords: Merleau-Ponty, appearance, reality, intentionality, knowledge, meaning

1. Introduction

The theory that I shall seek to elaborate here puts considerable emphasis on Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological analysis of the appearance-reality distinction, his construal of meaning, his doctrine of knowledge, and his phenomenological analysis of perception. This study is grounded in the considerable body of scholarship examining Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of skillful coping, his thesis of the primacy of perception, and his epistemology.

2. Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenological Analysis of Perception

Kelly remarks that Merleau-Ponty's view of perception depends upon the idea that the background of our perception of objects and their properties functions everywhere to guide what is focally articulate: *Merleau-Ponty puts the intentionality directly in the world, the background features of experience make a positive contribution to the phenomenology of perception, my current visual experience contains something that is itself an indeterminate presentation of the back, the canonical kind of indeterminate visual presence is the visual presence of the background against which a figure appears,*

and I experience an object as now having sides that are hidden from me because I experience it as now seen from everywhere. Perception is indeterminate because it is essentially *normative*. My perception of the hidden features of an object is not indeterminate in the sense of being merely disjunctive (perceptual experience is not the presentation of sense data). I do not have a vision of some *thing* or another, a thing which is itself determinate but which I have not yet determined, whereas I have a positive presentation of something indeterminate, a presentation of *an I do not know what*.

According to this discussion, I experience objects as *seeing* one another, and what I see is indeterminate. It is not possible to say whether the subject or the environment is in command (*we* can recognize an artist's style better than the artist can himself). The experience of the lighting context is essentially normative (the lighting context is experienced as the background against which the color of the object appears). I never experience the light as a determinate amount, but I see, in a direct bodily manner, *how the light would have to change* in order for me to see the color *better*. There is a unified structure that encompasses both the lighting and the color lit. The visual background is indeterminate (it is experienced normatively instead of descriptively). The indeterminate features of an object have a *positive presence* in our experience. The indeterminacy of the visual background consists in its playing a normative role in visual experience. The experience I now have of the hidden side of the object is not the experience I would have if I were behind it. To look at an object is to see it as the spatial center of focus onto which all the objects surrounding it converge.¹

Alweiss emphasizes that Husserl points to the possibility of the existence of sensuous moments that exceed objectification, distinguishes between the objectivity to which an act taken fully directs itself and the objects to which different partial acts direct themselves, and equates the moment of objectification and representation with intentionality.

We should bear in mind that Husserl holds on to the necessity and primacy of impressions, attributing a structuring function to the primal impression. Non-intentional sensations cannot be separated from their intentional structure. Sensual *hyle* provides the raw material for intentional formations. We need to posit an original source allowing for the appearing of appearances. The primal impression *appears as* a correlate. The primal impression initiates and guarantees the manner, or form, of appearing. The *idea* of completeness guides our perceptions and is anticipated in any appearance. Alweiss claims that *Husserl wishes to uphold a moment of heteronomy by emphasizing a moment of givenness. The sense of myself as moving in space is made possible because there is an absolute position, in accordance with which I can move.* Space is possible by virtue of the pure Ego, change can be perceived only in relation to unity, it is necessary to

bracket the general *thesis* of the natural attitude, every empirical language conforms to an *a priori* structure, and recollection is the primordial form of objectification. “Husserl argues that our judging is *always* subject to a kind of assessment as to whether it is correct, namely, true (corresponding to something objective) and successful (corresponding to the intention).”²

3. Merleau-Ponty’s Doctrine of Knowledge

Searle claims that, for Merleau-Ponty, the brain and the rest of the physical body are arrived at by a kind of abstraction from the *corps vécu*. “Merleau-Ponty talks a great deal about what he calls the body and the importance of the body, but it turns out that the body he is talking about is not the flesh and blood hunk of matter that constitutes each of us but, rather, *le corps vécu*, the lived-body, by which he means the set of phenomenological experiences we have of our own bodies.”³

Pietersma states that Merleau-Ponty’s primordial perception is a movement in which concepts play no role at all (a primordial perception is a rare experience, and the context of primordial perception assures us of truth): perception is an awareness of objects, is cognitive without being conceptual, and has no need of nonsensuous, purely mental conceptualization or categorization (it is not in need of mental constructions and conceptualizations). Merleau-Ponty argues for the basicity of a world without concepts and objects (the world of embodied perception), construes being as *perceptual* accessibility, and conceives of perception as an active and constant transcendence (*there is something profoundly problematic about the idea of entities independent of the subject*).

One thing that is clear is that Merleau-Ponty argues for the independent validity of perception in matters of knowledge: a perceptual object or entity always appears in a perspective, every finite perception tells us that there is more to it than we see, many of our perceptions are infected by our practical reliance on linguistic and conceptual conventions, and even our so-called privileged perceptions of reality pass beyond themselves. As Pietersma puts it, Merleau-Ponty’s strategy is to derive a metaphysics from perception, rather than from some other cognitive power: many kinds of perception are satisfied with something far less than the complete individual riches of a thing, our perceptions are not always harnessed to practical purposes or playing merely the role of instantiating our general concepts, whereas the cognitive activities of an embodied percipient display capacities that cannot but be accepted as such. Merleau-Ponty construes being as precisely that which is accessible to the body. The body is that by virtue of which there are for us sensible objects. The meaning of a thing inhabits a thing as the soul inhabits the body, meaning is intrinsic to perceptual things,

whereas meanings as objects of reflection are derivative from what is more primordial. The material itself takes on meaning and form. “Merleau-Ponty contends that the meaning cannot in any way be separated from the sensible object that has it or that the significance of what is perceived has no equivalence in the universe of the understanding.”⁴ Pietersma writes that Merleau-Ponty extrapolates the concept of being from preobjective and prepredicative experience, and his metaphysics interprets reality or being as essentially external (we should conceive of being as intimately associated with time, whereas time wants to overcome itself, sum itself up in a form that does *not* pass away): *human knowledge cannot be dealt with successfully without a new consideration of the fundamental nature of being*. Objectification comes about as an interruption of the movement of transcendence, and is a development intrinsic to the unity of being (all objectification represents an interrupted transcendence). The apparent object is, in truth, an objectified segment of our experience.

It is worth emphasizing that Merleau-Ponty defends the integrity and self-sufficiency of perception (1) as an awareness of objects and (2) as awareness of *Sinn*, and argues for a doctrine of knowledge arrived at by a phenomenology of embodied perception (Merleau-Ponty’s epistemology focuses on the search for knowledge). When we gain objects and objective knowledge, we lose our hold on being or reality. Reality presents itself to us in the form of relatively permanent objects that have properties. The origin of our knowledge is always with us as transcendental condition. We are only secondarily aware of appearances or points of view as limiting our knowledge. Our minimal awareness is one of a figure against a background, i.e., of an object in a field. The cognitive powers of embodied perception are not transparent to itself or to thought. Concepts are ways of summing up and unifying appearances, *giving them a name, and ascribing to them a character*. The phenomenological reduction cannot be complete. If something were completely known, it would by that fact forfeit its status as a *thing*. The predicative act can never “absorb” that on which it is founded.

In Merleau-Ponty’s view, reality is discerned in primordial perception, which is a process of constantly going beyond appearances in a search for reality or, more simply, taking them as appearances of reality. [...] Merleau-Ponty affirms that we find something to be evidently thus and so, to be irresistibly compelling belief and beyond doubt, only because of a certain history or tradition of thought that is accepted as beyond question. The epistemic status of the object and the cognitive capacities of the subject are thus both relative to the historical framework or tradition.⁵

4. Merleau-Ponty's Doctrine of the Body

Dreyfus says that, for Merleau-Ponty, *the fact that we have bodies is essential to understanding how we generalize*. Our skills are acquired by dealing with things and situations. There are many dimensions in which experiences can be similar. What the learner acquires through experience is *presented* to the learner as a finely discriminated situation. No mentalistic model can account for the way past experiences affects present experience. "According to Merleau-Ponty, in everyday coping activities the agent is in a much tighter relation to the object of his concern than standing back and positing it. [...] Higher animals and human beings are always tending towards getting a *maximal grip* on their situation. [...] In absorbed, skillful coping, I don't need a mental representation of my goal."⁶

According to Zahavi, Husserl maintains that constitution has two primal sources, the primal ego and the primal non-ego, our acts are tacitly self-aware and accessible to reflection, to be motivated is to be *affectedly* something, and then to respond to it, our experiences are guided by anticipations of normality, scientific theories gradually arise out of practical life, and there exists a correlation between different levels of normality and objectivity. My perceptions present me with intersubjectively accessible being. Every object must be understood in its correlation to experiencing subjectivity if dogmatic presuppositions are to be avoided. The unique subject-object status of my body permits me to recognize another body as a foreign embodied subjectivity, the *existence* of the object (its being) is correlated to its intuitive givenness for a subject, the absolute reveals itself as the intersubjective relation between subjects, to be a subject is to exist for-itself (i.e., to be self-aware), and each and every one of my perceptual objects implies a reference to myself as experiencing subject and to the Others as co-subjects.

What matters for the present discussion is that our knowledge of physical objects are characterized by a lack of coincidence between the intended and the given, to assume that the intentional object is act-immanent leads to a rejection of the categorial distinction between act and object, categorial objects are objects that can appear only as what they are in (or for) intentional acts, and the objects appear (are constituted) in intentional acts (only there they can show themselves as what they are). One can only intend an object if it is the object of our intention, it is senseless to distinguish between the intentional and the real object, the intentional object is the real object of the intention, whereas the very *existence* of the intentional object is phenomenologically irrelevant. There is an intimate connection between the constitution of an objective and the self-objectivation of the lived body. There is a difference between the way in which spatio-temporal objects are given to consciousness, and the way in which consciousness is given to itself.

The object is bodily present in perception and the perception gives us the real object itself. The perspectival givenness of physical objects is rooted in the things themselves. “Husserl claims that our body plays a crucial role when it comes to an understanding of intersubjectivity, just as intersubjectivity can have a significant impact on the constitutive function exerted by the body. [...] The constitution of an egocentric space presupposes a functioning body, and that the constitution of objective space presupposes a bodily self-objectivation.”⁷

5. Conclusions

The current study has extended past research by elucidating Merleau-Ponty’s full phenomenological account of object perception, his motor intentionality, and his doctrine of the embodiment of perception. These findings highlight the importance of examining Merleau-Ponty’s doctrine of the body, his discussion of the distinction between an appearance and a reality, his theory of knowledge, and his doctrine of meaning. Although researchers have discovered some important findings regarding the relationship between Merleau-Ponty’s account of the indeterminacy of perception, his understanding of object transcendence, and his notion of the indeterminate as a positive presence, there is still a great deal that is unknown and that requires further empirical inquiry.

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THE RELIABILITY OF IMPACT FACTOR AS AN INDICATOR FOR JOURNAL QUALITY

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ABSTRACT. The theory that we shall seek to elaborate here puts considerable emphasis on the impact factor's establishment as a crucial criterion of evaluation and achievement, the pressure resulting from the need to publish in high impact factor journals, and the potential for abuse and manipulation of the traditional impact factor. Our analysis complements the growing literature on the pressures of the scientific system challenges for those involved in the scientific publication process, self-assessment of research quality prior to submission for publication, and the extent to which the impact factor indicates the quality of a journal.

Keywords: impact factor, evaluation, citation, journal, research

1. Introduction

The current study extends past research by elucidating the inadequacies of the impact factor, impact factors' potential influence on advertising, subscription rates and author attractiveness, and the ability of an impact factor to identify important publications. This study is grounded in the considerable body of scholarship examining the importance attached to citations for judging the quality of research, the use of citation counts as a quality indicator, and the weaknesses of citation counts and impact factors.

2. The Impact Factor's Establishment as a Crucial Criterion of Evaluation and Achievement

Sevinc notes that the citation rate of a journal is quantified as its impact factor (the impact factor is a good technique for scientific evaluation). A journal's impact factor is based on the numerator, which is the number of

citations in the current year to any items published in a journal in the previous 2 years, and the denominator, which is the number of substantive articles published in the same 2 years. “The SCI database includes only normal articles, notes and reviews as citable items in the denominator, but citation of all types of articles, such as editorials, letters and meeting abstracts are included in the numerator. Therefore, Editors can raise the impact factor of a journal by frequent reference to their previous editorials, since the database makes no correction for self-citation, or by running a large correspondence section.”¹ Kanthraj maintains that impact is primarily a measure of scientific utility, originality and merit determine the quality of an article, whereas journal impact factor (IF) is the indicator for a journal’s performance. Reduction in publication lag time increases IF, and free FUTON (full text on the net) increases the IF and enables rapid dissemination (online availability of full text articles increases circulation and readership of the journal, and increases the IF). Upcoming journals encourage open access without any subscription fee. Citation indicates an article has influenced scientific community. Reduction in the number of citable articles in denominator increases IF (editors should restrict the number of review and original articles). Reviews are an amalgamation of several original works of a topic in depth. Publication in a high impact journal may enhance the impact of the article.² Tighe et al. hold that the academic publication process should remain transparent and impartial to biasing influences. “The potential for temporary IF inflation by self-citation may be somewhat stratified by the IF itself. For journals with low IF, small changes in self-citation may lead to proportionally large changes in IF. Conversely, journals with high IF require increased levels of self-citation to benefit their IF.”³

Neuberger and Counsell argue that the journal impact factor has become the common currency of “scientific quality,” assessing the citation rates of articles within a journal rather than of any given article (the range of impact factors reflects approximately the scientific standing of a journal). Impact factors are the best currently available measure, but do not reflect fully the perceived quality of the journal (the fact that impact factors are used to assess quality of output distorts the pattern of submissions). Neuberger and Counsell contend that journal impact factors reflect the journal rather than the article, journal impact factors will vary with time in both absolute numbers and rankings, impact factors say nothing about the stringency of the peer review process, editors may take into account the future citation rates of a manuscript in deciding whether to offer publication, impact factors may be manipulated by both authors and editors (a high rate of self-citing can affect the impact factor, whereas mini-reviews can attract citations rapidly and in large numbers), and greater availability of the journal can increase the impact factor substantially.

Scientific journals rank higher than clinical journals; English-language journals score higher than those in other languages; American journals tend to have higher impact factors than European journals; review journals tend to score higher than those containing original articles; review articles tend to score higher than the articles they cite; the most prestigious journals in different specialist areas may have very different impact factors; methodological papers may score much higher than those that provide new data; and free electronic access tends to raise the impact factor of a journal.⁴

3. The Importance Attached to Citations for Judging the Quality of Research

Etter and Stapleton assert that the journal in which an article is published is a key determinant of the dissemination of results. Citations are determined by many factors other than quality: they may be selected because of their accessibility in electronic databases, scholars may select the articles they cite because they have a professional interest in promoting a given line of research, or because of the utility of a citation to support a particular opinion, or to influence peers or decision makers, an article may be cited because it is written by a productive research group whose members often cite each other, or because it was published in a first-rate journal. The concentration of citations on a small number of articles may be explained by the practice of extracting citations from reference lists in other articles (an article that was ever cited is more likely to be cited again). Journals may obtain a high impact factor by the frequent citation of a limited number of their articles only. An article can be cited because it makes unacceptable or provocative claims that need to be refuted. The impact factor is not corrected for self-citation, and should not be used to assess the quality of individual articles or the output of research groups or of individual researchers. "The impact factor is vulnerable to manipulation, as editors can artificially boost the impact factor of their journal by publishing controversial articles."⁵

Mavrogenis et al. write that the IF may be viewed as a measure of prestige of a journal and indirectly of authors publishing in those journals. Self-citation beyond 20% is suspect of abuse (the journal's IF is higher and prestige enhanced by self-citation).

There are numerous sources of potential bias in the rankings, some inherent in the system and some not: self-citation (articles from the same journal), citation density (the number of references listed), quality of citations, poor comparability between different specializations, mainly use of English language in publications, type of manuscripts, ease of access, and journals

not listed in the SCI database are major disadvantages of the IF. [...] Editors may artificially increase their journal's IF by (1) facilitating (or even demanding) self-citation, (2) increasing nonsource items with citations, (3) limiting the total number of articles and/or the number of original papers and increasing the number of review and/or technical articles that are more likely to be cited, (4) encouraging 'salami slicing', and (4) prerelease or timing of publication early during a year thus allowing more time for citation for a given year.⁶

Mavrogenis et al. put it that excessive self-citation may cause a large shift in a journal's IF. Self-citation may substantially affect a journal's IF compared with IFs of other journals in the same specialty, and can bias how a journal is perceived. "Increasing the nonsource items, such as by encouraging letters to the editor containing self-citations of the articles being discussed, reference to previous editorials, or running large correspondence sections, is an easy way to increase the IF by increasing self-citation without increasing the source items."⁷ Vanclay remarks that good science requires a more proactive role from editorial offices. An impact factor should rely only on complete and correct citations, *reinforcing quality control through the whole journal publication chain*.⁸

Kaltenborn and Kuhn indicate criticisms that apply to the SCI and the SSCI, and to the IF: criticism of the lack of transparency in the selection process of source journals, criticism of the language- and discipline-specific bias in the selection of source journals, criticism of the focus on journals and of the neglect of other media; and only to the IF: criticism of the inadequate definition of citable documents in the impact factor calculation algorithm, criticism of the 2-year calculation period for the impact factor (the citation rate is determined multifactorially). The measuring of the IF and its use as a scientometric indicator for research evaluation purposes reflect on the measuring instrument and influence the area that the IF claims to measure. "Authors (involuntarily) adapt their publication behavior to a maximization of their personal IF. The outcome on the one hand is that manuscripts are submitted preferentially to high IF journals, even if those journals do not represent the most appropriate outlet on the basis of the work itself and of the intended readership."⁹ Kaltenborn and Kuhn point out that the quality of the article plays a central role in the hierarchy of influencing factors: the IF is promoted to the status of preferred characteristic of a journal selected for publication, and may be an indicator of the assertive potential of a journal but not of its quality.

One thing that is clear is that the IF may be interpreted as an indicator of the quality of a journal because of the correlation between a high rejection rate of manuscripts submitted to journals and a high IF (reasons given for

rejection may be associated with the degree of specialization of the submitted manuscripts and the journal's target readership).

The compulsion to publish vast quantities has not only led to a deluge of severely redundant literature but has also entailed an inherent risk of the requirements of good scientific practice being ignored. Furthermore, the use of publication indices like the IF to measure achievement has added momentum to the drawback-ridden *publish or perish* publication strategy, compelling scientists to boost their personal IF by means of mini-papers, often referred to as the 'least publishable unit' or 'salami publications,' and of unfounded twofold publications.¹⁰

According to Kaltenborn and Kuhn, *the long-term outcome of the reflexivity of the IF is a shift in the journal's structure and content*. A high IF ensures that good-quality studies are submitted, and forms the basis for an increasing circulation, and higher advertising revenue. The quality of an individual article cannot be assessed with reference to the IF of the journal (there are complex relationships between the quality and results of a study and publication bias).

The IF, which gives the average citation rate of an article published in a journal, is thus not an indicator of the frequency with which the individual article is cited. Fundamentally, a large number of articles that are cited extremely rarely, if at all, benefit from the high citation rates of a small number of citation classics: scientific standing and reputation are transferred from successful to less successful papers. From this aspect, the IF cannot be regarded as a good indicator of the scientific quality of an individual article.¹¹

4. Citation Counts and Impact Factors as Quality Indicators to Judge Journals

Aarssen et al. observe that the author selects a journal on the basis of traits such as journal impact factor, likelihood of acceptance, and likelihood of rapid decision. The likelihood of rejection increases with increasing journal impact factor (the probability of rejection is a function of the quality of one's paper). The number of papers published may be a driver of impact, impact factor itself may be a driver of rejection rate, and rejection rate may be the driver of impact.¹² Aarssen et al. explore whether publication success of the reviewer and scientific age relate to the reported rejection rates recommended by reviewers (variation in rejection rate by reviewer attributes represents a potential reviewer bias): *selection of referees should be balanced on a per manuscript basis by publication record in the top-tier journals* (novelty is a key element required for publication in top-tier journals).

All this necessarily leads to the conclusion that peer review improves science and gives our work credibility, whereas the selection of a given reviewer can affect the fate of a paper. “Peer-review is a means to both filter research into appropriate venues and assess whether the research is valid, useful, novel, and repeatable. [...] The expectations we use to assign merit to the research we review is based on our understanding of the field, what we view as novel, needed, or appropriate, but also on which journals we read more often, and where we publish.”¹³ Aarssen et al. state that research quality is usually rated by the size of the publication audience or readership. Highly regarded studies end up in the relatively few top-ranking journals. “For papers under review then, quality is commonly judged by their anticipated citation rate, and in some cases (from an editor’s view) perhaps also by their potential for maintaining or elevating the impact factor of the journal.”¹⁴ Aarssen et al. specify core determinants of variation in research quality that an author can use for self-assessment (*discovery* is the primary mission of science). Rigorous self-assessment can enable researchers to arrive at a reasonable estimation of the relative merit of their work. A lower ranked self-assessment probably does not mean a lower probability of publication. “Using self-assessment instead of peer-review and/or chance in identifying the ‘correct’ journal maximizes the efficiency of research time and energy for all concerned – authors, editors and reviewers. Ultimately, speeding up the publication process accelerates the potential rate of progress within science.”¹⁵

Hochberg notes that many journals receive increasing numbers of submissions through time, *but do not increase the number of accepted articles proportionally*, journals solicit some reviewers more than others, individual reviewers may be solicited by many different journals, and top journals typically reject 50% or more of submissions. Thus, journals and authors will rely on an increasingly small pool of reviewers, journals may need to adopt more active policies for encouraging or enforcing review, and there may be a shift in submissions towards journals that minimally review. “Peer review is the main way that the scientific community certifies exposure. [...] Peer review remains the best approach for journals to judge the merits of scientific research, and to provide feedback for authors to ameliorate the science, analysis, and inference of their work.”¹⁶ On Statzner and Resh’s view, an alternative to counting publications in high-impact journals would be to use cites of publications when evaluating individuals or research groups. Statzner and Resh hold that peer review is the basis for disseminating the best scientific information, there has been a deterioration in the effectiveness of the dissemination of scientific information, whereas *the demand for space in journals compared to its supply has become disproportionate*. There is a growing pressure that results in publication of many shorter articles

instead of a single longer one (journals without length limits for articles will become rarer in the future). *Publication and evaluation of research requires reviewers to keep the process going* (well-qualified reviewers are a limited resource). Repeated requests to reduce citations may increase the prevalence of unethical behavior. “The peer-review process is a partnership among authors, editors and reviewers. If these partners are open-minded, self-critical, unbiased and competent, the peer-review process is undoubtedly the best way to get good science published.”¹⁷

Smith emphasizes that high citation counts may not always equal scientific excellence (the global scientific importance of super-cited papers *remains somewhat contentious*). Smith observes that editors have often sought ways to manipulate their own journal’s score: a journal can encourage its authors to cite other articles previously published in the same journal, another technique used for increasing the impact factor is the review article (a journal can choose to publish a higher proportion of literature reviews compared to original research articles), a journal may choose to focus on research topics that naturally generate a high number of citations, journals may choose to publish articles that are particularly controversial or deal with inherently controversial issues, whereas the publication of a journal’s entire contents online, for free, represents another strategy.

Research findings like the ones mentioned here constitute an important body of evidence in favor of the claim that open access to scientific literature online offers substantial benefits for the scientific community: free online access facilitates the dissemination of scientific information via email links or discussion groups, and free access addresses an equity issue for countries that cannot afford expensive journal subscriptions. Smith argues that impact factors represent a major consideration for the scientific community, striving for outstanding impact factor is understandable in today’s competitive publishing environment, the ideal way to increase one’s impact factor is to attract and publish better material, whereas the advent of an impact factor marked a turning point in the global development of scientific publication and referencing systems. “A journal’s impact factor will tend to be driven by a core group of articles that are highly-cited in the first few years after publication, rather than its collection of super-cited papers.”¹⁸

5. Conclusions

Our paper contributes to the literature by providing evidence on the biases of the impact factor, excessive orientation towards the impact factor, and citation counts and impact factors as quality indicators to judge journals. The implications of the developments outlined in the preceding sections of this paper suggest a growing need for a research agenda on the global ex-

pansion of information technology, quantitative assessment of the scientific merit of journals, and the strengths and weaknesses of the impact factors.

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SARTRE'S EMPHASIS ON INDIVIDUAL CONSCIOUSNESS

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ABSTRACT. The paper generates insights about Sartre's existentialism, Sartre's theories of consciousness, being and freedom, the ground of Sartre's philosophy, and the development of Sartre as an existential phenomenologist. The objective of this paper is to emphasize Sartre's views on the human condition, his discussion of concrete relations with others, his ethical thought, and his views of consciousness.

Keywords: Sartre, individual consciousness, being, human condition

1. Introduction

The mainstay of the paper is formed by an analysis of Sartre's negative views on interpersonal relations, Sartre's approach to the nature of consciousness and what it means to be a conscious being, Sartre's use of intentionality, and the ethical implications of Sartre's fundamental positions. Although researchers have discovered some important findings regarding the relationship between Sartre's existentialist and phenomenological thought, his views on authenticity and an ethics of freedom, his analyses of consciousness, and his descriptions of interpersonal relationships as conflictual, there is still a great deal that is unknown and that requires further empirical inquiry.

2. Sartre's Theory of Consciousness of the Other

Daigle holds that Sartre's view centers around the notion of absolute freedom and choice: freedom entails responsibility (the individual is absolutely free and absolutely responsible), and is situated and is absolute and largely unaffected by its situation. It is our moral duty to actualize our freedom and to come to terms with our "condition." Sartre refers to the free human being as a set of possibles: the human being is an intentional consciousness

that is absolutely free (the individual free consciousness is responsible for creating meaning and interpreting the world), the human individual is free and responsible for what he makes of himself, the human being is fundamentally free and makes himself according to his projects (a prisoner or a person undergoing torture remains free). Sartre conceives of the individual as fundamentally free and creative of values. I need the Other in order to exist authentically and freely. We must make the Other free so that we may be free. Love is an attempt at assimilating the freedom of the Other. To love is to have the project of being loved. *Love is a fragile thing and a vain pursuit.*

The preceding considerations suggest that Sartre uncovers a multi-layered consciousness for which the cogito is just one facet: the first thing we encounter is consciousness, consciousness is always also self-consciousness, for consciousness, making sustains being, and the multi-layered consciousness creates an ego for itself as it interacts with the world (we are both entirely body and consciousness). Daigle states that Sartre conceives of all modes of consciousness as intentional: it is possible for an individual to lie to himself about himself without making use of an unconscious. Imagination and emotions are ways for consciousness to exist in the world. Existentialism takes human subjectivity as its starting point (there is no other universe than that of human subjectivity). Being-for-itself exists only because there is a being-in-itself. The for-itself is none other than the nothingness that encounters Being (the for-itself is a project). The for-itself is a being that is not absolutely bound by its facticity: it is not what it is and is what it is not. There is an unbridgeable distance between the for-itself and the Other (the for-itself must strive toward authenticity). The Other does not have to be physically present, my sense experience allows me to perceive the body of the Other, the presence of an Other radically affects my world and my self, the essence of my relation to the Other is conflict, the Other grasps a world and gives it meaning for himself, whereas conversion to the Other is both required and possible. It makes no sense to ask why there is Being. I cannot blame my situation or any other factor to excuse my way of being. The human being is constantly seeking explanations and reasons, and is a project that aims toward authenticity. Our starting point must be our being-in-the-world rather than our soul. Man is entirely responsible for himself. The death of God is a genuine liberation for human beings, and is the equivalent to the death of all transcendence. Most of the time we are in bad faith, and our presence in the world is unjustified and completely contingent (the aesthetic imperative is grounded in the ethical imperative). *We are determined by our situation only insofar as we let ourselves be determined by it.* Individuals should strive to be authentic, the individual is total, and authenticity is possible. Daigle reasons that Sartre's ethics aims at the flour-

ishing of the individual, and focuses on the human individual, rejecting the existence of any transcendent realm or values, and leaving the individual to himself to choose values. Structures exist insofar as there are humans in the world who make use of them. There are no transcendent realms beyond this world. “Sartre argues that I can only make my presence in the world necessary, and provide some foundation to my world and the meaning I give it, through the intervention of the Other.”¹

3. Sartre’s Approach to the Nature of Consciousness

Arthur asserts that Sartre subverts negritude’s inevitable assimilation of stereotypical images of blacks: negritude is not a negation of the *system* of racial differentiation, but a negation of a specific differentiation (negritude is a movement whose goal is to posit an essence). The negritude poets build a set of values that reverses the polarity of the demeaning terms given to them by whites (the poets of negritude are participants in an admirable quest for an African essence). “Negritude is a moment of negation that relies for its content upon white culture’s attempt to posit a black essence.”² Arthur contends that, for Sartre, black consciousness is a certain kind of practical activity that arises under certain specific conditions. “Experience” is the foundation of a black consciousness. Consciousness cannot “be” anything at all, since its essence is negation. Sartre appeals to rights in any form as a foundation of justice, returning to human rights as a touchstone for judging issues of basic fairness. The condition of all alienating human praxis is scarcity. There is a difference between primitive and advanced societies, based on the social regulation of scarcity (primitive societies exist in a state of timeless repetition). An *idea* can be the object that unifies a serial collectivity. The proletariat and the bourgeoisie are serial collectivities. A single meaningful history will emerge from the innumerable human acts that constitute it. Dialectical materialism ignores the fact that history can only be made through the actions of individuals. The equation of the national community with a moral community represents an “alienated” morality. If the means change the end, then the means must be disallowed. Structuralism treats humans as objects whose choices are created outside of themselves. The limit-case of risking one’s life, or of choosing death as a possibility, demonstrates that moral choice is not exhausted by exterior conditioning. Living fully one’s own cultural identity is a basic freedom that ought to be defended. “Even as Sartre focused attention on the production and reproduction of serial collectivities bonded by alterity, he ultimately pointed beyond them, to the identifiable yet irreducible core of those processes, which is the self-producing individual, perpetually struggling against her own unavoid-

able objectification by others, the predictable yet unpredictable spontaneity of human negation of the world.”³

Gardner contends that Sartre insists on the abortive character of the teleology which defines human existence. The reality of the axiological deficit of human existence is presupposed by the moment of salvation. facticity and transcendence are two aspects of human reality, human motivation has a metaphysical source (metaphysics must break with the conceptual scheme of common sense), whereas atheism is a necessary condition for man to achieve his proper end. Philosophical reflection itself should not relinquish the practical standpoint in favor of a contemplative stance. Reflection cannot be understood in terms of an ordinary judgment of identity. I am responsible for the world in the sense of being its *author*.

Sartre wants to undermine our profound sense of ourselves as something substantial lying behind and supporting the stream of our consciousness, in which the flux of our mental life is housed and from which it flows. [...] My existence is grasped adequately, for Sartre, only when it is understood as stretched across various, temporal and other dimensions which extend as far as an individual human life extends, and when this structure and the relations which compose it are taken up as something other than an object of knowledge.⁴

4. Sartre's Notion of the Absolute Freedom of Consciousness

Duncan says that, according to Sartre, consciousness neither contains anything, nor is it a substance: consciousness is transcendental, impersonal awareness of transcendent objects and processes. Humans are nothing other than what they make of themselves. Practices could be determined by forces other than subjects. Even under extreme cases of oppression, such as torture, a person acts freely. We must look for the production and intelligibility of history at the level of projected free-for-itself. free agency is unlimited, but it arises from fundamental contingency.⁵ Miller contends that Sartre portrays social life as an incessant series of conflicts, defines consciousness, or the “for-itself” of human being, in terms of freedom and transcendence, grants the independent existence of factual barriers to the expression of free will, and derives the objective social order from the subjective individual order (dialectic is not a determinism). In shirking the task of genuine self-definition, the individual passively supported the prevailing social reality, rationality is a possibility open to the individual or to the group-in-fusion, whereas authenticity depends on a recognition of the subject's freedom *and* its past *and* its being-for-others. Refusal (a negation of the given reality) stands at the core of all revolutionary behavior. Since the prisoner could

choose to accept his condition, a free choice could remove from the chains the significance of obstructing freedom.⁶

Kanaan and Ferber hold that Sartre criticizes Husserl for neglecting the presence of a specific mood constitutive of the *epoché*: the *epoché's* radical transformation of experience calls for an explanation that emerges from Sartre's analysis of the relationship between consciousness and Ego (Husserl fails to see the connection between the transformative possibility opened by the *epoché* and the unavoidable and everlasting presence of anxiety).⁷

According to Alweiss, Husserl seeks to account for an extra-mental reality, by showing how our thought processes relate to an objectivity, is concerned with the directedness of thought itself, and draws a distinction between thinking and knowing. Husserl holds fast to the *idea* that there is an *absolute self-sufficient* stream toward which any knowing *strives* (knowledge is judgment and judgment is a form of synthesis). To know a thing is to know how it reacts, for instance to pressure or heat. Doubt leads to the realization that we can never think without thinking *of* something. *We should never conflate concrete processes of thinking with pure logic, nor temporally individuated acts of thinking with the ideal conditions of cognition.* It is possible to think of objects, i.e., have meaning-intentions that can never find meaning-fulfillment, i.e., become objects of knowledge, since they are never *given* to us. Meanings are *intentional correlates* of acts for Husserl: full understanding is guaranteed only if we know how to verify a meaning-intention, in every objectivating act, meaning is constituted, two acts of meaning can have the same object but different "contents," and we can *recognize* an experience as fulfillment only by grasping or understanding the meaning-intention in the first place. "Husserl draws a distinction between signs and expression. Not all signs convey meaning. The concept of the sign is wider than that of expression, insofar as expressions also signify. However, we should not conflate the function of meaning with the function of signifying; the two are totally different."⁸

Gorz notes that Sartre establishes the dialectical intelligibility of historical processes and provides a perspective *that permits an understanding of the individual as the alienated agent of history.* The fused group represents the elimination of serial alienation. Sartre demonstrates the possibility in principle of a reconquest over alienation in its subjective dimension. The necessity of alienation is not the same as the necessity of objectification. The group is the reassumption of necessity as a necessity of freedom through common praxis. Groups and common action can only be produced *in struggle.* Socialism cannot suppress violence in human relations. Scarcity is the "passive motor of history." *Violence is internalized scarcity.*⁹ As Doja puts it, Sartre criticizes the abstraction of structural analysis and its objectification of human experience. The priority given to autonomous and unconscious

structures dehumanizes the subject. “Sartre’s brand of existentialism was primarily concerned with the experience of the subject in-the-world, stressing the importance of historical situation and the necessity of individual choice and responsibility.”¹⁰ Trilling says that Sartre understands the ego to be synonymous with the conscious self. The unconscious is not properly to be so designated.¹¹

5. Conclusions

The implications of the developments outlined in the preceding sections of this paper suggest a growing need for a research agenda on the connection between Sartre’s emphasis on individual consciousness, his notion of the self, his rejection of the traditional notion of subjectivity, and his thinking about freedom.

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THE ROLE OF LEARNING IN L2 ACQUISITION

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ABSTRACT. Our paper contributes to the literature by providing evidence on the relationship between the role of processing mechanisms in L2 acquisition, processing mechanisms in language comprehension, similarities and differences between first and second language acquisition, brain mechanisms specific to language acquisition, and the neural mechanisms supporting language. The paper generates insights about L2 processing of semantic or pragmatic information, the role of learning in L2 acquisition, the nature of learners' developing linguistic knowledge, and the role of transfer as a knowledge source of L2 learners.

Keywords: learning, L2 acquisition, language, grammatical knowledge

1. Introduction

This study is grounded in the considerable body of scholarship examining the processing of grammatical information, mental representations of linguistic structures, the nature of linguistic knowledge, and the interconnectivity between pedagogic goals and the language used to achieve them. The theory that I shall seek to elaborate here puts considerable emphasis on the mechanisms underlying language acquisition, the role of UG in explaining the human language making capacity, the nature of the strategies used in second language acquisition, and the interrelatedness of language use and teaching purpose. The current study extends past research by elucidating the mental representation of grammatical knowledge about the L2, the acquisition of grammatical concepts, the nature of the underlying grammatical knowledge base of learners, and the complex relationship between language learning and interaction.

2. The Mechanisms Underlying Language Acquisition

Chater and Christiansen contend that viewing language as a cultural adaptation¹ provides a *powerful framework within which to explore the evolution of linguistic structure and its consequences for language acquisition* (viewing the evolution of language as the outcome of cultural evolution leads to a different perspective on language acquisition). Language evolution is better understood in terms of cultural evolution. The key to language evolution is evolutionary processes over language itself (language is an evolving system). Language is substantially shaped by the pragmatic constraints involved in linguistic communication (language has been shaped to support flexible and expressive communication). Chater and Christiansen assert that *there are many innate constraints that shape language and other culturally based human skills*: the fit between the structure of language and the brains of language users comes about because language itself is shaped by the brain (thought profoundly influences language). Language processing involves extracting regularities from complex sequential input. Sequential learning tasks are an important experimental paradigm for studying language acquisition and processing (UG characterizes a set of universal grammatical principles that hold across all languages). The motor and perceptual machinery underpinning language influences language structure, the structure of mental representation and reasoning has a fundamental impact on the nature of language, and the explanation of any given aspect of language requires the inclusion of multiple overlapping constraints deriving from perceptuo-motor factors. “Understanding how language changes over time provides important constraints on theories of language acquisition; and recasts, and substantially simplifies, the problem of induction relevant to language acquisition.”²

Lantolf and Thorne observe that we use language to regulate our mental functioning³ through *private speech* (the speaker knows the topic addressed in the speech and is having problems figuring out what to do about it). Learners use private speech in language classrooms *as a means of internalizing the linguistic features available in their environment*. As Lantolf and Thorne put it, Vygotsky develops a unified theory of human mental functioning: to create a truly unified psychology requires a completely new way of thinking about human mental development (private speech need not be fully syntactic in its form). Humans have the capacity to use symbols as tools to mediate their own psychological activity. While biological factors form the basis of human thinking, they are insufficient to account for our ability to voluntarily and intentionally regulate our mental activity. The key to internalization resides in the human capacity to imitate the intentional activity of other humans, imitation involving goal directed cognitive activity that can result in transformations of the original model. Learning collaboratively with others precedes and shapes development.⁴

3. The Mental Representation of Grammatical Knowledge about the L2

Meisel holds that grammar constitutes the core component of the language faculty: *grammatical categories are theoretical constructs defined in terms of their grammatical properties, few or no second language learners are fully successful in acquiring a native grammatical competence, and the underlying logic of the process of grammatical development and the resulting grammatical competence are shaped by different acquisition mechanisms.* According to Meisel, the theory of UG views the human language faculty as comprising a priori knowledge about the structure of language (knowledge of language is internal to the human mind/brain): UG represents the initial state of the language faculty, captures only those properties which human languages have in common, and as the theory of the human language faculty *defines the initial state of first language development and determines essential properties of developing grammars at every moment of the acquisition process (partial access to UG is the most plausible explanation of the facts known about second language acquisition).* L2 learners may resort to strategies and mechanisms resulting in solutions not constrained by principles of UG, and rely on principles conforming to UG and on domain-specific ones.

The findings referred to here suggest that parameterized principles of UG explain interlinguistic and intralinguistic variation in terms of functional categories. The course of acquisition and the formal properties of L2 utterances are determined by principles of UG, and are shaped by production and comprehension mechanisms. Meisel insists that uniformity of linguistic development⁵ is the most crucial property characterizing first language development, serving as an outstanding criterion in assessing possible similarities and differences between L1 and L2 acquisition: *structural development is less plausible as an explanation of second language than of first language development, the role played by the linguistic input cannot be assessed without reference to mechanisms of language processing, whereas learners of both acquisition types proceed through invariant sequences in their acquisition of syntactic and morphological properties of the target languages.* The underlying system guiding L1 language development can be described in grammatical terms and successful attainment of native grammatical knowledge is a defining characteristic of L1. In L1 acquisition the underlying logic determining the order of phases within the invariant developmental sequences is grammatical in nature, whereas in L2 acquisition, grammar can account partially for the observed acquisition orders (L1 and L2 acquisition are characterized by fundamental differences in some domains of grammar). Meisel says that L2 processing of morpho-syntactic information differs from L1 processing, relying heavily on non-structural and on lexical-semantic

information. L2 knowledge and acquisition processes share with native grammars the property of structure dependency, L2 knowledge is a hybrid system, drawing on domain-specific grammatical knowledge and on domain-general cognitive resources, and the course of L2 acquisition is influenced by grammatical properties of the target constructions. Inductive learning is one of the mechanisms explaining the course and the attainable results of L2 acquisition.

The point of interest here is that all surface manifestations of the target languages can be learned in L2 acquisition. Processing mechanisms shape the course of L2 acquisition and the form of learner utterances (different learning mechanisms are involved in some instances of learning of L2 forms and constructions). Meisel posits that every surface property of a given language⁶ is learnable for L2 learners. Transfer is a mental activity, a process (it does not necessarily play a decisive role at the initial state of L2 acquisition). “L2 learners at the initial state of acquisition typically make implicit (or explicit) assumptions about structural properties of the target language which are markedly distinct from those assigned to corresponding structures by developing as well as mature native grammars of these languages. Consequently, only by revising the initial hypotheses might L2 learners be able to develop grammatical knowledge qualitatively similar or identical to that of native learners.”⁷

What matters for the present discussion is that the discovery of ordered sequences in first and second language acquisition is a significant contribution to the theory of language development. Second language learners proceed through invariant acquisition sequences defined in terms of the grammatical properties emerging in their speech, relying strongly on surface properties of languages. Meisel asserts that second language acquisition is characterized by invariant acquisition sequences. The onset of language acquisition is prenatal. The constitutive property of human language is that linguistic expressions exhibit an abstract hierarchical structure. Different types of knowledge can be activated in using first and second languages. Properties of language processing are possible explanations for parallels and differences between various types of language acquisition. Language is a species-specific endowment of humans, whereas mental grammars (I-language) are specific to the human mind. Learning implies changing previously acquired behavior. Learners make use of all available resources in their efforts to process input (all surface properties of languages are learnable). Meisel reasons that structural knowledge must be triggered in order to be instantiated in the developing grammar. The distinction between learning and triggering of knowledge refers to distinct mental activities resulting in empirically discernable acquisition processes.

4. The Nature of the Biases that Influence Language Acquisition

Lantolf claims that there is a close relationship between the social and psychological uses of language: *SCT focuses on the formation of mediational ability through appropriating and internalizing symbolic artifacts (development originates in the integration of biologically endowed abilities with culturally organized artifacts that mediate thinking)*. Symbolic mediation is the core concept of SCT. SCT-L2 is concerned with concrete classroom activity and its impact on learning, arguing for the pedagogical relevance of explicit and rigorous linguistic explanation. Concept-based instruction (CBI) has as its centerpiece explicit knowledge of the relevant features of the L2.⁸ Larsen-Freeman notes that complexity theory is in its infancy vis-à-vis L2 development, increases our understanding of complex systems, and can be tapped for its useful perspective on dynamic phenomena such as L2 development (language is a dynamic set of patterns emerging from use). Self-organization in complex systems is inevitable. Language, its use, and its acquisition are mutually constitutive, occurring at different levels of ecological scale and timescale. Language development is an iterative process, with learners visiting the same or similar territory repeatedly.⁹ Norton and McKinney argue that *the imagined identities and imagined communities of learners are central in the struggle for legitimacy*: an investment in the target language is an investment in a learner's own identity, opportunities to speak and exposure to target language speakers are fundamentally socially structured, and learners often have differential investments in the language practices of their classrooms and communities. Failing to consider the centrality of learners' identities and issues of power and inequality in the language learning process produce an inadequate understanding of SLA (SLA is a relational activity that occurs between specific speakers situated in specific sociocultural contexts). "Language learning engages the identities of learners because language itself is not only a linguistic system of signs and symbols, but also a complex social practice through which relationships are defined, negotiated, and resisted."¹⁰

Walsh holds that language teachers can improve their professional practice by developing an understanding of classroom discourse, and might improve their professional practices by focusing on classroom discourse: *language lies at the heart of everything, whereas communication refers to the ways in which language is used to promote interaction*. For language teachers, understanding the discourse of the classroom is crucial, teachers' use of language and their goals must work together, and any language lesson is a series of micro-contexts, which are jointly constructed by teachers and students through their interactions (learners are central to the process of enhancing teachers' awareness of language use in the L2 classroom). By

placing classroom interaction at the center of their professional development, language teachers may create micro-contexts in which learning opportunities abound.¹¹

5. Conclusions

The findings of this study have implications for processing mechanisms in language production, the acquisition of grammatical concepts, the nature of the linguistic knowledge of L1 and L2 learners, language learning as a mental activity happening in the cognitive system of the individual, and the nature of the human language capacity. Our analysis complements the growing literature on the learning and processing of lexical-semantic information, the cultural evolution of human linguistic communication, the nature of the biases that influence language acquisition, and the cognitive function of private speech in the case of L2 users.

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PHILOSOPHY OF SUBSTANCE: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT. The main objective of this paper is to explore and describe Descartes's independence conception of substance, Locke's conception of material substance, the original Aristotelian theory of substance, and Brentano's ontology of substance and accident. Scholarly research reveals strong correlations between Spinoza's view of God as the substance of all creatures, Descartes's subject conception of substance, the Brentanian picture of the relation between substance and accident, and Aristotle's conception of the relation of whole and part.

Keywords: substance, Aristotle, Locke, Descartes, Spinoza, Brentano

1. Introduction

This paper seeks to fill a gap in the current literature by examining Locke's doctrine of substance, Brentano's view of the part-whole relation, Spinoza's discussion of substance and mode, and Descartes's thesis that substance and attribute are not distinct entities. The results of the current study converge with prior research on Spinoza's understanding of the substance-mode relation, Descartes's defense of substance dualism, Locke's thoughts on the idea of substance, the ultimate substances of Brentano's ontology, and Aristotle's doctrine of substance.

2. Aristotle's Doctrine of Substance

Hoffman and Rosenkrantz point out that Aristotle counts biological species as natural substance-kinds, but does not count artifact-kinds as natural substance-kinds (the notion of a natural substance-kind originates with Aristotle). The independence of substance should be understood in terms of the relation of the category of substance to the other categories. A substance is that which can persist through change (entities *other* than substances can undergo

change). A substance is that which is uniquely independent of all other entities. A property exists only if it is instantiated (a first-order property exists only if it is instantiated by a substance). Individual substances are the basic or primary existents. Descartes asserts that there can be a substance that is independent of any other substance. A substance is a substratum in which properties subsist or inhere. Human beings have nonphysical souls, and therefore are not physical substances. Spinoza posits that for something to be an individual substance, it has to possess a very strong sort of independence. A substance cannot share its nature with any other entity. There is but one substance (the entire universe), and the nature of the universe is, in part, to be extended and conscious (necessarily, there is one and only one substance). Berkeley identifies substances with collections of concrete insubstantial entities that cannot exist unperceived. Kant claims that human beings cannot conceive of a reality devoid of substances.¹

3. Descartes's Defense of Substance Dualism

According to Broackes, Aristotle claims that *white* exists in individual white things but would not exist if those primary substances did not. Qualities are not capable of existing without things that have them, and things are not capable of existing without qualities. Descartes takes the self-sufficiency of substances as causal independence from everything else whatsoever. To learn the true nature of a substance, one needs to find one set of properties (the fundamental ones) and set aside another set (the superficial and changeable ones). The knowability of substance is clear in Descartes. The substance/attribute distinction itself is merely logical. In Leibniz a substance is not only causally self-sufficient and simple, but also indestructible and uncreatable. Not every subject is a substance. Locke says that ideas are what we mean by our words – the *subject* (i.e. topic) or *substratum* of those words.²

Rodriguez-Pereyra points out that Descartes maintains “substance dualism” (no substance has both mental and material properties). Each substance has only one principal attribute, and the distinction between substance and attribute is conceptual. The distinction between a substance and a mode of another substance, or between two modes of distinct substances, is a real distinction. The ideas of thinking and extended substance are complete ideas. *A complete thing is a substance endowed with the forms or attributes which enable one to recognize that it is a substance.* The mind and the body are numerically distinct substances. Substance dualism entails the real distinction between mind and body. Rodriguez-Pereyra insists that Descartes has a conception of substance as a subject of properties. “Substance” applies to every thing which is a subject where whatever we perceive resides. A substance is a subject of properties, where properties include both attributes

and modes. The difference between substances and properties lies in the fact that substances are basic subjects of properties. Every substance has only one principal attribute to which all its other properties refer (a substance and its attribute are not distinct entities).

One thing that is clear is that the distinction between a substance and its principal attribute is conceptual. Created substances depend causally on God, and are naturally immortal (they cannot cease to exist unless God denies them their concurrence). A mode cannot be a mode of different substances, there is an asymmetry between substances and modes, and substances have only one principal attribute. Rodriguez-Pereyra claims that the idea that substance and attribute are not distinct entities plays an outstanding role in Descartes's defense of substance dualism: Descartes distinguishes eternal truths from substances, denies that substance and attribute are distinct entities, and uses his idea that substance and attribute are not distinct entities to defend substance dualism.³

4. Locke's Understanding of the Concept of Substance

Ayers remarks that Locke draws a distinction between the underlying, intrinsic properties of a thing, its "real essence" or constitution, and the phenomenal or observable properties of a thing, its "nominal essence:" *if we knew its essence, there would be no difference between our idea of a general substance such as matter and our idea of its essence, and we acquire the idea of substance when we are forced to refer co-existing powers and sensible qualities to a common ground or explanation.* Ayers writes that Locke's interest is in a conceptual scheme in which substances have the role of ultimate subjects of natural science. The physical world comprises a single "corporeal" substance. "Ideas of substances" are complex ideas formed on the basis of observation, aiming at a peculiar correspondence with what exists in nature. Ideas of specific powers can be regarded as "simple ideas" by contrast with the complexity of ideas of substances.

According to this discussion, "substance" is an unknown something lying behind all properties, however actual or intrinsic. We identify and distinguish spirit and body by their phenomenal properties and operations. The observable properties by which we define a substance do not constitute the nature or essence of the substance (*extension* is not the essence of *body*). A thing's powers can be explained in terms of its actual or intrinsic structure. The *observable* properties by which we distinguish substances are in general dependent upon surrounding circumstances.⁴

5. Spinoza's Ontology of Substance

Lin argues that Spinoza holds that God is the unique substance (*Natura naturans*). Only one substance of a particular attribute exists. Modes inhere in substances and substances inhere in themselves. No two substances can be conceived through the same attribute (no two substances can causally interact). The more attributes a substance has, the more real it is.⁵ As Melamed puts it, Aristotle contends that the term “substance,” in the full sense of the word, applies only to particular things. The independence of (primary) substance is defined in terms of *predication*. Spinoza proves that God is the only substance: all other things apart from God are God's modes (the substance cannot exist without its modes). Spinoza relates particular things to God as modes of an indivisible substance. The thinking substance and extended substance are modes of God. The definition of substance cannot tolerate one substance being dependent on another substance. Particular things inhere in (and are properties of) the substance, but are *not* predicated of the substance. One substance cannot be produced by another, the causal self-sufficiency of substance is a *demonstrable* property, and modes are non-essential properties inhering in their substance. Leibniz maintains that beings through aggregation (bodies) are only states or modes of the substances which constitute them. Melamed says that Descartes distinguishes between God, the only substance in the strict sense of the word, and finite substances (substance in the full sense of the word must be causally independent). Descartes grants the title “substance” to things which are causally dependent only on God. God cannot have modes insofar as modes are by-products of alterations in substance. The distinction between a substance and the attribute which constitutes its essence is a distinction of reason. The faculties of imagination and sense perception are modes inhering in the thinking substance. *The more complete a substance becomes, the more real it is and the more it is a thing.*⁶

6. The Brentanian Picture of the Relation between Substance and Accident

Smith focuses on Brentano's theory of substance and accident, pointing out that Kant conceives substance as that which remains identical through change, Locke conceives it as a “supposed I-know-not-what,” Hobbes conceives it as that which exists “without the help of sense,” whereas for Leibniz a substance is just a monad. Brentano conceives his theory of substance as a refined and perfected version of the Aristotelian theory: the Aristotelian notion of substance can be understood only as correlative to that of *accident* (a substance is that which can gain or lose accidents). A

substance is a (possible) *bearer of accidents*, and it serves to *individuate* one accident from another. Substances are *beings in the prominent sense* and accidents exist *merely in an analogous sense* (not all entities are beings in the same sense). Accidents are not necessary for or essential to the further existence of their bearers, whereas substances can exist without the help of the accidents which they may underlie (a given substance can have more than one accident). Accidents with a multiplicity of bearers are not admitted within Aristotle's theory.

To the extent that it is convincing, the argument so far establishes that the accident exists only with the support of its substance. *Substances may endure as one and the same not merely when they gain or lose accidents, but also when they gain or lose substantial parts.* Two things can never be one thing and no unitary thing can be a multiplicity of things. Smith asserts that Brentano treats location in time, as in space, as a substantial determination. There is only *one* temporal determination, which all things share in common. Space is one-sidedly dependent on (inseparable from) time. All entities exist in the same way ("existence" has only a strict and proper sense). Everything that exists is a concretum, a "real thing." The substance itself is included within the accident as a proper part. The accident is the substance itself *augmented* in a certain way. The act is the self momentarily augmenting itself, mentally, in a certain way. *Experience does not resolve into a multiplicity of scattered bits, and an accident of an accident is an accident of the substance.* A substance can survive only the loss of its accidents, not of its substantial parts (all substantial parts are essential). Those ordinary things which are susceptible to change of parts are *entia successiva*. Brentanian accidents may themselves serve as the bearers of further accidents. The remaining ultimate substances in the Brentanian ontology are material or concrete things. A substance has the job of providing the *foundation* for its accidents and must provide their *individuation*.⁷

Jehle evaluates Jaegwon Kim's recent argument against substance dualism. Thus, causal interaction between two entities requires pairing relations, pairing relations are spatial relations, souls are supposedly nonspatial, immaterial substances (souls cannot enter into paired causal relations with material substances). Jehle notes that Kim's argument against dualism fails, and sketches a way the substance dualist can meet Kim's challenge of explaining how souls and bodies are uniquely paired.⁸ On Schneider's view, the bundle theory holds that a substance's properties are individuating. Substances are certain bundles of properties (substances are metaphysically composed of all and only properties). Schneider argues that substances are metaphysical constructs of universals or tropes. Hybrid substances are puzzling in the context of a trope property dualism.⁹

7. Conclusions

Our paper contributes to the literature by providing evidence on the nexus between the Aristotelian characterization of a first substance as a fundamental logical subject, Spinoza's ontology of substance, Descartes's conception of a substance as a subject of properties, and Locke's understanding of the concept of substance.

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SARTRE'S ANTHROPOLOGY OF FREEDOM

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ABSTRACT. This paper is grounded in the considerable body of scholarship examining Sartre's idea of the subject as responsible for the world, his idea of absolute freedom, his metaphysics of the human subject, and his description of the subject as non-self-identical. The mainstay of the paper is formed by an analysis of the relationship between Sartre's ontology of possibles, his theory of the for-itself-as-Self, his conception of facticity, and his metaphysics of nothingness. This research makes conceptual and methodological contributions to Sartre's theory of the self, his conception of being-in-itself, his concept of authenticity, his understanding of consciousness as freedom, and the Sartrean social world.

Keywords: Sartre, freedom, consciousness, metaphysics, self, Other

1. Introduction

Research on Sartre's philosophy of freedom, his argument against psychological determinism, his positive account of the free choice, and his philosophical humanism has yielded fairly consistent findings over the past decade. This paper seeks to fill a gap in the current literature by examining different aspects of Sartre's doctrine of the non-self-identity of the for-itself, his ontological dualism, his critique of the "psychic" conception of the subject, his conception of existential psychoanalysis, and his discussion of the relationship between freedom and facticity. The results of the current paper converge with prior research on Sartre's metaphysics of freedom, his treatment of the epistemological aspect of the relation of self to Other, his theories of the structures of the for-itself, and his theory of empirical reality. Our analysis complements the growing literature on Sartre's metaphysics of the for-itself, his affirmation of the possibility of pure reflection, his conception of a purified self-relation, his theory of consciousness of the Other, and the Sartrean conception of freedom. Applying new conceptual and

methodological approaches, this study advances to the next level research on Sartre's criticism of dialectical materialism, his notion of alienation, his philosophical anthropology, his discussion of the subject of torture, and the core Sartrean belief in human freedom.

2. Sartre's Discussion of the Relationship between Freedom and Facticity

Poellner argues that Sartre articulates a subtle account of a fundamental sense of human freedom as autonomy, in terms of human consciousness being both *reasons-responsive* and in a distinctive sense *self-determining*. The aspects of Sartre's theory of human freedom are based on his phenomenological analysis of consciousness as, in its fundamental mode of self-presence, not an object in the world. Consciousness's being alive to reasons is a matter of the affective perception of values and disvalues as features of phenomenal objects. The *ultimate* reasons acknowledged by consciousness could not be values adequately presentable as intentional objects. Consciousness's ultimate reasons are not given by the world but by itself. Consciousness cannot rationally have an ultimate end other than self-transparent freedom itself.¹ Morrision holds that Sartre rejects any forms of causal determinism: a belief in psychological determinism is a device we use to hide our absolute freedom from ourselves. The will is only *one* of the manifestations of freedom. "For Sartre, every fundamental project is an attempt to solve the insoluble 'problem of being,' to realize the impossible synthesis of the in-itself and the for-itself, to achieve the security of something which merely is what it is, while retaining the freedom of the being whose being is perpetually in question."² To act is to bring about a change in the world. Every genuine action is performed for *some* reason, and every act is *in some respect* intentional. There is an explanation for every genuine action (there is no act without a reason and a motive). Consciousness is always self-conscious. *I can surprise myself with deeds which are wholly out of keeping with my self-image*. There is no such thing as a *choice* which is completely or in principle inexplicable. Nothing can cause us to choose in one way rather than another. "No purely factual state of affairs can determine a conscious being to apprehend it *as* a reason for acting in one way rather than another."³

Webber contends that, for Sartre, *one's basic projects are so deeply held that a form of psychoanalysis is required in order to bring them to light*. Character traits *do not determine behavior, and are within the agent's control*. The character traits that result from interactions with the environment are freely chosen responses to one's situation. Character traits are dispositions that incline one towards certain types of actions (there are no such things as character traits). Our talk of character traits refers to that person's

past behavior. A person's essence includes character traits that incline that person towards certain types of behavior. Our facticity includes character traits that incline us towards certain patterns of behavior. One freely transcends one's situation. There is no such thing as a "transcendental ego" or subject underlying or inhabiting consciousness. The only ego or self discovered in reflecting on our own conscious experiences is "transcendent." The physical world is outside of consciousness. We encounter egos in the world and psychologists study them. One's behavior responds to the invitations and demands that the world presents. Action is free in a sense that requires the falsehood of all forms of psychological determinism. To say that an object is constituted is not to say that it is unreal. The term "world" denotes the mind-independent stuff as it is organized into the complex of instruments and obstacles.⁴

3. Sartre's Philosophy of Freedom

Gardner writes that Sartre's conception of freedom *presupposes the unintelligibility of psychological determinism*, and does not identify freedom-as-realized with ontological freedom. Sartre treats freedom as omnipresent in human reality, identifying our freedom with *nothingness*. Sartre regards ontology as connected, via freedom, with value, and his account of freedom serves to elucidate the first person practical standpoint. freedom is no mere psychological power or capacity (its understanding requires that everything be rethought from the ground up), is the appropriate concept with reference to which human identity should be fixed, involves some forcible break with the world, and is not something for whose presence or absence there could be criteria (*absolute freedom is the very being of the person*). Reason is comprehended firmly *within* Sartrean freedom. Anguish establishes the possibility of *a specific consciousness of freedom*. Navigating between and beyond realism and idealism is necessary for the vindication of freedom, knowledge of freedom is implied by every instance of cognition or self-consciousness, whereas realism makes freedom impossible (realism and idealism make knowledge of the Other impossible).

Sartre's view accords with the peculiar epistemology of freedom. Our knowledge that we are free has the same immediate and certain, yet contentless and transparent character as our knowledge of our own selfhood and existence. Turning reflection on myself in an endeavor to locate what it is about me, or within me, that makes me free, necessarily I come up with nothing; nothing that I could bring to light through introspection or 'inner' intuition could be my freedom.⁵

According to Gardner, Sartre's conception of consciousness is that of an unmediated and internally structureless relation to a transcendent object: consciousness is an autonomous totality, and is dependent ontologically on its object (ontology is authoritative for practice). If consciousness is transcendently impersonal, then the idea of an absolutely basic, "natural" level of self-concerned or egoistic motivation in human psychology must be abandoned (transcendence as a structure of consciousness is a structure of the for-itself). Psychological causal determination is inconceivable. The correct ontology proceeds from consciousness, consciousness of unrealities is derivative from and dependent on consciousness of reality, consciousness of Others must be *beyond criteria* in order to be possible, consciousness of our metaphysical failure can never be eliminated, and the concept of consciousness is one which can have *only* a phenomenological sense (*while consciousness is bound to the in-itself, the in-itself is in no way dependent on the for-itself*). Emotion is a specific mode of consciousness of objects in which individuals and the world are apprehended as having qualities of a specific kind. The possibility of real nothingness is explained by the identity of consciousness with nothingness. Reality contains negations because consciousness has the power to negate. Nothingness belongs to the fabric of reality, and is nihilation *of* being. Being-for-itself is *being-in-itself that has undergone a nihilation*. Every concept and act of thought involves negation. The for-itself stands in a relation of negative ontological dependence to the in-itself. The being of the phenomenon is being-in-itself (what the for-itself lacks is itself *as* being-in-itself), self-founding or necessary being is a contradictory notion, the peculiar mode of being of the for-itself-as-Self corresponds to that of value, irrationality should be grasped as immanent in *self-conscious being*, and the human point of view *itself* demands a coherent conception of being as a whole. The for-itself is orientated necessarily towards itself *as* self-coincident, the full meaning of the future must be that of the future *for-itself*, the telos of the for-itself is the self-coincidence or self-identity of a Self, the human subject's overarching desire is to be in-itself-for-itself, and unextendedness is a proleptical consideration of the for-itself in terms of the determinations of the in-itself (the distinction of self and world is a vertical distinction of domains). The body-for-the-other is the real body. The mode of being which defines the human subject does not have subject-predicate form (Sartre denies that objects in general are constituted by the subject). Value is whatever exercises a normative power over the subject, the correlates of its projects. Subjectivity *can have no* function, and there is a "circuit of selfness" which is prior to intersubjectivity. Our relation to the being of appearances *cannot be a relation of knowledge*. The totality of being must be conceived as a "detotalized totality."

4. The Value of Sartre's Theory of Freedom

Arthur argues that Sartre's resistance to colonialism *is a potent catalyst for rethinking the limits of any person's freedom* (oppression without freedom is nonsensical). Sartre synthesizes ideas on freedom, collective Otherness, and the concrete situation. The fact of individual freedom means that each one of us is responsible for choosing to adopt the position of bad faith. Our freely chosen project determines the meaning of any given situation. Serial collectivities induce an identification of free beings with inhuman matter through the mediation of the unifying object. "Sartre holds fast to a conception of freedom in which human beings create future-oriented projects that transcend what is given in the present. [...] An oppressor is both oppressed by himself, in the fact of not recognizing his own freedom, and oppressed by others."⁶ Arthur holds that, for Sartre, part of a person's being is given through the objectifying look of the Other, a person's being-for-others is "unrealizable" for himself, and a person does not normally experience his own body as an object. Individuals are the products of systems, whereas each person incarnates the world individually. The self can never encounter or really understand what he is for others. The Other can act as an imperative, and remains primarily the prenumerical not-me. Our bodies are marked, and these markings are contingent upon our situations.

The preceding considerations suggest that Sartre's subject is not identical to the contents or things it takes as its objects. No matter what humans do, part of their being will always be constituted from without. No aspect of facticity may modify the for-itself. Thought is as much a kind of materiality as is a table or a bureaucratic institution. On Arthur's view, Sartre maintains a strict relationship between violence and right, sees no way out of colonialism except through violence, and addresses violence both as a legitimate response to systems of oppression and as a means of liberation: *terrorism is an alienated, atomistic response to intolerable conditions of life experienced by the least favored in an inhuman system* (through acts of counter-violence, it will be possible for the subhuman to reassert his own humanity). The dialectic of racial difference-making bears a certain relationship to the anti-colonial struggle. The only way a colonist can believe himself to have a clear conscience is to treat natives as subhuman. The colonial situation is a social fact. The colonizer is a moral agent just as all humans are, and his actions aim at creating integral man. Colonialism induces the split between the human and the subhuman, granting the status of human to the colonizer, and *dehumanizing* him. Colonialism as a system represents an alienated morality. Race and other forms of identity should be taken as factors in systemic oppression that could not easily be solved through political means. Racism is a *system* of values that must be overturned for people to recapture

that part of their humanity that racism allows others to make into an object (racism is the best example of alienated thinking).

5. Conclusions

Scholarly research reveals strong correlations between Sartre's understanding of human beings, his view of character, his social phenomenology, his philosophy of interpersonal relations, and his doctrine of absolute freedom. The analysis presented in this paper contributes to research on Sartre's phenomenology of the social world, his existentialist philosophical anthropology, his theory of the constitution of the ego, his discussion of the nature of the self, and his notion of the absolute freedom of consciousness. These findings highlight the importance of examining Sartre's thesis of world-responsibility, his rejection of naturalism and realism, his metaphysics of the mind/body relation, and the value of Sartre's theory of freedom. The implications of the developments outlined in the preceding sections of this paper suggest a growing need for a research agenda on Sartre's positive account of the body, his conception of the depth of the Other's penetration, his treatment of knowledge, and the dynamic ontological relations analyzed by Sartre.

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TAKING LOGOPHOBIA SERIOUSLY

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ABSTRACT. The purpose of this paper is to gain a deeper understanding of the theoretical strength of Foucault's analysis of power, the specific and the non-specific interpretation of indefinite descriptions, and the meaning of natural language.

Keywords: meaning making, language, linguistic constraints, discourse

1. Introduction

The mainstay of the paper is formed by an analysis of Foucault's explication of the analysis of discourse, the pragmatics of specific linguistic expressions, and the process of meaning making.

2. The Discourse of Logophobia

Pablé analyzes how an integrational approach to teaching linguistics at tertiary education institutions differs from the orthodox approach: individuals need to become confident and responsible language-users (there is a semantically determinate metalanguage which operates independently of time, culture, language, and people). Pablé concludes that students come to think of verbal communication exclusively in reference to fixed codes that individuals already possess prior to language-use.¹ Pigliucci holds that, as Shackel puts it, logophobics have developed an arsenal of strategies to obfuscate clear thinking: logophobia is a skeptical doctrine about rationality *where it is whatever we make it, and what we make it depends on what we value.*

Opponents are held to disguise their self-interested construction of rationality behind a metaphysically inflated view of rationality in which Reason with a capital R is supposed to transcend the

merely empirical selves of rational beings. [...] The essential political problem for the intellectual is not to criticize the ideological contents supposedly linked to science, or to ensure that his own scientific practice is accompanied by a correct ideology, but that of ascertaining the possibility of constituting a new politics of truth.²

According to Pigliucci, logophobia is “a broad condition that can strike adult humans of all ages, genders and cultural backgrounds, especially when they have never been seriously exposed to the basics of critical thinking, or when they have grown up in the thralls of a powerful ideological system.”³ On Federici’s view, Voegelin’s arguments are grounded in human experiences, offering a more complete understanding of knowledge and truth than does positivism, presenting “a rich and penetrating historical analysis of human experience with transcendent reality that is a powerful antidote to postmodern relativism,”⁴ explaining “the displacement of Christianity by modern political ideologies as language symbols separated from their experiential roots,”⁵ and recognizing “scientism as a primary obstacle to the restoration of Western civilization.”⁶ As Federici reasons, “Voegelin’s creation of a new science of politics is meant to recover human experience as metaphysical reality, to establish the process of this recovery as scientific, and to restore human consciousness of metaphysical reality.”⁷ White argues that narrative possesses a content prior to any given actualization of it in speech or writing. Real events should not pose as the subjects of a narrative (they do not offer themselves as stories). “Narrative is a meta-code, a human universal on the basis of which transcultural messages about the nature of a shared reality can be transmitted.”⁸ White asserts that Foucault does not seek an origin or transcendental subject that would confer any specific meaning on existence: at the center of Foucault’s thought is a theory of discourse based upon a conventional conception of the relation between language and experience (*the authority of Foucault’s discourse derives primarily from its style, and discourse need not have come into existence at all*). White posits that there is not a reality that precedes discourse, the multifold operations of power are most manifest and most difficult to identify in the basis of cultural praxis, and a clue to the meaning of Foucault’s discursive style can be found in the rhetorical theory of tropes.

Spellmeyer writes that Foucault uses the term “games of truth” to describe the various forms of knowledge, underscoring the nature of knowledge as an activity rather than a body of information (the activities we call knowledge involve more than compliance with rules or conventions): *Foucault denies the possibility of an autonomous or permanent selfhood for which language serves as a neutral instrument, whereas the central issue*

in Foucault's work is the potential for oppressive reification in all forms of knowledge.

All of this can be taken as evidence of the recognition that the discussion above suggests that Foucault's subject in discourse, the speaking "I," is the source of problematization (discourse does not assign to the subject a definitive role), the "I" speaks only in those moments when it overcomes the rules designed to contain it, and the "I" is an absence in discourse (discourse never renders anything as one). Spellmeyer reasons that Foucault characterizes the formation of knowledge as a series of "discontinuities" or redirections. "Foucault perceives behind our reverence for consistency a 'profound logophobia,' a commitment to the unity and changelessness of truth that makes the "polyvalence of discourse" a perpetual scandal."⁹

Honneth insists that Foucault grounds the theory of power in historical investigations, reconstructing Foucault's analysis of power from the basic concept of social struggle: *Foucault extracts ethnology from its substantive connection with primitive civilizations, and his archaeological view of history is the ontologized formulation of an originally methodological concern.* Foucault understands by "facts of civilization" the systems of knowledge that determine the culture of a society, clarifies the theoretical character of the concept of the subject in the philosophy of reflection (the principal error of the philosophy of reflection is exemplified by its consequences for the concept of history), finds the characteristic of discourse in its function as a means for control, his concept of discourse results from an objective social context in which language use fulfills the function of comprehending and controlling natural and social processes, whereas Foucault derives the conditions of scientific knowledge from a framework of reference placed within the strategic requirements of the social struggle. Physical violence and ideological influence work by way of directly or indirectly forcing opponents to abandon their own objectives, and *judicial torture is the essential element in a system of punishment in which the body functions as a locus for ascertaining the truth* (social orders of power must remain unstable).

According to this discussion, "discourses" are the linguistic units that are revealed in the domain of symbolically represented knowledge (individual acts of meaning are subordinate to the independent order of signs). The task of systematic bracketing delegitimizes the traditional reference system of intellectual history, the model of thought determining cultural modernity is rooted in the philosophical supposition of a constitutive ego, and the process of technical rationalization culminates in the "totalitarian" organizations of domination of highly developed societies.¹⁰

3. Language and Linguistic Constraints

Abbott says that the use of individual concepts allows us to maintain that proper names are nondescriptonal rigid designators: proper names and other nondescriptonal expressions should be viewed as *expressing constant individual concepts rather than the individuals themselves (the specific-nonspecific distinction in indefinite descriptions is a conventional (semantic) one)*. Abbott holds that quantifying over individual concepts helps with the semantics of indefinite descriptions, constant individual concepts correspond one-to-one with individuals, whereas the use of individual concepts can provide a suitable analysis of the difference between the specific and the nonspecific interpretation of indefinite descriptions. “Where specific readings involve existential quantification over constant individual concepts, there is no prediction that an addressee cannot grasp such a reading without knowledge of which individual the speaker had in mind in making the assertion.”¹¹

Ruthrof proposes a picture of language in which *Vorstellung* (“mental replication and variation of perception”) occupies center stage: the world of *Vorstellung* is the “outside of language” and contains natural language as part of our mental equipment. Language is part of the *Vorstellungswelt* which is fundamentally grounded to the world of our senses, there is no difference between *Vorstellung* and language in terms of their fictional potential, and *Vorstellung* as carrier and modifier of perception is an essential ingredient, one without which language could never ascend to meaning. Ruthrof claims that the iconic, mental material reappears, in the linguistic meaning event, as the quasi-perceptual content regulated by the concepts of natural language: *language is not a syntactically defined, self-sustained sign practice*.

Taken together, these findings suggest that language-games act as generic frames for the pragmatics of specific linguistic expressions (only specific moves within a language-game can provide meaning), the process and event of appropriate combinations of linguistic expression constitute meaning as use, and mental acts should be defined as *intersubjective* and so governed by rules in principle. Ruthrof emphasizes that the full machinery of *Vorstellung* in the process of meaning making reveals itself in the interpretive attitude in problematic linguistic contexts: in the bulk of language use we must rely on mental reconstructions and approximations (*Vorstellung*), language has an evolutionary trajectory along with which *Vorstellung* has evolved into the most powerful component of the human organism, whereas meaning is an event that partakes of both public and intersubjective or indirectly public processes involving *Vorstellung*. “A theory of linguistic meaning must tell us how arbitrary linguistic signifiers or expressions are transformed such

that the speakers of the language understand what the signifiers are *about*. [...] The *Vorstellungswelt* is as indispensable an ingredient of *sufficient semiosis* as are the specifics of linguistic constraints.”¹²

4. The Meaning of Language

Cole notes that a primary use of language is to convey information about how things are in the world. Language embodies information about the world, and is suitable as a medium of communication. The meaning of natural language can be understood as a special case of natural meaning.¹³ Hunter analyzes the complex interactions between beliefs about meaning and beliefs about the facts (meaning must be independent of the facts). Resolving factual disagreements requires linguistic agreement on meaning, whereas resolving linguistic disagreements requires modal agreement. Modal facts are facts about the relations among worlds. Modal disagreements cannot be resolved rationally. Agreeing on the meaning of a sentence involves agreeing on its truth conditions (meaning must in a way be independent of truth). The common ground in an inquiry can be represented by a set of possible worlds.¹⁴ Livingston contends that, according to Wittgenstein, *even* propositions referring to infinite numbers must *have* their sense by and through a finite symbolization: all the forms of possible meaning must show up in the possibilities of signification in a finite, combinatorial language (the problem of the meaning of the infinite is a problem of the *logic* or *grammar* of finite signs). In speaking of understanding a mathematical structure, we may speak of coming to “understand” the sequence, and of gaining a capability or mastering a “technique.” The existence of a procedure does not imply the existence of a superlative *object*.¹⁵

5. Conclusions

The findings of this study have implications for Foucault’s social theory, the forms of possible meaning, and the relation between language and experience.

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'I KNEW JEAN-PAUL SARTRE': PHILOSOPHY, EDUCATION AND COMEDY

•
A DIALOGUE BETWEEN
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ABSTRACT. Ludwig Wittgenstein suggests that 'A serious and good philosophical work could be written consisting entirely of jokes'. The idea for this dialogue comes from a conversation that Morwenna Griffiths and Michael Peters had at the Philosophy of Education annual meeting at the University of Cambridge, 2011 that was sparked by an account of an assessment of a thesis where one of the examiners

unexpectedly exclaimed ‘I knew Jean-Paul Sartre’ trying to trump the discussion. This conversation is a dialogue about comedy and humor as a basis for philosophy, education and pedagogy that provides an introduction to recent works and a context for ongoing research.

A serious and good philosophical work
could be written consisting entirely of jokes.
Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*

Let us ask ourselves: why do we feel a grammatical joke to be *deep*?
(And that is what the depth of philosophy is.) (PI §111)
Ludwig Wittgenstein

MP: The idea for this dialogue comes from a conversation that Morwenna Griffiths and I had at the Philosophy of Education annual meeting at the University of Oxford, 2011. It was a discussion that at one point focused on an assessment of a piece of work where one of the examiners used the phrase ‘I Knew Jean-Paul Sartre’.

MG: Our discussion started in laughter. We were recounting episodes in committee meetings, focusing, I see now, on bad arguments. One episode concerned me, early in my career in Higher Education. I was attending, for the first time, a Board of Examiners at a College of Higher Education. The Board was chaired by a rather pompous, rather self-satisfied professor of French from the University which awarded our degrees. There was a question over a very high mark I had awarded for an essay in a philosophy of education course. In my estimation the student had made an honest and creative attempt to discuss Sartre’s *Being and Nothingness*. Not surprisingly the attempt was not elegant. However, I thought it was interesting, original and very much his own thoughts about this difficult book. The Chair took a different view, stating that the essay lacked clarity and contained contradictions, ambiguities. I was too new to the conventions of academic life to realize my relatively low status and his relatively exalted one. (Perhaps I was still too close to the apparent academic democracy of being a doctoral student?) I replied that Sartre himself loved ambiguity and paradox. Take, I said, the second chapter in *Being and Nothingness* where Sartre is discussing sincerity.... At this point, I was cut off in mid argument by the authoritative voice of the Chair, ‘I knew Jean-Paul Sartre’. However, in spite of this apparently knock-down argument, my mark was allowed to stand...

Was this laughter of ours appropriate to the high purposes of a conference on philosophy of education? Does laughter and comedy have a place in philosophy or philosophy of education at all? This dialogue explores this question, partly by remembering the power of laughter and comedy, partly in a scholarly way, and always linking it to education. But we intend this exchange to be serious but without the self-defeating solemnity, pedantry

and pomposity, that can overtake academic discussions of humor. Nor is it adversarial.

MP: You could have responded to the pomposity by saying ‘Jean-Paul Sartre was my grandfather’ (spoken in a thick Parisian accent, blowing the smoke of your Gauloise cigarette in his face). What I particularly like about this story is the assertion of authority through association (as though knowing someone rubs off their genius): there are endless variations ‘my mother knew Wittgenstein’ or pushing the association further, ‘my mother’s step-cousin met Marx’s grand-daughter.’ Comedy and laughter are great antidotes to pomposity and bombastic assertions of disciplinary authority and prowess. ‘I knew Jean-Paul Sartre’ was designed to establish or prop up the authority of the examiner. It was laughable and also comedic. I can easily imagine Monty-Python constructing a skit on this theme. And it seems to me that part of the success of Monty-Python was the development of a kind of surrealist philosophy based on semantic and visual play and juxtaposition—the constant pin-picking and self-critique of a discipline that takes itself too seriously and rarely sees its own excessive self-esteem or exaggerated dignity and pretentiousness. In politics and philosophy, and indeed academia across the discourses, comedy, humor, satire, irony and pastiche are important forms of critique especially where reason runs out and doctrinaire ideology takes over. I see the relevance of humor when it comes to what I call ‘the finger-wagging’ discourses generally employed by those who possess the Truth and whose only mission is to demonstrate their moral superiority. This means anyone with ideological goods to trade: old-style Marxist sociologists of education who can dismiss everything they haven’t read as ‘non-sense,’ especially if it isn’t British or American.

Yet comedy by contrast to tragedy is often seen as a low form of art that originates after tragedy and consequently does not resonate easily with the loftier themes to be explored about the human condition. Consequently, it has been of less interest to philosophers. Simon Critchley (1999, 2002) has argued that if aesthetics has provided a bridge that spans the pure and the practical then tragedy is the privileged aesthetic form that reconciles the freedom of the subject and the necessity of nature, a view central to Schelling’s *The Philosophy of Art*. Moving from the German to the French context he investigates the tragic-heroic and the comic anti-heroic paradigms of philosophy, the latter that can be traced back through Heidegger and Nietzsche to elements within German idealism and romanticism.

In Athenian democracy public opinion was strongly molded by political satire and the politics of emotions played a strong role in political life. Considered one of the four original genres of literature by Aristotle in the *Poetics*, (alongside tragedy and epic and lyric poetry), comedy is the genre the most removed from *mimesis* as imitation of life. The philosophical study

of the comedic can be distinguished from the philosophical study of humor (and laughter) which according to the standard analysis has three main categories: incongruity (Kant, Kierkegaard), superiority (Hobbes, Plato, Aristotle) and relief (Freud, Spencer) (some scholars add 'play' as a fourth category). These constitute (philosophical) theories of humor (Smuts, 2006).

Bernard Freyberg (2010?) has reviewed six recent books on the philosophical significance of comedy (Critchley, 2002; Heller, 2005; Hokenson, 2006; Willett, 2008; Zupančič, 2008) for *Philosophy Compass*, all works flowing out of the Continental tradition that sports Friedrich Nietzsche's scattered comments, Henri Bergson's *Laughter* and Georges Bataille's philosophy of laughter as *non-savoir* among its standards (Trahair, 2001). Willett (2008) and Zupančič (2008) are women: the former approaches comedy from a political perspective as 'feminist, queer, and multiracial' (119); the latter fashions her own account from the Freudian-Lacanian tradition. Both Critchley and Heller provide general philosophical accounts while Hokenson provides a history and Freyberg himself turns back to classical sources. What this review demonstrates is that laughter and comedy have a deep structure so to speak indicating something quite profound about the human condition but that also humor and comedy have classical sources, long enduring traditions that reflect embedded social relations and are therefore also open to change and, more importantly, culture-bound, gender-biased, and class-based.

The entertainment of the hypothesis of philosophy of education as comedy makes the question of education and pedagogy central and considers the relationship between comedy and education: not only educational comedies and satires (the issue of genre) but also comedy as a form of education. Indeed, it might be argued that education often serves as the focus and background for comedies like the university novels of David Lodge (*Nice Work, Changing Places, Small World*). In the tradition of Erasmus' *In Praise of Folly* (1511), a satirical examination of the pious abuses of Catholic doctrine and the learned humanists, modern education has always stood in a line of critique that sharpens the wit through use of satire and irony as source of moral criticism and cultural resistance, according to the Shakespearean fool, the trickster and the jester central pedagogical roles.

MG: Michael, you point at comedy and at comedy as a form of education. You also point out that 'The philosophical study of the comedic can be distinguished from the philosophical study of humor (and laughter)'. And yes, of course you are right, in one way, because comedy has been discussed – with great seriousness – by many philosophers down the centuries. But nevertheless I think that doesn't do justice to the way we started this dialogue. Isn't part of the point of the comedic that it is anarchic: hard to pin down in a discussion that distinguishes it analytically from humor and

laughter, or, for that matter, from irony, satire, tomfoolery, slapstick, farce, the grotesque, the monstrous, the buffoon, the bawdy and the scatological.

It is not just that there are a number of ways in which laughter is used as argument. Perhaps most obviously it can be used to undermine lazy argument and taken-for-granted ways of behaving. And, relevant to this dialogue, it can be used as educational argument, in that an argument is educational if it opens up an area or raises serious issues in an accessible way, by provoking a smile, a giggle or a belly laugh. Douglas Adams (1995) is an author who has done this. In his portrayal of the cow which is happy to be eaten he tickles the minds of his readers to think harder about reasons for being a vegetarian. Elsewhere, he describes a supercomputer which can deduce the existence of spaghetti in a few minutes after somebody has input the *cogito*. These philosophical arguments could be made more solemnly, but not more seriously.

Michele Le Doeuff's pioneering book in feminist philosophy uses a similar strategy to argue against sexism in philosophy. In the 'Author's Note' to the English translation (1990: xi) she recalls a 'small woman...perched on a chair like a nervous bird....defending a thesis on Kant.' She is facing (*ibid.*):

five gentlemen all in a row; these are the panel of examiners. ...one of them is speaking at this moment...Has she even noticed the slightly odd tone of his voice, which is saying, 'Madame, in your bibliography you have omitted to cite Nabert! How, Madame, could you have forgotten Nabert? Nabert whose fine Kantian beard everyone remembers.¹ And when I speak of Nabert's Kantian beard (pause), I do not mean "a fine beard like Kant's" (pause) for like everyone else I know that Kant was cleanshaven. I simply mean that all the great commentators on Kant have always fine patriarchal beards like Nabert's'.

The wry smile on the faces of some of her readers is probably only be found on those who understand something of the technologies of sexism. For those readers it will add to their understanding and perhaps give them further tools to combat it. It is, surely, more powerful than simply arguing straightforwardly that it is important to be explicitly aware of the significance of role models, etc. She also gives an example of the power of laughter to silence feminist critique. In Le Doeuff (2003) she describes being part of a group at the Sorbonne, which was preparing a section on English philosophy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, for a philosophical encyclopedia. They were checking through the list of those to be included, when she noticed that Wollestonecraft was not there. Many of the assembly had not heard of her. Le Doeuff explained that Wollestonecraft was of the Enlightenment and contested the subjugation of women (p. 109).

Roars of laughter ('maybe you'd like an entry on women's lib while you're at it?'), jokes and giggles...The laughter died down, the group leader wiped her eyes, [and] said 'All right, Michèle, but the shorter the better'.

Not surprisingly, in Le Doeuff's book she has the last laugh. She recounts that the following year she was approached by one of the general editorial team to suggest some women, since they seemed not to have enough of them.

MP: Argument makes an appeal to reason through demonstration based on the logic of inference between premises. Humor and comedy operates in different ways—in many cases it contradicts logic and plays to irrationality by surprising us with unusual associations like a dream or a surrealist painting. Humor is a tool that dislodges the ideologue when reason and reasoning has run out, when the limits of rational discourse have been reached. Sometimes comedy and humor can also provide insight and wisdom through paradox and riddle. Indeed, the riddle contains a form of wisdom that states the truth through paradox or contradiction in both Western and Eastern traditions.

MG: The more I mused over the idea for this dialogue, the more ways I found that these elements might enter into philosophy as educational at the same time as they puncture philosophy's tendency to identify itself with 'the man of reason' as being the discipline that always works from logic and inference.

Christine Battersby draws attention to some of the possibilities for a less reasonable, less straitlaced and less straight-faced philosophy. She compares the later Nietzsche's apparent self-identification as a *Hanswurst*, (or *Hans Wurst*, i.e. Hans the sausage) the greedy and lewd stock character in German popular theatre. She focuses particularly on Nietzsche's *Ecce Homo* (1969), pointing out the passage in 'Why I am a Destiny' as saying he has a terrible fear that one day he would be called a holy man. He says he would rather be a *Hanswurst* than a holy man. He goes on, 'Perhaps I am a buffoon [German: *Hanswurst*.² As Battersby comments, Nietzsche's words in this book are not to be taken at face value. But equally, the tricks and the clownish antics, of the *Hanswurst* perform the same disruption to otherwise straight and tragic dramas as *Ecce Homo* does to the orthodox philosophizing of Nietzsche's time. Battersby further points out that he is attentive to the responses of Hamlet to his impossible situation:

I know of no more heart-rending reading than Shakespeare: what must a man have suffered to have such a need of being a buffoon³! – Is Hamlet *understood*? Not doubt, *certainty*, is what makes one insane.

He is, it seems, demonstrating that philosophy needs the paradox and riddles that you mention, Michael.

There are many others who provide educational examples of thinking without linear reasoning and logic. Most obviously, there is irony. Socrates is known as using it in argument, judging by dialogues widely believed to be early. Then there are well known philosophical jokes about epistemology, such as the poem about Bishop Butler's idealism:

There was a young man who said, "God
Must think it exceedingly odd
If he finds that this tree
Continues to be
When there's no one about in the Quad."

REPLY

Dear Sir:
Your astonishment's odd:
I am always about in the Quad.
And that's why the tree
Will continue to be,
Since observed by
Yours faithfully,
GOD.

Another example is the epistemological joke that solipsism is such a stupid idea, it must have come from somebody else. These are serious jokes. From the point of view of education: Are these ways to learn? To think? Or are they perhaps ways of entering a 'community of practice'? And either way, isn't there a pedagogical point here?

MP: I think you are right. There are pedagogies connected to humor and to laughter—that of the jester, the trickster and the fool. The pedagogy that teaches us to laugh at ourselves has a role to play in sensitizing us to our customs and desensitizing us to our culture. (What is the role of the 'class clown?')

MG: Classically, Aristophanes undermines Socrates by lampooning him. Is this itself an argument? Or a reason for philosophy and philosophers to distrust comedy? Perhaps it is an assertion that philosophy and argument take a range of forms. Foucault asserts the significance of laughter, of laughing at the pretensions of straight philosophy, as he explains that it is precisely the trouble he takes in writing that leads him into the labyrinths from which he can be accused of shifting position. He puts this, 'I'm not where you are lying in wait for me, but over here, laughing at you.' (Foucault, 1972: 17)

Comedy, laughter, irony, buffoonery: all these are significant beyond the confines of academic philosophy. They are also significant for marginal-

ized groups, as the example I gave of Le Doeuff's writing shows. These matter at least in the early stages of educational political/philosophical thinking about social justice, a matter of central concern, I think, of education, and so of philosophy of education. We could consider how subverting the taken-for-granted is subverted by Irigaray's use of mimesis (Irigaray, 1985, Whitford, 1991). Or we could consider playfulness as discussed by Maria Lugones (1989). Autobiographically I think of the kinds of laughter that we used to have in the early days of the UK Society for Women in Philosophy about masculine ways of doing philosophy (self-importance, ignorance of children); metaphors, (*The chase*'), counter examples ('like a woman' used as a compliment to a man, as in 'You think like a woman'). Or to take another kind of marginality, and again autobiographically, Stefan Körner, a Czech immigrant and a professor of philosophy, lampooned taken-for-granted British philosophical norms. Ever since he explained how British he found the idea that oddness is a problem, I too have been less susceptible to the common move in philosophy, 'That seems rather odd,' meant as a way of belittling an argument.

With these thoughts in mind, I find I am drawn to the idea that philosophy needs 'fools', in the sense that fools are found in theatre and dance. The fool provokes laughter, perhaps just because she or he can point up the distance between wishful thinking and hard truths; they can make the absurd – or tragic – bearable, to allow us the possibility, as Battersby argues for the later Nietzsche,

of rationally willing the recurrence of one's life – however terrible and tragic that life might be. He insists that the greatest human being (the 'overman') is able to say 'yes' to life, and will that the world should repeat itself in all details an infinite number of times again – however awful that thought (and the suffering) might be.

In a less pessimistic mode, fools may help point out the solemnity of the taken-for-granted, opening up a space for new ways of thinking and seeing. They help restart the play when it is stuck. They suggest new moves for the dancers, instead of keeping them within bounds of steps and partners. And isn't philosophy crucially about re-thinking, and re-drawing boundaries, just when orthodox modes of understanding have lost their power to provoke understanding and imaginative responses to the world.

So, Michael, I am thinking of comedy, humor and laughter as all part of fooling, of responding to the world become difficult or stale. To do, in effect, what is called for in Sondheim's famous song: "Send in the Clowns"

Isn't it bliss?

Don't you approve?

One who keeps tearing around

One who can't move...
Where are the clowns?
Send in the clowns.

And perhaps finding, as Sondheim intended in the song, that all along, all of us are the clowns.

My fault I fear.
I thought that you'd want what I want.
Sorry, my dear.
But where are the clowns?
Quick, send in the clowns.
Don't bother, they're here.

It is significant here that Sondheim's clowns are 'fools', not jolly child-friendly clowns. He explains in an interview (Gussow, 2003):

As I think of it now, the song could have been called 'Send in the Fools.' I knew I was writing a song in which Desirée is saying, 'aren't we foolish' or 'aren't we fools'? Well, a synonym for fools is clowns, but 'Send in the Fools' doesn't have the same ring to it.⁴

All of this, of course, brings us back to the jester, the trickster and the fool that you just mentioned.

MP: Nothing too much hangs on the distinction I mentioned at the start, except to say that it is traditional. I agree with most of what you say. It really extends the discussion in all sorts of ways. And your examples are excellent. I do not think I want to reduce everything to the formulae: comedy as a substitute for argument; although indeed there are times when it might take this structure. In some instances comedy is required when the limits of reason are reached or when reason runs out or can make no impact especially in conversational stand-offs with fundamentalists who will cling to articles of faith despite cogent argument against all evidence.

I think you took the right route to emphasize the discursive *genres* of comedy and its *historical forms*: burlesque, farce, satire, comedy of manners as practiced by Molière and Congreve; Restoration and Shakespearean comedy; theatre of the absurd; surrealist performance in cabaret; not to mention stand-up comedy, slapstick, the joke and so on. This gives us an indication of its breadth and also its connection with everyday life. I have always favored the notion of the fool especially the Shakespearean fool as a figure that plays a central pedagogical role. This is a very large topic.

The fool gives wise counsel in the form of banter that mocks and educates at the same time. The fool is in part based on the court jester who was a joker, a prankster, clown or buffoon—the word comes to us from the Latin *foliis*, which means 'bag of wind'—and in the tradition licensed fools provided

entertainment especially through the telling of riddles but with music and juggling. There have been a number of studies that demonstrate the jester was not restricted to the Elizabethan stage or to the European court—there were rich traditions in China, India, Japan, Russia, America and Africa (Otto, 2001). I like the formulation that refers to folly as the philosophy of the fool which plays a vital role as *The History of the Fool* indicates:

The fool displays a folly which is just as important as rationalized wisdom, a construct of magical quality and ambiguity which accurately counter-balances the rationalism of both medieval and renaissance systems. The fool commonly conducts an interaction between himself and a person who society defines as wise by acting stupid and cunning at the same time, an interaction which would always end in the fool winning in this uneven matching of wits. The fool constantly questions our perceptions of wisdom and truth and their relationship to everyday experience. S/he readily applies metaphysical abstractions to attack the routine taken-for-granted aspects of the daily rituals of the audience, becoming an important conduit for determining meaning and clarifying abstractions which rule our lives. The fool lifts the veil of authority, devoid of decorum constantly making silly remarks, acting irreverently, unmasking the unpleasant aspects of power. S/he gives us the opportunity to humorously look at our own values and judgments as the powerful socio-cultural structures of power pull, push, and shape our identity. The social significance of the fool cannot be underestimated (*sic*), it is perhaps the surest sign that a society has attained cultural maturity because the construct allows the society to reflect on and laugh at its own complex power relations (<http://www.foolsforhire.com/info/history.html>).



entering a new phase
striking out on a new path
expanding horizons
starting something new
beginning an adventure
going on a journey
heading into the unknown
being **spontaneous**
living in the moment
letting go of expectations
doing the unexpected
acting on impulse
feeling uninhibited
surprising someone
feeling carefree
having **faith**
trusting the flow
staying open
letting go of worry and fear
feeling protected and loved
living in joy
recapturing innocence
believing
embracing **folly**
accepting your choices
taking the “foolish” path
pursuing a pipe dream
being true to yourself
taking a “crazy” chance
trusting your heart’s desire.

The fool in Shakespeare is too large a theme to enter into here but let me refer to Mark Edmundson (2000) who discusses Feste in *Twelfth Night* as one of Shakespeare’s most memorable fools, focusing on the exchange Feste has with Olivia:

Feste: Good Madonna, why mourn’st thou?

Olivia: Good fool, for my brother’s death.

Feste: I think his soul is in hell, Madonna.

Olivia: I know his soul is in heaven, fool.

Feste: The more fool, Madonna, to mourn for your brother’s soul, being in heaven. Take away the fool, gentlemen.

Edmundson refers to Feste’s ‘comic pedagogy’ and goes on to say: ‘Shakespeare’s fools are subtle teachers, reality instructors one might say, who often come close to playing the part that Socrates, himself an inspired clown, played on the streets of Athens. They tickle, coax and cajole their supposed

bettors into truth, or something akin to it. They take the spirit of April Fools' Day to an inspired zenith.'

What is worth commenting on in my view is the philosophical significance of the riddle. How many philosophical problems are constructed as riddles? The riddle has a special place in philosophy, akin to the place occupied by contradiction and tautology, at the limits of sense that attempts to say what cannot (technically) be said (with apologies to Wittgenstein).

MG: I agree that riddles are akin to some of the lines of thought we have been following. Especially so in that they, like the playfulness, foolery, satire, buffoonery and double-meanings we have been discussing, can tickle, coax and cajole us into thinking. This is what philosophy including philosophy of education sets out to do. Isn't it? Take the famous riddle of the Sphinx, as told by the poet Muriel Rukeyser and quoted by the philosopher Adriana Cavarero (2000: 9):

Long afterward, Oedipus, old and blinded, walked the roads. He smelled a familiar smell. It was the Sphinx. Oedipus said, "I want to ask one question. Why didn't I recognize my mother?" "You gave the wrong answer," said the Sphinx. "But that was what made everything possible," said Oedipus. "No," she said. "When I asked, What walks on four legs in the morning, two at noon, and three in the evening, you answered, Man. You didn't say anything about woman." "When you say Man," said Oedipus, "you include women too. Everyone knows that." She said, "That's what you think.'

I am also reminded of Mary Daly's riddling book, *Websters' First New Intergalactic Wickedary of the English Language*, which manages to tickle, coax, cajole and provoke thinking – partly because of her radical feminist perspective. Its collection of puns, double-meanings and satirical takes on the taken-for-granted in words are designed to provoke indignation and laughter, in order to encourage re-thinking. Here are a couple of examples (Daly, 1988, p. 147):

Nag *n*: a Scold with Horse Sense; a Biting Critic of cockocracy; one who has acquired the Virtue of Nagging ..

Nag *v*: ["to affect with recurrent awareness, uncertainty, need for consideration or concern: make recurrently conscious of something (as a problem, solution, situation)" Webster's]: This definition has been awarded Websters' Intergalactic Seal of Approval.

The same tickling and provocation can be found in works of art, as Paul Gilroy comments on the a painting, 'She ain't holding them up, she's holding on (some English Rose)' by the British Afro-Caribbean artist Sonia Boyce's. As he says, the painting is 'an ironic re-figuration of herself in the guise of an English Rose' (Gilroy, 1993:76). The painting made me

smile at the same time as it provoked me as a white British woman to re-think the relationship of Englishness and blackness. No doubt it does the same, only differently, for other British people self-identified in a range of ways. As indeed does the title of the chapter in which Paul Gilroy discusses her work: 'Art of Darkness'.

Michael I feel that together we have followed Foucault in that we have constructed a labyrinth into which we can venture, moving our discourse (1972, p. 17):

...opening up underground passages, forcing it to go far from itself, finding overhangs that reduce and deform its itinerary.

We have done this for the reasons he describes (1972, p. 17):

...not as a way of saying that everyone else is wrong. It is a attempt to define a particular site by the exteriority of its vicinity; rather than trying to reduce others to silence, by claiming that what they say is worthless, I have tried to define this blank space from which I speak, and which is slowly taking shape in a discourse that I still feel to be precarious and unsure.'

The themes introduced at the start have circled and come back again, while some of the themes introduced near the end have resonances with what came before.

As a result our labyrinthine journey has provided us with new possibilities within educational thinking and theorizing, precisely because it has begun to map how humor can make us philosophers of education laugh, smile, guffaw, and gasp with surprise, with the result that we are provoked, tickled, cajoled and coaxed us into thinking and being creative in response.

November 2011

Dear Michael,

It has been some months now since we wrote this dialogue together. I have been looking at it again, thinking about what I have learnt from it, specifically regarding what implications there might be for education and the philosophy of education. We began by wondering what place that laughter of ours had in philosophy of education, and indeed in education more generally. It is interesting to return to this theme – set of themes – while reading our joint exploration of the labyrinth the topic turned out to be.

So, to be serious, but, I hope, not too solemn. The most striking feature of a dialogue is that it is, indeed, a dialogue. Humor, in its many forms, points to the significance of dialogues for philosophy, for philosophy of

education and for education. The examples we give, including the example of our own dialogue at the Philosophy of Education conference point to the significance of foolery, buffoonery, comedy, satire, irony, riddles and the rest, not as part of a practiced argument but as interventions within a dialogue. These genres seem to function as aids and spurs to thinking. To put this another way, a moment of thinking is induced by laughter. The thinking that is generated in this way can, with hard work, be worked on to produce new concepts, arguments and insights which can be written. Even Nietzsche who, he says, aspires to be the *hanswurst*, the buffoon, only partly achieves this when writing a monograph. Of course the monograph is also a spur to thinking – at least it may be if the reader comes across it in the right frame of mind, and with a set of understandings and assumptions (or ‘prejudices’ to use a term of Gadamer’s). However, as is well known, what provokes laughter in one reader provokes only boredom, annoyance or incomprehension in another. In a real dialogue each of the participants can tell when to interject with humor, and if they have read the situation wrongly, it is immediately clear.

I am pointing to the significance of forms of thinking which can mostly be found only in dialogue. Philosophy and philosophy of education are essentially about thinking and about thinking anew. We are reminded that philosophy (the subject) is an act. It is not a spectator sport.⁵ It requires the action of philosophizing if it is to continue. Progress is not linear and should not be. As Iris Murdoch said (1970:1):

It is sometimes said, either irritably or with a certain satisfaction, that philosophy makes no progress. It is certainly true, and I think this is an abiding and not a regrettable characteristic of the discipline, that philosophy has in a sense to keep trying to return to the beginning: a thing which it is not at all easy to do.

Some philosophizing is best done in argument and counter-argument, of the sort that can be formally written down. However some of it works best in spoken dialogue between two or more human beings who are interacting, often face to face (or mouth to ear in the case of telephones or skype), and sometimes in quick virtual exchanges in writing. I suggest that much humor depends on such exchanges. I am reminded that it is in the dialogues of Plato rather than the monographs of Aristotle that we find the use of irony used to spur further thinking.

It seems then that there are forms of thinking not available through straightforward assertion and argument. In times when writing monographs and papers has become part of the way that we academics have let ourselves be co-opted into a managerial, economized way of life, it seems particularly important to preserve more risky, less manageable ways of doing philosophy. A serious argument is being made for humor and laughter in

academic life. This is partly an argument of the significance of process of thinking as well as for their outputs, measurable or not. It is also an argument for valuing the ridiculous, the comic, the absurd all of which are unexpected, unpredictable and risky: not subject to measurement through pre-determined indices or able to be monitored using tick boxes.

The different kinds of humor and comedy we discussed in the dialogue point to a range of ways in which the stasis engendered by managerialist, 'best practice', mode of living can be challenged. Buffoonery, as Nietzsche shows so clearly, is one way of pricking the pretensions and pomposities of orthodox thought. Dealing with pomposity, as Michael said, is also possible through that laughter we shared about the exam board. Our laughter depended on our shared understanding that something was laughable: pompous statements of status masquerading as argument. Both of us were prompted to think what the point of the laughter was for our own thinking about arguments and philosophy of education. Something similar occurs in Michele Le Doeuf's account of the Kantian beard and of the come-uppance of the editorial group for the philosophical encyclopedia. She assumes a feminist readership which will share in the laughter. However, because it is a monograph, there is a danger, indeed likelihood, that those who do not may read the account in quite a different way, as happens with writing. Consider how wary of writing Socrates seemed to be, and consider also how difficult it is to interpret the irony within Plato's dialogues (Vlastos, 1991). For me as a feminist reader a merely implicit understanding of mine was articulated, even conceptualized, so that I could more easily recognize similar situations within University teaching and research. There is a further way that humor enters dialogue rather than monologue: bringing in the fools. Thinking gets stuck. An impasse may be reached. A dilemma seems irresolvable. The dialogue suggests that what may needed is a lateral leap of insight of the kind that foolery brings. There are many ways of being a fool, of course, as Michael points out, none of them mere jolly clowning, as clarified by Sondeim. Buffoonery is one way of being a fool, as are using satire and irony. All of them potentially make space for seeing the situation in a new light, perhaps creating a new concept, perhaps showing a way back in order to find a new path.

I have been considering philosophy, including, of course, philosophy of education. I now turn to a consideration of education, including, of course, education through doing philosophy of education. Like doing philosophy, teaching and learning is an interaction between people. It is possible to teach and to learn through the production and consumption of monographs, lecture, film or website. But the usually preferred mode of education is more personal and immediate, whether physically face-to-face or virtual. Such interactions are of the moment, just as philosophical discussion is. And both

allow of the introduction of humor. Equally, like academic philosophy, including philosophy of education, teaching is subject to managerialism. Standards are specified and stipulated. Outcomes and objectives are identified from the start. Judgments of quality are made using tick boxes and the like.

Criticisms of a narrow, managerial understanding of education are easily found. We share them. Hence some of the significance of humor. Woven through the dialogue is a suggestion of how to move beyond critique into subversion with a view to construct ways of teaching and learning that do more than have either teaching or learning be judged using pre-specified competencies. Like philosophy in general, education theory and practice means returning to the starting point again and again, and re-thinking practices within contemporary contexts. We need to 'to think what we are doing' (Arendt). Maxine Greene articulates a thought out commitment to education being about more than the acquiring of useful information and skills. Education, she says, is about the transformation of individuals and the world, a world of others into which we are thrown and are part. (Greene, 1988:3)

Those of us committed to education are committed not only to effecting continuities but to preparing the ground for what is to come. ... My focal interest is in human freedom, in the capacity to surpass the given and look at things as if they could be otherwise. ... We are free [John Dewey] said, 'not because of what we statically are, but in so far as we are becoming different from what we have been'. To become different, of course, is not simply to will oneself to change. There is the question of being *able* to accomplish what one chooses to do. ... It is clear enough that choice and action both occur within and by means of ongoing transactions with objective conditions and with other human beings. They occur as well within the matrix of a culture, its prejudgments, and its symbol systems. Whatever is chosen and acted upon must be grounded, at least to a degree, in an awareness of a world lived in common with others, a world that can be to some extent transformed.

This exercise is very similar, if not identical, to some aspects of philosophizing. It is in effecting this kind of thinking that humor comes into its own in education as in philosophy. Woven through our dialogue are suggestions about this. First, Michael and I both mention the role of humor, satire, irony, comedy and buffoonery as a source of moral criticism and cultural resistance. Surely if education is to transform the world the first task is to see it from a critical distance, to dig beneath the surface, to unmask the structures of power which are so often taken for granted. Humor and comedy, as we have remarked provide the first stage in conceptualization and then in creatively imagining alternatives. The class clown, mentioned

by Michael, becomes significant as more than a disrupter of class management. He or she may be helping everyone, the teacher included, take a lateral look at what is going on in the educative moment. Second, the use of irony, satire and their relatives (though not sarcasm) take on significant roles. They can be used to demonstrate and construct shared assumptions. This may even be a way of helping students to enter communities of practice, as I suggested with the philosophical jokes I mentioned. Secondly, irony and satire can be used as *reductio ad absurdum*, a way of laughing at untenable positions without being insulting to dearly held beliefs. This has to be done carefully, or it can be taken as sarcasm, as the example of Socrates so clearly shows. Perhaps one of the most significant pedagogical uses of irony, satire and the like is in articulating what is not rather than straightforwardly articulating what is. This makes space for new thinking having cleared away some of the old thinking. This is education as a shared space for natality (Arendt, 1958), for the unexpected and unpredictable response, rather than for encouraging the ventriloquism of students taking on their teacher's ideas and repeating them as their own. Thirdly, it seems to me that laughter and shared appreciation of wit helps students engage their minds and imaginations with the ideas that the teacher puts forward. The serious business of education need not, we suggest, be identified with solemnity, pompous authority and predictable assured outcomes. Rather the wit of the teacher and her students allow them all to see the world afresh from a new perspective and to create new ways of understanding it.

Best wishes,
Morwenna

Dear Morwenna,

You have covered everything I wanted to say and reduced me to silence! It has been an interesting dialogue. I guess when I think of genres in relation to philosophy of education I think immediately of the *bildungsroman* – the novel of educational formation and development (if I can put it that way) – but also the film genre that emulates a structure of liberation, collective or individual – *To Sir With Love*, *Welcome Back Kotter*, *Educating Rita*, *Bad Teacher*. These forms seem susceptible of corruption, not just the ‘sit com’ but a revival of the comedy of manners, la comedy humaine, perhaps even the bitter joke which is hard to swallow. Monty Python was the comedic heir to French existentialism via absurdist theatre, ‘kitchen sink’ and the broader influence of surrealist humor. The pedant and the ‘swot’ have often been figures of fun, just as the teacher-student relationship has also been

constantly eroticized and sublimated. Now the neoliberal manager requires the hard edge of dark satirical humor, as you suggest. Let's poke fun at all the managers, the deans, the administrators, the students, teachers and especially faculty who display all kinds of interesting pathologies that make them wonderful targets for comedic critique.

Yours until the sheep grow bald,
Michael

NOTES

1. Nabert



2. The standard translation by Kaufman translates *Hanswurst* as 'buffoon'. This line in the original is: '*Ich will kein Heiliger sein, lieber noch ein Hanswurst.*'

3. See footnote 2.

4. The "clowns" in the title do not refer to circus clowns. Instead, they symbolize fools, as Sondheim explained in a 1990 video interview, it's a theater reference meaning 'if the show isn't going well, let's send in the clowns'; in other words, 'let's do the jokes.' www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWC5qfVnsVs&feature=related.

5. I take this sentence from Gordon Reddiford, my first teacher in philosophy of education.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Kierkegaard's *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*: A Critical Guide

Rick Anthony Furtak (Colorado College) (ed.)

New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 258 pp.

ISBN 978-0-521-89798-3

According to Climacus (Kierkegaard's pseudonym), original immanence is the ubiquity of the eternal (Ferreira), people suffer from a forgetfulness concerning ethical and religious existence and inwardness (this condition of forgetfulness is tied to their knowing too much) (Muench), inwardness is both a self's relation to itself and its outward relation to others (Mooney), and *practical reasoning is distinguished by its focus on the aims and goals that orient a person* (Furtak). Climacus portrays humor as a special kind of vantage-point: *the humorous attitude to Christianity is a reversion to thinking of the truth as behind us*, whereas a Christian proper has no communicative reason to convey the absurdity of Christianity. (Hannay) Climacus defines the truth of subjectivity in terms of passion. To become a Christian is to embrace the historical event of God's incarnation as man. (Howland) Climacus' understanding of the finitude of human understanding is qualitative, reality is essentially historical, speculative thought is ludicrously comical, and both becoming subjective and becoming a Christian are lifelong tasks. (Westphal) Climacus' view of the comic is rooted in "contradiction" or incongruity, humor is "lower" than the fully religious individual, the comic and pathos need to be in balance, and the true comic includes a delicate balance of "jest" and "earnestness." (Lippitt)

Climacus' discussion of the task of becoming a Christian focuses on the existential form of Christian belief. The subjective truth which constitutes the truth of Christianity is essentially dynamic. *The individual is not able to accomplish the task of becoming a Christian by her own efforts*. Climacus emphasizes the uncertainty and insecurity of Christian faith, regarding uncertainty as a necessary condition of faith. The religious person has suffering with him and *desires* suffering in the sense of wanting to recognize it. Existence is a movement *inter-esse*, and is characterized by the interest that is lacking from abstract thought. The existing individual's temporal life is the choice or actualization of a possibility. The idea of progress conceals from individuals the nature of their spiritual tasks. The individual's relation to an eternal happiness is "pathos-filled." (Carlisle) Climacus argues that *the relationship between human reason and Christian faith centers on the in-*

carnation. There is no necessary opposition between reason and faith. Reason cannot be neutral with respect to the incarnation. God might reveal to us that the incarnation *is* possible by becoming incarnate. The creature-creator relation makes God and humans “akin.” The incarnation is an example of love that is pure and unselfish. A person must respond to the incarnation either in faith or in offense. The consciousness of sin must be revealed to the individual by the incarnate god. Human existence is an attempted synthesis of the infinite and the finite, the eternal and the temporal. (Evans) As Climacus’ puts it, Christianity is an existence-communication. *The categories of Christianity must be derived from the paradox of eternity’s entry into temporal existence*. God’s entry into time is “an absolute fact” which cannot be reduced to the purely historical. Faith is not an inferior form of knowledge which needs to be transcended. The untruth of the individual is something for which he or she must take responsibility. Sin is an *existence*-category. (Law)

This is a wonderful collection of papers on the influential thought of Kierkegaard. The importance of the contributors along with the high quality of their pieces make this a volume worth reading.

Cultural Evolution

Kate Distin (Independent Scholar)

New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 272 pp.

ISBN 978-0-521-76901-3

Distin develops a theory of information and its inheritance, which *enables us to understand how cultural evolution has taken off in humans as a process independent from biological evolution*. Information must be transmitted to a receiver *that can interpret it and respond appropriately*. Information does not exist without a receiver to link input to output, depends on a receiver that can discretely represent it (it depends on a receiver that can detect and react to variations in the source), and can only be transmitted to a receiver that knows how to make sense of it (information is any variation that a receiver can discretely represent). Money is an artefactual language in which information about value is represented and exchanged, whereas writing is an artefactual language for the representation of cultural information. The inheritance of information is dependent on the representational capacities of each generation of receivers. The receiver’s *discrete representational knowledge* enables it to react appropriately to a source of information. For information to be shared between multiple receivers, they need to play a cooperative game in which they all obey the same linguistic rules. There are multiple ways in which a receiver can interpret information. Human culture is the product of evolving information, *is the product of interactions between human agents and cultural information*, and is built by human agents on the basis of cultural information. Patterns of cultural taxonomy are the product

of interactions between cultural information and its inheritance mechanisms. Cultural evolution is the product of heritable variations in cultural information. Culture is the product of evolved information. Evolution is the product of heritable information. Humans have the cognitive capacity to support the hierarchical transmission of complex information. The structure of any method of representing information is determined by the nature of its medium. Narrative is a good way of organizing, retaining and communicating information. Human cognition must discretize information in order to receive it.

As Distin puts it, artefactual languages have evolved under a representational selective pressure, and may isolate informational content from social context, and facilitate functional links between groups of otherwise-unrelated individuals. Artefactual language use demands that we prioritize interpretation and representation. The shared use of an artefactual language depends on the human instinct for cooperation. Humans have an innate capacity for both social and functional cooperation, which is supported by the acquisition and shared use of natural and artefactual languages. The origin of culture can be explained by means of natural and artefactual languages. Natural languages are cultural artefacts that coevolved with the human brain. The acquisition and repeated use of artefactual languages can make individuals more highly metarepresentational. Much of cultural information relies on the inheritance mechanisms of artefactual languages for its preservation and replication. Linguistic inheritance mechanisms ensure that certain resources are transmitted from one generation to the next, can give rise to evolution in languages, and cannot directly give rise to biological evolution (linguistic structures discretize the media in which they are realized and the information that they carry). Languages are transmitted across linguistic generations and are not restricted to genetic routes. Language-learning behavior can act as a mechanism for language evolution. Language learning moulds our cognitive structures, the process of learning a second language increases our meta-linguistic awareness, and human language learning is a nongenetic inheritance mechanism. The roots of natural language lie in a uniquely human instinct for cooperation. Natural language shapes the ways in which we think about the culture that it enables us to acquire, and *has structural features which indicate that it evolved primarily as a method of communication*. Natural languages are important markers of social identity. Languages facilitate communication and representation, shape the cognition of those who learn them, and *rely for its transmission on receivers who are able to acquire its structures from hearing it spoken*. The spoken language is a cooperative game played according to socially determined rules. Language acquisition provides the substrate for cultural evolution. Encounters with novel languages can have an impact on the cultural frameworks. Each language shapes the ways in which we interpret and respond to its content. The human language faculty

is both enabled and constrained by our biological endowment. *The biological advantages of enhanced communication are dependent on the cooperative tendencies of the communicating species.* Our instinct for cooperation is given direction by the ways in which we learn to communicate. *The human tendency for cooperation has been crucial for cultural evolution.* Speech provides and strengthens the social links between members of a community.

Distin asserts that culture takes the form of identifiable units *which are assembled under the guidance of ecological and representational pressures into recognizable cultural clusters,* is the product of interactions between human receivers and cultural information (it is the product of interactions between cultural information and its varying human receivers), and is the product of gradual changes in heritable cultural information. Human culture is best explained as the product of evolutionary processes in culture itself. Cultural barriers are largely language based. Innate ability, creativity and motivation are part of the genetic landscape onto which culture falls, meta-representation makes it possible for information to be combined from more than one cultural lineage, and patterns of cultural taxonomy are shaped by the ways in which cultural information is transmitted. *Mental constructs are accessible to the extent that they have been activated by recent use.*

Cultural Evolution is a book of admirable breadth and complexity. I find it to be tremendously interesting and thought-provoking.

Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*: A Critical Guide

Arif Ahmed (University of Cambridge) (ed.)

New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 248 pp.

ISBN 978-0-521-88613-0

In the *Tractatus* the only admissible sort of meaning is the meaning of atomic propositions (the atomic propositions all have sense). For Wittgenstein in the *Philosophical Investigations*, meaningful language is the characteristic kind of human action (meaningful words *are* deeds). For a great many cases in which we employ the word "meaning," the meaning of any part of a language is its use in that language (the meaning of a word is almost always its use). (Hanna) Activity is central to Wittgenstein's account of meaning. (Luntley) According to *Tractatus*, objects cannot be meaningfully enumerated or said to exist. Wittgenstein holds in the *Investigations* that it makes no sense either to attribute or deny existence of anything as elementary as simple objects. (Jacquette) Wittgenstein *equates* meanings or concepts with rules governing the use of language. Family resemblance *is* compatible with rule-following. (Forster) Wittgenstein identifies having a concept with the possession of an ability, capacity or disposition. (Glock)

All essays in the book are written with admirable clarity, and are rich in examples. I recommend it to anyone who is interested in Wittgenstein's work.

The Cambridge Companion to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*

Paul Guyer (University of Pennsylvania) (ed.)
New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 461 pp.
ISBN 978-0-521-88386-3

Kant establishes in the *Critique of Pure Reason* that we know genuinely informative universally and necessarily true principles *about* our experience, shows that these principles do not yield theoretical *knowledge* about objects that we *cannot* directly experience, and shows that we have room for rational *belief* about such objects insofar as those beliefs are required on *practical* grounds. Knowledge requires sensible intuition as well as concepts. The synthetic unity of apperception can only be produced by the faculty of understanding. Determinate *self*-consciousness is possible only through cognition of objects. (Guyer) Kant maintains that the knowledge constituting the proper end of metaphysics is never mere empirical knowledge. Substantive knowledge of objects does not find expression in merely analytic judgments. Our representations of space and time are themselves *a priori* and condition all experience. (Hogan) Kant says that no objects are really possible unless the categories apply to them. The actual experience of an object can prove the objective reality of a concept. (Winkler) On Kant's view, sensibility is that faculty or capacity of mind by which we passively receive representations from things that affect us. The special status of geometry derives from the special status of our representation of space. An adequate account of geometric cognition presupposes the *a priori* production of the objects of geometry. The apriority and the applicability of mathematics are necessary conditions on experience. The intuition of space precedes the representation of things as spatial (our cognition of space is *a priori*). One can represent the extension and form of things even in the absence of an actual object of sensation. One represents things as spatio-temporal by situating them with respect to oneself. Space and time are the transcendently ideal forms of our intuitions of empirically real things. The form of all appearance is available to the mind, *a priori*. The form of appearances can be investigated independently of their matter. All and only the appearances are spatial objects of experience. (Shabel) Kant argues that perception is an empirical consciousness, involving not only pure intuitions of space and time, but also sensation. A sensation is not an objective representation. The cognition of objective temporal relations requires necessary, objective, *a priori* representations in the form of the relational categories. (Watkins) Kant asserts that a perception is of a real thing if there is a given sensation. We somehow know from our receptivity that there are things in themselves. We can order our representations in time. (Emundts)

Kant identifies the faculty of understanding and its rules by reference to the unity of self-conscious experience. We can have immanent metaphysical

knowledge of synthetic *a priori* principles that structure all possible human experience. Human knowledge can result only from applying concepts to schemata mediating the application of concepts to appearances. Human reason necessarily produces ideas of the soul, the world-whole, and God. *We misunderstand the ideas of pure reason if we treat them as objects of speculative knowledge.* Ideas are subjective (they are concepts in the human mind), are normative standards against which the sensible world is to be measured, and are useful for representing ends or goals that we strive to achieve. (Rohlf) Kant argues that the soul is a simple, identical substance in an ontologically significant sense. The soul as a thing in itself in pure apperception is without phenomenal properties. Pure apperception does not yield *determinate* insights into ourselves as things in themselves, precedes and is independent of the states of inner sense, and is of ourselves as a thing in itself. The states of inner sense are all located in time. The objects of sensibility are mere appearances, distinct in kind from things in themselves. In our relation to all other things, we deal only with the *effects* of the things on us. Our understanding is discursive. A substance is that which possesses powers by means of which it can ground accidents. Accidents are mere modes of a substance. Nothing we know rules out the destruction of substances despite God's continued existence. It is only with regard to substance *in sensibility* that we need to assume permanence for the sake of the possibility of experience. (Wuerth)

Kant emphasizes that space and time are given in pure intuition as infinite magnitudes. A beginning of the world in time must have been preceded by an empty time. A cause must be a causal power of an agent substance acting at a time on a patient substance. The validity of the moral law depends on our having "practical freedom." In order to regard ourselves as acting from principles of reason, we must regard ourselves as transcendently free. (Wood) On Kant's view, the process of determining our concepts of things leads us to the idea of the *ens realissimum*. Reason has specific *speculative* interests in positing a necessary being. *The postulation of a necessary being is foisted upon us in our efforts to account for contingent being.* (Grier) Kant states that reason can create concepts that can unite the empirical concepts of the understanding. Action on the basis of the moral law requires a practical, experiential concept of freedom. (Rauscher) Kant holds that philosophy consists in knowing its own bounds. Thought can extend further than knowledge (we can have thoughts, without intuitions, about things in themselves). Transcendental idealism is what explains the possibility of sound transcendental arguments. The conclusion of a sound transcendental argument is an item of synthetic *a priori* knowledge. (Moore) Kant claims that knowledge is the joint product of the faculties of sensibility and understanding. (Horstmann) Kant's transcendental idealism is based on the restriction of

our cognition to objects of possible experience. The basic element of the transcendental logic is the judgment. (Pollok) Kant says that the schema, though a product of the imagination, represents how the imagination produces the relevant image. Pure space and pure time are something to be intuited. (Dahlstrom) Kant's analysis of transcendental affinity is tailored to our finite cognitive capacities. A complete sensibility and understanding does not of itself determine whether any appearances to it or any of its perceptions are associable. The modal categories only concern the cognitive value of a judgment's copula. Some synthetic propositions can be known *a priori*. Our commonsense world is phenomenal because it only exists in our experiencings. Our commonsense spatio-temporal world of physical objects and all their perceptual qualities are transcendentially ideal phenomena. (Westphal) On the whole, *The Cambridge Companion to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason* is an excellent collection from some first-rate philosophers. This book will be widely discussed.

The Cambridge Companion to Frege

Michael Potter (University of Cambridge)

Tom Ricketts (University of Pittsburgh) (eds.)

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Frege conceives of the sense of a term as the mode of presentation of what it refers to. The sense of a sentence is the thought which the sentence expresses. The reference of the sentence is its truth-value. Sentences are just a kind of name. Logic is a subject whose central concern is truth. Thoughts are essentially complex, and are of relevance to logic because they are what truth applies to. A false thought cannot be thought of as the absence of something. Arithmetic is derivable from logic. We should regard truth not as correspondence with the facts but as identity. Any attempt to define truth would be circular (one would have to understand the definition as being *true*). An appeal to the difference between the signs does not explain the difference in content. (Potter) On Frege's view, the classification of a provable truth as analytic or synthetic, *a priori* or *a posteriori*, is determined by the proof requiring the fewest specific assumptions. The truths of arithmetic are analytic, and govern the widest domain of all. The laws of logic are the laws of truth (the task of logic is to discern the laws of truth), and are distinguished by their universality. The laws of arithmetic are logical laws. Numbers are non-spatio-temporal objects. The fundamental propositions of the science of number have the same status as logical laws. The notion of extension of concept is a logical notion. The everyday sentences of natural language do not have truth-values. Truth is what we get at some ideal end of inquiry, and applies to thoughts rather than sentences. We are entitled to regard certain sentences as expressing truths (although some of their terms

do not have fixed meaning). A sentence can have truth-value only if each of its constituents has *Bedeutung*. Sentences *are* proper names. Begriffsschrift is a tool that enables us to avoid some difficulties inherent in natural language. The meaning of primitive terms can only be communicated via hints or elucidations. (Weiner)

Frege's conception of logic is integral to his philosophical system. The business of logic is to articulate and demonstrate the logical laws. The laws of logic are general in using topic-universal vocabulary to state truths about everything. All quantified variables have unrestricted domain. The explanation of a truth is a logical proof of that truth from more basic truths. (Goldfarb) Frege writes that each proposition has a unique analysis. (Sullivan) Frege regards function-names as *objects*. Function-names are expressions with empty places. Predicates stand for functions. (Oliver) Frege's view of logical segmentation is founded on his quantificational conception of generality. Logic does not concern itself directly with cognition and cognizers. Frege's view of truth excludes a notion of designation from within science. Concepts can only occur in a combination. The holding of any relation over concepts is fixed by the objects falling under those concepts. Existence-statements are examples of statements that say something about a concept. Objects are what proper names signify and concepts what predicates signify. Statements of number predicate something of concepts, the objective designata of predicates. Numerals appear as proper names in the statements of pure arithmetic. *A predicate is the result of removing one or more occurrences of a proper name from a sentence.* (Ricketts)

Frege maintains that analytic truths can extend our knowledge *and so have genuine and distinctive content*. Arithmetic is analytic and its truths can be proved from logical laws and definitions alone. We should distinguish thought from truth-value, and two aspects in the act of judging – grasp of thought and recognition of truth. The relation of thought to truth-value is that of sense to reference. Truth is not a property of thoughts, is not related to thought as subject to predicate, and is primarily ascribed to thoughts and derivatively to the sentences that express them. Thoughts cannot be the references of sentences. The same thought can be expressed in radically different ways. In contexts of fiction and poetry we care only about the thoughts expressed by our sentences (these thoughts do not depend on the references of our words). The objectivity of thoughts is necessary for the explanation of shared human intellectual activity. At least some *sentences* must have a reference as well as a sense. *The reference of a part of an expression need not be a part of the reference of the whole expression.* Our sentences are *about* the objects and concepts which are the referents of the words we use. Consistency is a property of the concept with which one defines an object. Numbers are not concepts, but objects. Identity is a relation

between objects which are parts of the content of an identity judgment. While ideas develop and change, concepts do not. Inference is a process whereby we make judgments on the basis of other judgments. The sense of a name is grasped by anyone familiar with the language to which the name belongs. There may be modes of presentation which are unshareable and incommunicable. In indirect discourse contexts, words have as their “indirect reference” their customary sense (words have an “indirect sense”). (Kremer) Frege argues that to be subject to assessment as true or false is to be subject to logical assessment. Two sentences, despite having the same referential truth conditions, may differ in ways that *logic* obliges us to acknowledge. The need to distinguish between sense and reference manifests itself first in relation to sentences. The sense of a sub-sentential expression is *a way of thinking about its* reference. (Taschek) The notion of generality plays a central role in Frege’s thought about the nature of logic. Logic is the most general science, and arithmetic is logic. The notion of a truth of logic plays a crucial epistemological role for Frege. Logical laws are fundamental to thought and reasoning. The Begriffsschrift contains no axioms or rules that are non-logical. If all primitive expressions of Begriffsschrift refer, then every well-formed expression refers. The axioms and rules of the Begriffsschrift are, respectively, true and truth-preserving. Frege’s semantic justifications of the axioms and rules of his system establish that its axioms are true and its rules are truth-preserving. *Complex names are formed by applying certain combinatorial operations to the primitive expressions of the language.* The rules are required to be truth-preserving if arithmetic is to deliver knowledge. (Heck) Frege notes that there are two fundamental sources of truth in mathematics: logical truth, which grounds arithmetic in the widest sense, and geometrical intuition, which grounds geometry. Axioms must be truths. Numbering consists in the assignment of a number-object to a sortal concept. (Hallett)

Frege points out that truth is unanalyzable. The truth-functional logical connectives are literally functions. In a logically perfect language all properly formed singular terms must refer. Sentences containing non-referring singular terms/bearerless proper names are neither true nor false. *Any* sentence containing a bearerless name in a direct/non-oblique context is neither true nor false. (Milne) Frege asserts that thoughts do not contain the entities themselves, the subjects of our judgment. The method of analysis is function and argument. The world is divided into functions and objects. A sentence has both a sense (the thought it expresses) and a reference (its truth-value). Identity applies only to objects, not to concepts. Two predicates which apply to the same objects are like two names which pick out the same object. (Hylton) Frege observes that the sentences used in some kinds of philosophical explanations do not say what they seem to be intended to say. A

sentence is a completed function-expression naming a truth-value. *In general* the sense of a sentence is a function of the sense of its parts. Names are capable of having both sense and reference. An expression cannot have a reference unless it has a sense (the sense is the way in which the reference is presented). The geometrical line connecting two points is there before we draw it. (Diamond)

There is much to appreciate in this book. I find it to be both insightful and admirable, and a masterly success.

An Introduction to Metaphysics

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Carroll and Markosian identify three different approaches to characterizing metaphysics: *the etymological approach* (metaphysics is the branch of philosophy concerned with a disparate collection of topics), *the big-picture approach* (metaphysics is the branch of philosophy concerned with fundamental questions about the nature of reality), and *the definition-by-example approach* (metaphysics is the branch of philosophy concerned with such topics as ontology, time, the Mind-Body Problem, the problem of personal identity, etc.). Something is metaphysically necessary iff its negation is not metaphysically impossible. A key to the nature of mind is whether mental states can affect the material world. *Moral freedom* is the kind of freedom that is a necessary condition for moral responsibility. Finding the correct analysis of the concept of causation is an unsolved problem in philosophy. Lawhood is critical to the standard formulation of Determinism, and a key element of plausible accounts of causation. The Mind-Body Problem is the problem of understanding the relationship between mental phenomena and the bodily basis of those phenomena. Mental states are *multiply realizable* (a single mental property can be realized by many different sorts of material properties). There is no intrinsic direction to any dimension of space, there is no dynamic aspect to the dimensions of space, and space is ontologically indiscriminate.

This is a stimulating, sharp and keenly argued book, and an extraordinarily powerful and eloquent account of metaphysics. The line of discussion is lucidly presented and well conceived.

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