



University of Southern Denmark

## Other orientation

### uncovering the roots of praxis

Cowley, Stephen J.

*Published in:*  
Language Sciences

*DOI:*  
[10.1016/j.langsci.2024.101624](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langsci.2024.101624)

*Publication date:*  
2024

*Document version:*  
Final published version

*Document license:*  
CC BY

*Citation for pulished version (APA):*  
Cowley, S. J. (2024). Other orientation: uncovering the roots of praxis. *Language Sciences*, 103, Article 101624.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langsci.2024.101624>

Go to publication entry in University of Southern Denmark's Research Portal

## Terms of use

This work is brought to you by the University of Southern Denmark.  
Unless otherwise specified it has been shared according to the terms for self-archiving.  
If no other license is stated, these terms apply:

- You may download this work for personal use only.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying this open access version

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details and we will investigate your claim.  
Please direct all enquiries to [puresupport@bib.sdu.dk](mailto:puresupport@bib.sdu.dk)



## Other orientation: uncovering the roots of praxis

Stephen J. Cowley

Department of Language and Communication, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark



### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Available online 5 March 2024

#### Keywords:

Dialogism  
Distributed language  
Languaging  
Ecolinguistics  
Generativism  
Intersubjectivity

### ABSTRACT

In honouring Per Linell's achievements, I pursue how dialogue was traced back to praxis. Hence, I begin with how, countering generative theory as overblown, Linell found a hard middle way and, thus, adopted a modest realism. In early work, he traced phonology to what can be heard and, later, diagnosed exclusive emphasis on things or rules as written language bias. Since much depends on how we speak, verbalizing derives, in part, from the influence of others. In modelling speech performance, he therefore turns to a duality of planning and execution. Activity can be orienting to others and/or their doings and sayings. The pattern recurs in initiative–response analysis which effectively tracks isomorphisms in the push and pull of dialogue (initiative and response). Given samenesses, forms, ways of acting, and uses of wordings, we sustain the sociological consciousness of practical and linguistic knowhow. Praxis prompts people to act, transcend situations, use dialogue, construct practical theories and, slowly, change their languaging. In scaling down, I argue that the future prospects of Linell's work lie in rethinking the interdisciplinary area that is concerned with languages, human practices and, above all, their effects.

© 2024 The Author. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

“linguistic theory is a theory of praxis, rather than a system of abstract units (and rules)”

(Linell, 2010: 18)

### 1. Introduction

The paper celebrates the importance of Per Linell's work for the language sciences. As we engage with praxis, we evoke and are moved by others. Not only do we get beyond language but, I suggest, we can grasp why grammar no more reduces to innate principles than practices reduce to dialogue. As Linell turns away from abstract units (and rules), he shows that the social and the psychological interweave as languages prompt us to hear, act and otherwise perceive.<sup>1</sup> Thus, communication prompts us to transcend situations by meshing knowledge, experience and beliefs. While this is the core of Linell's dialogism, he does not trace its roots to speaking bodies but, rather, emphasises the influence of others. In tracking his view, I turn to whole organic being (Ingold, 2000) to track how dialogical views of conscious experience gradually emerged from Linell's tussle with generativism. Specifically, I align early work, recognition of the push and pull of dialogical performance and his model of speech activity (Linell, 1982a). Thus, what initiative–response shows are parallels between how people orient to each other and how we produce and interpret speech in line with what, in the eighties, he conceptualised as a plan/execute model of performance.

Others can move us and, thus, set off what Paul Thibault (2019) calls *selving*. This is especially so when the other is close or held in high esteem. Not only did Linell's work help me resist generativism, but he persuaded me that dialogue infuses all human cognitive and linguistic powers. I like to think, moreover, that my work was touched by his ethos. When one grants due space to

E-mail address: [cowley@sdu.dk](mailto:cowley@sdu.dk).

<sup>1</sup> In this context, I assume that perceiving does *not* reduce to sense impressions (Sellars, 1979). Hearing, especially for the phonetically trained, is an expert type of ordinary perception (viz. of objects, people situations, etc.).

others, one draws on “the capabilities of action and perception of the whole organic being” (Ingold, 2000: 5). Not only does one make use of situation transcending practices but, their consequences can change habits, ways with wordings, experience and sensibility (Dreon, 2022). In my own case, Linell’s work (as I imagine it) has deep influences. In what Margolis (2016) calls an enlanguaged world (i.e. of many tongues), I was *moved* by reading his work. In tracing dialogue, and languaging, to praxis I came to adopt a distributed perspective (Cowley, 2011). On this view, others channel multi-scalar experience in an ecology where environments shape organisms. Whole organic beings use sensibility as, together, humans become persons. We use wordings to unite practical–dialogical skills, speech performance and, inseparably, cooperative action. The effects are singular, partly shared and, largely, unknowable. In transcending situations, we bundle practices, wordings and other orientation into coordinative activity that shapes experience.

### 1.1. Outline

As a beginning linguist I was inspired by Linell’s struggle with generativism. In the 1980s, I too was concerned with how psychological reality (as it was called) brings the phonological and/or phonetic basis of talk to experience of others. Later, when Linell turned to dialogue, I retained a focus on its epistemic roots. In §2.0, I re-voke the heyday of theoretical linguistics, its ambitions, and how, as Linell developed his PhD, generativism went into decline. I stress how he united a modest realism with a hard logic by insisting on what we *hear*.<sup>2</sup> I ascribe this to what Swedes call a *lagom* attitude, seeking a middle way that satisfies and, at times, rejects theory as pie in the sky. In §2.1, I evoke a setting where, while opposed to generativism, many (including Linell and I) asked how hearing various languages can affect understanding, mind and world. In §3.0, I present Linell’s diagnosis of written language bias, his model of speech performance, and how he tracked isomorphisms with initiative–response analysis. In §3.1, I stress discontinuity between his work before 1990 and how a Kantian separation of mind and world affects how social psychology pursues dialogue. I argue that the *concept* of other orientation jars with what, in the 1980s, was modelled as ‘plan/execute.’ In §3.2, I show how to reach consilience by working backwards. Rather than scale up from sense-making, one can scale down from sociodialogical consciousness. Thus, I track human dialogicality to a position taken in a very early publication (Anward and Linell, 1971). In §3.3, I suggest that a focus on how practices are actualized as planning *cum* execution unites responding, linguistic embodiment, selving, and re-evoking of others. We use, not just simultaneity or means-end models, but also how a history of other-orientation prompts us to amalgamate pasts into (partly) shared experience. In §4.0, using recent ecolinguistic work, I return to how linguistic knowledge bears on the human. Linell’s contribution lies in attributing what is *heard* to, not mind, but dialogical beings who derive their powers from praxis.

## 2. The fading of generativism

After publication of *Aspects* (Chomsky, 1965), a theoretical cocoon trapped many linguists for decades. Language was pictured as an autonomous realm whose nature linked mind and world. Even a critic like Bruce Derwing (1973) found “no doubting” that linguistics had been transformed by what Kuhn (1962) had called a paradigm. For Danny Steinberg, henceforth, one could identify “grammatical knowledge that speakers hold” (Steinberg, 1975: 218). A theory of “competence” was to save phonology, alter views of linguistic change, and reclaim semantics. Allegedly, this required only a new nomothetic–deductive methodology. Having begun by formalizing sentences, generative grammars set out to disclose reality itself. In his review of *Aspects*, Matthews (1967) was first to warn us off any such claim. Use of scare quotes on “psychological reality” hint that, in his view, it is absurd to invoke a future mental science to justify grammars (descriptions of sentences). Yet, for decades, many modelled grammar around recursive rewrite rules and, perhaps, transformations.<sup>3</sup> Human uniqueness was ascribed to a hypothetical organ that linked novelty with knowledge. Generative linguists rewrote grammars, rethought learning to talk, remade psycholinguistics (as language processing), created computational languages and, remarkably, acted as if entitled to debate the role of natural selection. In appeal to sentence generation, rule–based specification of an infinity of strings was even said to specify creativity (for critique, Moore and Carling, 1982). Given historical contingency, a mechanistic mentalism entered academic politics and spread to, say, Chomsky’s attacks on the ideology behind the Vietnam war. Linguistics was taken to link computation, philosophical tradition, functionalism, and the human mind. Intelligence did not, as in generative AI, predict a next item in a string. Rather, it was said that a generative grammar was installed in each human mind!

When I studied for my Masters (in 1984–1985), only heretics doubted the psychological reality of linguistic rules or that grammar could be a science. Yet, the demise of generativism was underway.<sup>4</sup> Even as a *Sprachphilosophie*, a competence/performance distinction was very crude (Matthews, 1967): indeed, it made performance rules independent of any given language. Thus, pause, for example, lacked local meaning and was treated as separable from the language of its users.<sup>5</sup> Later, Matthews

<sup>2</sup> While Linell rejects the hard naturalism of Chomsky or Fodor –and the view that ‘language’ can be innately grounded, he also opposes reduction of language to discourse; in this sense, his realism is ‘modest.’

<sup>3</sup> In parallel, Marr (1982) defines “vision” in terms of, not generating a set of sentences, but by transforming a 2 ½ dimension sketch into a 3D one; as a computational operation, it is open to implementation by machines.

<sup>4</sup> A fuller account would trace cognitive linguistics back to generative semantics; for now, it is enough that it invokes psychologically real representations pursued by science –ignoring humanistic critique by Matthews (1979), Itkonen (1978), Botha (1971) and others.

<sup>5</sup> Perhaps this is why he took me on as a PhD student to study pause (and prosody) in Italian conversations. In my Masters dissertation, I showed pause did not reduce to a universal, a cognitive rhythm, or a structural aspect of talk.

(1979) describes competence as incomprehensible in that, above all, it makes language acquisition instantaneous. Indeed, even in the seventies, some admitted having felt that the field had “lost its senses” (Derwing, 1973:6). Bizarrely, it was mooted that grammar unites a “body of conceptual knowledge” with a “self contained linguistic realm” (Itkonen, 1978: 80) Yet grammars were meaningless rewrite rules and, as none denied, concepts invoke meaning.<sup>6</sup> Although the conflation appears impossible, many embraced the scientization of ‘language.’ After all, in common parlance, *language* can be placed in the mind or said to be (psychologically) real. Using generative premises Rudi Botha (1971) asked if, in principle, phonology could gain from a nomothetic-deductive method. As a psychological model, he notes, the method offers no refutation. He therefore concludes that generative phonology adds nothing to older views. In spite of the merits of explicit formulation (O’Donnell, 1974.6) formalism is bound to leave out linguistic change, words, language varieties and, in phonology, what can be heard. For Steinberg (1975), then, formalism and mentalism are incompatible: derivations must be constructed. In 1974, it was lamented that “no satisfactory account of competence has ever been produced” (O’Donnell, 1974: 57). Over the years, nothing was to change. Indeed, for Itkonen (1978), studying the field of grammar lends itself to neither methods of inductionism nor nomothetic-deductive enquiry. In that it presupposes a normative logic, a grammarian’s sense of what is right must attune to a given language. As intuition is understanding, for Itkonen, the study of grammar requires a hermeneutic approach.

At this time, Linell was writing a PhD on generative phonology. Rather than abandon the approach, he preferred it to structuralism’s naïve induction and “elegant systematization” (Linell, 1979: xiii). Even in his earliest papers, he sought a *lagom* compromise that would bring the use of languages to generativism. While granting abstraction to word and sentence prosody, for Anward and Linell (1971), they are *also* perceptual and/or motoric. Recognising the abstract and abstruse (Linell, 1973: 3), he sought the *right* level of description. This was argued in using the Swedish vowel [u] to challenge dogmas of generative phonology (Linell, 1973). Having characterised the vowel’s variability, Linell offers rule-based description of differences. Rules connect levels such that “phonetic properties are present in the sound signs” or, at least, “can be regularly interpreted into them” (Linell, 1973:3). Verbalizing is multi-layer or multi-actional because we both hear and report word forms as *sayings* or what he calls ‘morphological operations’. For this reason, psychological reality reduces to neither formal representation, nor acoustics. Rather, we use heard appearances as we use the perceptual and/or motor routines of a familiar environment. Hence, Linell stresses how the use of audible differences take on phonological roles.<sup>7</sup> To limit phonology to rules is, thus, “misleading, if not false” (Linell, 1973:4). Like Matthews (1967), Derwing (1973) and Itkonen (1978), Linell rejects a competence/performance dichotomy, stresses linguistic differences and, like Botha (1971) insists that forms be described by explicit and (ideally) refutable principles. Rejecting pie in the sky, Linell (1973) views acts of utterance as multi-actional and, later, multi-scalar (Linell, 1982a). Below, I show how Linell develops this view by tracking how people mesh responding and initiating as (what I will call) ‘other orientation’ becomes central to being human.

For Linell phonology builds on what we can agree that we hear and is thus, compatible with deriving *what we grasp* of languages. In reviewing Itkonen, Linell (1976) finds much that is compelling. While granting psychological validity to forms and audible features, Linell is willing to follow him in allowing for a social ontology. For Itkonen, understanding uses grammar to set off normative intuitions. Yet, Linell rejects a hermeneutic approach for the *desideratum* of deriving intuition from evidence and, in phonology, hearing. He rejects naïve inductionism to seek out what can be made explicit, intuitive and testable. As in Derwing (1973), the psychological demands a descriptively adequate, “language-specific phonetics” (Linell, 1979: 31). The heard draws on rules that are “phonologically and grammatically acceptable and correct” (Linell, 1979:31). While his phonology “can be regarded as rather traditional” (Linell, 1979: 268), Linell brings motivated abstractions to his concern for what is heard. The move has at least two major implications. First, psychologically valid observations may use isomorphisms (samenesses) and not rules.<sup>8</sup> Second, even before completing his PhD, his *lagom* solutions offer a multi-layer model of verbalizing:

- They reject the abstraction of generativist models for a psychologically valid approach where hearing verbalization uses practical knowhow.
- They reject a nomothetic-deductive approach while using generative systematicity to base falsifiable principles on observation, analysis and induction.

The principles do not allow linguistic performance to reduce to rules–isomorphisms can unite samenesses with meaning. Indeed, I will suggest that intuitive ways with wordings bring just such regularities to how people hear and speak.

<sup>6</sup> Chomsky followed the received view in American tradition (see, Moore and Carling, 1982; Matthews, 1993).

<sup>7</sup> As pointed out by a referee, on some definitions, phonology relies on ‘universal constraints.’ However, even in 1971, Linell and Anward (1971) show that prosodic phonology is language specific, perceptual and motoric. Linell later focuses on perceptual and other-oriented aspects to find a way to dialogism (which needs no phonology). Today, Bondi et al. (2023) offer a view where ‘semantic forms’ enable semiotic perception based on what, after Merleau-Ponty, they call semiogenesis. Although making no reference to Linell, like him, they begin with *what can be heard*; in this work, what he treats as ‘phonological’ becomes richly meaningful linguistic ‘form.’

<sup>8</sup> A referee asks how, for Linell, phonology relates to phonetics. Linell’s ‘rather traditional’ view uses a structuralist ‘levels’ metaphor and a concept of *hearing* that presupposes, in an undefined sense, the existence of *languages*. It contrasts with forms of phonetics that use scientific instruments and modes of description to reach below a threshold of consciousness. While there are parallels with, say, the work of Robert Port (e.g., 2010), writing in the 1970s, Linell focuses on shared judgements about what is heard. In pursuing the interindividual, I rejected ontological individualism to used acoustic analysis in what, perhaps, misleadingly is called sociophonetics (Cowley, 1994a).

## 2.1. Generativism's aftermath

In 1974, Linell completed, "Problems of psychological reality in generative phonology: a critical assessment (Linell, 1974). In reworking his PhD's negative argument, it was later published as *Psychological reality in phonology: a theoretical study* (Linell, 1979). In denying the putative reality of phonology, he presents the subtle view that linguistic form is *in* phonology (i.e. normative and psycho-social). Languages (or varieties of languages) bring an experiential role to public meaning. The move parallels how, in *Understanding Language* Moore and Carling (1982) emphasise that a person's world (knowledge, beliefs and bias) informs understanding. Rejecting a bucket views of meaning, or Reddy (1979) "conduit metaphor," they bring emplaced experience to active understanding. Later not only did Harris (1981) challenge transmission models, but he also denied reality to linguistic units (or rules). For Linell, by contrast, while against generativism, languages are not wholly mythical. Experience—and hearing—show that some reality inheres to forms that phonological rules describe while, at once, allowing for regular use of leeway.

As a novice, I read *Psychological Reality* as a challenge to mentalism. If phonology was not in the mind, I reasoned, nor is language. Using ethology, I tracked audible prosodic flow that, often inadvertently, set off mimicry. My intuition was, and is, that, in utterance-activity (or languaging), voices sustain interdependencies (Cowley, 1994a) that, later, Chemero (2016) was to identify with sensorimotor empathy. I appreciated, not Linell's (1979) model, but how the heard brings the interindividual to prosody (giving 'roots' to other orientation). Yet, Linell's goal was simply to "try to develop parts of a model of phonology" (Linell, 1979: 30). To this end, he allows that hearing can pick up (or blur) the social, psychological, experiential and interactional. With hindsight, given that he presupposes rules, isomorphisms must occur *in* reality (for hearers). As non-prosodic speech (i.e. articulatory gesture) uses timed movement, hearing and the vicarious co-function in the execution of phonological form. An act of saying echoes beyond a performance as Linell illustrates with the case of *winter*:

/w/ pronunciations may vary in consonantal friction and rounding, the /i/ pronunciations in tongue height and nasalization, the /n/ may be clearly segmentalized or more of less merged with the syllabic peak (/i/), the /t/ may be tense, even aspirated [t<sup>h</sup>], or it may be realized as a glottal stop or a flap, the [ər] may be segmentalized into a perhaps [r] coloured [ə] plus a more or less clear [r]-sound, or there may be just one syllabic segment with both vocalic and retroflex features, etc. In reality many more minute variations are possible (Linell, 1979:47).

The description shows why any model of how a wording is spoken eludes reduction to rules. A 'morphological operation' combines a phonetic plan<sup>9</sup> with articulatory unfolding. In saying *winter*, articulation sets off variable execution. On each given occasion, an act of utterance brings leeway to the plans (Linell, 1979: 49). Such acts are multiactional, multi-level and, thus, exhibit multi-scalar flexibility. As movements (for Linell), the sensory and the motor enact linguistic dispositions (or, in other terms, the tonic and the phasal). Intuitively, one can know "what to say" and, as it unfolds, find a way of saying it. We reach out for isomorphisms (e.g. ways of talking) whose normative status, without intent, chimes with meaning. Given a concern for refutation, a modest realism brings dispositions (Linell's 'representations') to phonology. All acts of utterance combine execution with regularities that pertain to a language (or variety). Hence, multi-actional events invite phenomenological explication. As knowhow, actual competence can be sensitive to social contexts and, thus, how others influence speaking. In this way, phonology links languages, mind and world. The study of languages assumes a "complex interaction of ability, habituality and normativity" (Linell, 1979: 19). As a result, Linell grants dual control to verbalizing (and, by extension, prosody) such that one can *know* what one is saying and, yet, find oneself saying (unexpected) things. Phonological knowhow shapes sound that is "subsidiary in function" and, often, arises "without knowing how" one acts (Linell, 1979: 19). As for Itkonen, public events use intuitive understanding and thus appear without thinking.<sup>10</sup>

Later, Linell abandoned appeal to psychological reality and, indeed, phonology. Nonetheless his lagom perspective allows positive restatement of the points above:

- He retains the goal of specifying a psychologically valid dimension for *form* in dialogical modes of performance.
- He retains a commitment to explicitness, and, at once, aims to avoid over-abstraction.

Linell shows how, *within* utterances, languages set off creative and communicative effects. Although speech performance is vicariant, schema or plans shape a morphological operations such as any act of uttering *winter*. In cognitive terms, verbalization uses, not impulses, but rules: phonological form embodies phenomenal experience such that, with training, one can hear details in acts of articulation. Far from reducing to habits, as for Chomsky, utterance acts are planned *and* creative. Below, I use the observations as the basis for tracing the roots of praxis to other orientation.

<sup>9</sup> Rightly, a referee notes that the term typical of the psycholinguistics of the time. Not only does it assume ontological individualism but, in so doing, acts as a black box that cuts off whatever-it-is that is NOT part of execution.

<sup>10</sup> It is important that Linell focuses on spontaneity. In the 1970s, since many viewed conscious experience as an index of the mental, most psycholinguistics was experimental (and often based in reading aloud –as with 'saying winter'). Today, many recognise while language can be spontaneous, we also use skilled linguistic action or, in folk term, 'knowing' what one is hearing/writing or saying/seeing (before or as one says it) or, indeed, what one *wants* to say or what something *must* mean. In linguistics, these ways of languaging are lost when one appeals to 'utterance' or 'linguistic forms.'



### 3. From phonology to initiative and response

Much of meaning is “the result of verbalization and some interpretations are discovered only after the verbalization” (Linell, 1982b: 149). In talk, we hear things in what is *being* said and, for that matter, as speech resonates. In slower scales, writing, or the course of reading, set off multi-scalar effects. Yet, no-one imagined that studying what he called in speech performance (Linell, 1982a) would show the importance of the other’s responsiveness. In fact, even saying *winter*, brings vicariance (i.e. de facto choice between modes) to articulation. As one talks, responsiveness can engender modulation, communication and creativity. In emplaced settings, a person’s worlds (Moore and Carling, 1982) arise in co-orienting to both samenesses and differences. Judgments occur before, after and as we hear and interpret sayings (or morphological operations). Events are multiply embedded and, thus, multi-actional. As Linell saw, This multi-actional complexity reappears in initiative-response analysis (Löfström and Norén, 1977). Strikingly, this predates his turn to ‘interactional’ views of language or the theorization of dialogue. In a PhD supervised by Linell, Gustavsson (1988) brought I–R analysis to the classroom. In his introduction, the work’s importance is seen as showing “the way in which linguistic meaning is the product of utterances being embedded in activities” (Gustavsson, 1988: 1). Psychological validity is *in* the vicariant flow that enables utterances to actualise activity systems. Yet to open up distributed agency (and look beyond interaction), these views demand considerable development.

Linell (1982b) places a startling innovation against earlier work on phonology. With the hallmark of being original while saying little that is new, *Written language bias* is another lagom move. Just as speech uses phonology, print too binds experience with the conventional and normative. Linell therefore concludes that the linguist’s fixation on words (and rules) is misguided and due to bias induced by writing. As isomorphisms draw on *ways* of speaking, the phenomenological reduces to neither “object-like permanent structures” (Linell, 1982b: 1) nor a psychologist’s picture-like entities. To think otherwise is to mistakenly think that alphanumeric patterns “expose” structure. Although Linell’s concern is no longer with articulatory events, the logic is compelling. Indeed, even in phonology, it is only thanks to notation that most can (or could) specify the variability audible in *winter*. Without writing, it would be hard even to imagine, say, the variability in rounding and consonantal friction of a/w/as part of saying *winter*. For Linell, writing discloses “transient dynamic behaviour distributed in time” (Linell, 1982b: 45). Experience or, in 1970s terms, psychological reality binds writing to “abstract linguistic structures” (Linell, 1982b: 55). For Linell, “samenesses” condition linguistic behaviour, neural process, and, in time, individual sensibility. Since people also orient to isomorphisms in a stream of vicariant prompts (e.g. “how *winter* is spoken”), writing too can cue the referential and conventional alongside the evocative, expressive and social experience. In escaping written language bias, one rejects monologism or, more precisely, the view that the *origo* of speech performance lies within a speaker (as opposed to an activity system with human parts). As we *hear* utterances as repetitive, acts of speaking can unite what is public, flexible, planned, and indeterminate. *Contra* the computationalist, they do not reduce to intentional objects with mental content.

Linell (1982a) brought a principle based theory to models of speech performance. While using phonological form, performance includes audible aspects of form. Hence, phonology points to how the normative and socially shared can sustain praxis. As Derwing (1973) suggests, its forms (“representations”) can *derive* from phonetic behaviour. Rather than ask *how* questions, Linell theorises sayings as morphological operations whose schema or plans allow vicariance to be “interpreted into” the said (Linell, 1973: 3). In performance, people use isomorphisms, or, for Linell, execution uses structured acts (so-called ‘plans’) that allow variable sub-acts. As one says, *winter*, one can vary the rounding of the speech gestures indicated by a [w]. The claim is lagom in that, far from being social or neural, isomorphisms are part of performance. Parties anticipate, pick up on listener activity and, in time, perform construction *cum* execution. As in §3.3 below, modulation arises in: (1) altering schemas and anticipating; (2) performance and, above all, responding; while (3) using what are later called interacts (Linell, 2009). Thus, without criticizing cognitivism, Linell leaves behind rule-based models by touching lightly on the ecological.<sup>11</sup> Subsequently, Linell turns to hearing speech performance against normative isomorphisms.

In starting from the heard, he finds that isomorphisms or, generally, ways of doing things channel human behaviour. On other terms, common sensibility, or social habits (see, Dreon, 2022) move how people perceive and act. One needs, it seems, neither symbol grounding nor organism-centred sense making. Rather, praxis can alter human cognition. While this may seem obvious today, thirty years ago, it was unclear that praxis or practices could self-sustain if not through propositional knowledge. There was little sense of how, in a world of many tongues, practices could bundle action together with linguistic isomorphisms and experience. Putting data first (i.e. prioritising the ‘heard’) Linell traces performance in various activity types to particular kinds of samenesses (i.e. reliably identified patterns). In an important paper, Linell et al. (1988) use coding to capture varying degrees of responding and initiative. In I–R analysis, interactional dominance is shown to be ubiquitous. Just as phonology links plans with execution through isomorphisms, dialogue uses the push and pull of performance. In that the vicariance reappears in interactional asymmetries of interactions and, indeed, even blogs (Torre, 2014), the model is fractal (i.e. recur in many scales).<sup>12</sup> Further, given how social life uses hierarchy and control, initiatives and responding or isomorphisms may lie behind all asymmetries. In Linell’s work, these findings emerge after he had left monologism behind; at this point, he showed that, at times, isomorphisms

<sup>11</sup> He approvingly cites Fowler et al. (1980) and uses Neisser’s (1986) cognitive-ecological middle way. However, his more action oriented view plays up expert experience as opposed to affordance-based skill acquisition.

<sup>12</sup> Although a referee asks how this can be, Linell leaves such questions aside and, given ontological individualism, cannot approach the fractal. However, if one allows for distributed agency, cross-party influence can be tracked within utterance.acts, interindividually (over time) and within groupings (as general). Given other orientation, it need not bear on variables like class, gender, ethnicity, age etc.

point in one direction and, at others, others. Initiatives bring flow to how sayings induce responsiveness. At this time, Linell had no dialogical *theory* but, rather, suggests that push and pull can clarify equilibria or of be used to quantify distinctions between individuals or activity types. Further, I–R analysis applies to questioning by police (Linell et al., 1988) and, thus, institutional settings as well as the family and classroom setting where the method was developed.

Like phonological form and its incidental variants (e.g. rounding a [w] in ‘winter’), push and pull bear on experience (or ‘psychological reality’). Like phonology, dialogical isomorphisms stabilize aspects of social order. Communication is collectively managed in that, “utterances are individual products only in the trivial sense that words are said by one or the other interlocutor” (Linell et al., 1988: 438). Before returning to why this is ‘trivial’,<sup>13</sup> I stress that the normative is *not* identical to the meaningful. Yet, in Conversation Analysis (CA), this distinction is lost when ‘turns’ become context renewing and context-making. In appeal to talk in interaction, Linell treats isomorphisms as contextual by separating what people say (‘text’) from the play of push and pull. As for Sacks et al. (1974), this aspect of dialogue becomes quasi-mechanistic; Linell leaves aside how isomorphisms enact social meaning. In criticizing how CA fetishizes speaker exchange, Cowley (1998) argues that a fixation with turn-taking blocked progress in the field: specifically, it masks language specific ways of using, say, pausing or the interplay of voices (not to mention gestures, gaze or ways of using vocalizations to display and perform). In Sellars’s terms, it hides how the semantic aspect of language draws on tension with the local (Seiberth, 2021). It masks a transcendental, Janus faced nature: for Sellars, judging the colour of what we see as, for example, *red* reduces to neither sense impressions nor a fixed meaning. One can see something as *red* as one looks at (or imagines) experiences as diverse as seeing hair, squirrels, flags etc. Just as a rounded [w] cues vicariance, even when printed, *red* has isomorphisms that bring aspects to the local. It brings social meaning to both red things and at once, use of *red* as a sign. This parallels how plan/execution models allow, say, *winter* to be permeated by local variation. Like seeing a red squirrel as dark, isomorphisms bring indexical/iconic cues to hearing an utterance act (e.g. *pleasure in winter’s arrival*). Hence, I–R analysis elides two kinds of push and pull: (1) unnoticed normative aspects of dialogue; (2) isomorphisms that use experiential reality. Like saying (or hearing) *red*, both kinds of move can motivate speaking (and acting).<sup>8</sup> Within an interaction order, parties are conditioned by activity settings, felt differences, and past experiences. In the flow, people move each other to ‘express’ more than they could intend –they bring the local into play as one transcends its own particulars. Given a part in praxis, push and pull can bind referential talk into actions and verbalizing/vocalizing that is affective, evocative, expressive, ludic, poetic and so on.

The semantic-transcendental aspect of phonology uses isomorphisms. This view appeared long before Linell’s turn to interaction and then returned with interactional asymmetry. In contemporary terms, I–R analysis points to how humans contribute to a system’s distributed agency. Specifically, they use multi-actional control as isomorphisms push and pull. As a result, prosody, gaze and rhythmic phenomena contribute to multi-scalar performing. We actualize practices as ‘plans’ set off multi-scalar performing triggers heard dissonances and uncertainties and, at once, parties accede, react, or cope with the contingent. Both the felt and the conventional bring a sense of the other and their powers (in what Linell calls a situation). Remarkably, I–R analysis allows one to quantify asymmetries that shape pre-reflective activity. Hitherto, the nearest attempt to link this to linguistic embodiment is Rommetveit’s (1991) application of I–R analysis to the text of Ibsen’s *Doll’s House*. Of course, overlapping phenomena appear in many literatures. This applies, for example, to work on social meaning and, even more strikingly, to how mother–infant interactions take on a trajectory over the first months of life (e.g. Trevarthen, 1979).<sup>14</sup> Yet, even today, few linguists have considered how the isomorphisms of speech performance, talk and even reading depend on how we *move* and, at once, find ourselves moved by the non-local.

### 3.1. Sociodialogical consciousness and the concept of other orientation

For Bakhtin (1986), consciousness is sociodialogical.<sup>15</sup> While this view is common to Hegel, Marx and Vygotsky, as Michael Holquist (1990) notes, for Bakhtin, the “conceptual rock” of dialogism is the “non-identity of mind and world” (Holquist, 1990: 18). Drawing on Kant, he treats reason as dialogical such that, at a moment, understanding reunites mind and world. On this view, dialogical simultaneity permits, above all, polyphony and social participation of absent parties. Of course, one’s own voice also permeates sociodialogical communication. As applied to the social sciences and phenomenology, such a view offers an abstract *concept* of other orientation. While Linell draws more on social psychology than Bakhtin, he too separates mind and world in work that came to highlight how people manage communicative projects (Linell, 2009). Thus, leaving behind isomorphisms in speech performance, Linell focuses on how doings, voices and sayings use *shared* knowledge. The findings of

<sup>13</sup> Linell treats it as ‘trivial’ because of his ontological individualism. He cannot connect it with, above all, Maturana’s (1970) view of languaging as orienting to the other’s orientations within a consensual domain or, indeed, the 16th century view that languaging renders understanding (see, Cowley, 2019). In failing to see how agency is distributed, like Rommetveit (1991) he ascribes dynamics to semantics and wordings (in a text). Given distributed agency, they are taken to co-constitute experience as (‘planned’) utterance acts shape bodily activity and physical wordings (whose sources are multiscaled).

<sup>14</sup> This appears in accommodation and temporal aspects of speech; however, acoustic analysis can be used to track interindividual behaviour across all prosodic features—and there are parallels with many species (Cowley, 1994b). In classic terms, ‘direct relations’ can be *indices* (and part of flow) and/or *markers/stereotypes* that either call forth interpretation and/or indicate expected ways of responding (such that interpretation need not occur). These transcendental dynamics enact ‘forms of behaviour’ that the folk describe by, not I–R dynamics, but sub-personal qualities, character, relationships, group/community identity etc.

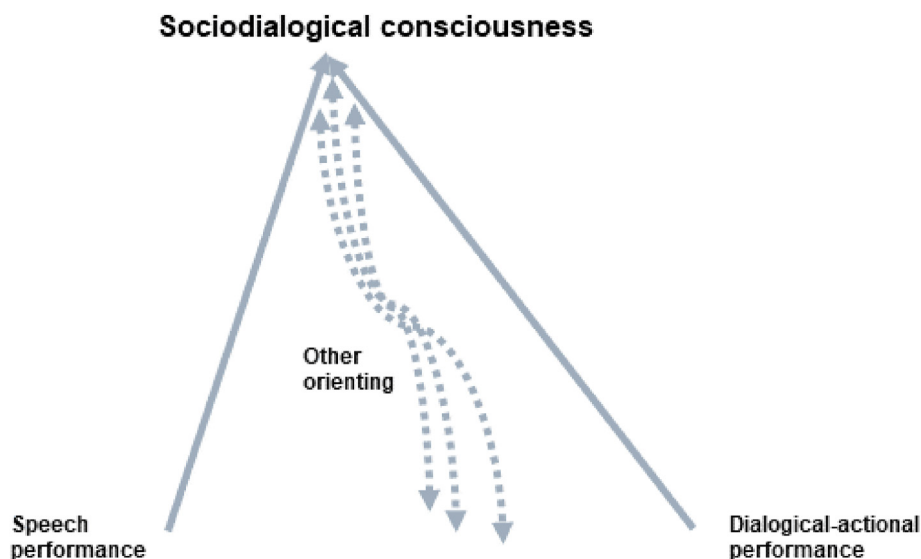
<sup>15</sup> Although the choice of ‘sociodialogical’ is Linell’s (2007), it is not contentious. In this paper, Linell explicitly endorses ontological individualism by ascribing dialogism to a person and not a ‘brain.’ Countering, my case is that, as shown in Linell’s own work from the 1970s and 1980s, praxis roots itself in bodily other orientation (which is, partly, embraced).

I–R analysis are taken to confirm an abstract concept of *dialogue* which leaves aside how the local permeates speaking as one moving person is moved by another. Disappointingly, he takes a text/context view to pursue what, following Sacks et al. (1974), can be theorised as social action, conversation or, most usually, interaction.

Since psychological reality is *in* phonology, one might expect a dialogical counterpart feature *in* push and pull. Initiative and response would arise in coping with uncertainties or asymmetries by binding the linguistic with attitudes, affect, social meaning and so on. Yet, while informed by prosody, Linell's later work largely omits performing, vocalization and how people move. Instead, Linell highlights “turns” (or interacts) and thus leaves aside both the interindividual and how rhythmicality binds the perceived, monitoring, responsiveness and contingencies. Indeed, I–R analysis cannot distinguish sociodialogical consciousness, coordinative activity, and embodiment. The use of initiatives and responding is seen as normative and, perhaps, ‘intersubjective’. By assuming recurrent regularities shared forms of knowledge appear rule-like. Under this idealization, he overlooks how isomorphisms enact human engagement (and bodily responsiveness) by taking a Kantian view. In turning to minds and brains, Linell (2007) ascribes individual roots to dialogue:

“Other-orientation is a key concept, perhaps *the* key notion, in dialogism. In talk-in-interaction, the individual responds to an other and his or her prior actions and utterances, addresses the other and anticipates possible next actions from him or her ...Even in solitary thinking, there seems to be some kind of other-orientation” (Linell, 2007: 609).[

Far from being united in push and pull, the abstract concept of ‘other orientation’ is used to clarify how autonomous people engage. Indeed, the same person-centred view is central to his monumental discussion of mind, language and world (Linell, 2009). Where does this ontological individualism come from? While other orientation is absent in Marková and Foppa (1990, 1991), it is prominent in *Mutualities of Dialogue* (Marková et al., 1995). In introducing the volume, mutuality is traced to Wundt's *die Wechselwirkung der Individien* (Graumann, 1995); specifically, the agent uses the normative in “active mutual other orienting” (Graumann, 1995:3). In Linell's (1995) contribution, he too leaves no space for local events or interindividual responding. Like Graumann, he plays down experience and traces situated interaction to what he calls design. On this model, mutuality arises as parties (A and B) treat “understanding” as a goal. Invoking Psychology, he posits that agent A makes “assumptions about his/her social relation to B and about B's cognitive, emotive and conative state (Linell, 1995: 180).” In linking this explicitly to Sacks et al., 1974, *recipient design*, this is identified with normative structure. Accordingly, he eliminates factors that, in early work, were seen as indicating psychological reality – perceiving, feeling and bodily isomorphisms. From this perspective, words are ‘trivially’ individual because the putative intersubjectivity of push and pull overrides the bodily; agents use an “internal relationship of ‘rules’ and ‘praxis’” (Linell, 2010: 50). Hence mutuality is *wholly* sociodialogical and consciousness is separated from voices, saying, situated events, people and local sense. Ironically, as in generative phonology, it leaves out the multi-layer and multi-actional. In taking this view, Linell commits to the “non-identity” of mind and world. Speech performance, polyphony, and other orientation enact social construction that uses a cycle of interaction, understanding and, situation transcending moves. As in the epigraph, Linell aspires to make linguistic theory into a theory of praxis. In illustration, Fig. 1 shows how sociodialogical consciousness might use other-orientating as situated interaction unites normative aspects of speech performance with their dialogical counterpart.



**Fig. 1. Sociodialogical consciousness.** Situation transcending moments enter sociodialogical consciousness as situated interaction draws on other orienting as speech performance (including phonology) arises with the dialogical-actional (using push–pull isomorphisms). The model omits how other orienting is achieved.

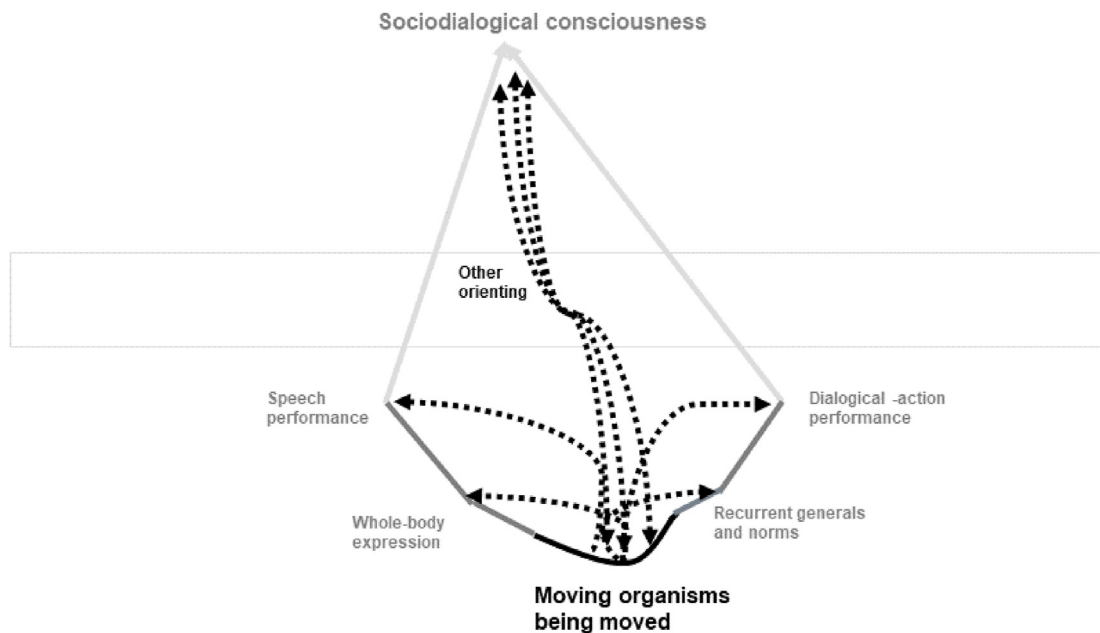
Having abandoned generativism, the design based view comes close to eliminating Linell's realism. He allows the normative to replace experience, bodies and the particular. An abstract view of dialogue allows sociodialogical consciousness to overrides



social meaning and the whole organic being's response to isomorphisms. By appealing to turns (or interacts) by A and B structure is separated from agency. The view of other orientation (or recipient design) masks how experience is influenced by the pre-reflective. As noted above, this is purely theoretical. One can interpret the findings of I–R analysis against Linell's early work. On this view, one resists ontological individualism by placing the push and pull of talk *in* dialogue. Rather than treat the sociodialogical as paramount, it can set off responsiveness and the isomorphisms of coordinative activity (including the plan/execute of speech). Inspired by Linell's early model, I will turn back to how, as we move others, we move ourselves. These movements, I suggest, render possible sensorimotor empathy (Chemero, 2016). Indeed, I suggest that they enable praxis to shape dialogical beings who self-construct as they actualize practices that enmesh a range of human interdependencies.

### 3.2. An elephant?

Under the influence of Bakhtin, Varela and social psychology, agents are often seen as the *origo* of speech and thought. In appeal to autonomy, many trace dialogue to 'utterances' or ways of acting that can be construed in the terms of a concept of mind.<sup>16</sup> While some ascribe mental reality to a first person (and intersubjectivity), others posit a functional architecture or model how design can use system dynamics.<sup>17</sup> Simply, appeal to an *origo* places an elephant in the room. Whether fictional or factual, one can only 'scale up' with the help of concepts like learning, language, computation, sensemaking, experience, affordances etc. Indeed, given ontological individualism, some such set of constructs are the only possible basis for gaining habits and skills and/or the parameter setting of competence. However, if one starts with how we are moved by others as we move, one can reject Kantian individualism. Instead, turning from appeal to autonomy (and mind), one can adopt something like the Nguni concept of *ubuntu*. On this view, as in many traditional African settings, humanity derives from the humanity of others. In an enlanguaged world, emplaced experience ensures that, as a result of doing things together (what, in isiZulu, is called *imbumba*), agency comes to be distributed. Isomorphisms enable living bodies to link action, languaging and sensibility. Since praxis and the sociodialogical are collective, responsiveness shapes interindividual activity such that, in time, ways of acting *scale down*. With subsequent entrenchment, one learns to participate in practices. Thus, just as we learn to hear *winter* and, with training, identify a rounded [w], dialogical push and pull brings isomorphisms to moving and being moved. Other orienting is activity based on the responsiveness of whole organic beings. Far from being a consequence of design, such features can be rooted in (or by) human responsiveness. As in animals, bodily expression uses isomorphisms. Hence, as shown in Fig. 2, languagings bring a semantic-transcendental aspect to human life. In an enlanguaged world, we learn about particulars and, at once, come to connect whole body expression with recurrent generals and norms (e.g. use of a rounded ]w/or of red):



**Fig. 2. The roots of sociodialogical consciousness.** Building on the above (Fig. 1), arrows suggest how other orienting is achieved. Just as speech performance uses whole bodies, the dialogical and actional get things done by using wordings (generals and norms). In an emplaced setting, moving and being moved draw on these to unite current and past engagements with others.

<sup>16</sup> This includes Hegel (2018), Ryle (2009) and Sellars (1979).

<sup>17</sup> These include phenomenologically inclined enactivists (e.g. Gallagher, 2017), functionalists (e.g. Barsalou, 2008; Clark, 2013) and those who use radical embodied cognition to replace what representations describe with models based in system dynamics (e.g. Chemero, 2011).

Agency is distributed by *how* we do things as we use isomorphisms. We orient to others, use objects, anticipate, and get things done. Famously, in landing a plane, a pilot moves and is moved as a cockpit manages its speed (Hutchins, 1995). Responsiveness, and initiatory acts, operate in domains of experience that James (1991) calls 'little worlds.' Once familiar, these invite expectations, set off ways of acting and, with variable response, enhance performance. As domains become common, culture accumulates through a history of response in thought and feeling. In landing a plane a pilot relies on a familiar little world, a cockpit, while also using what Fester-Seeger (in press) calls a system-in-the-person. In parallel, the rounding of a [w] can trigger effects in a linguist's little world.<sup>18</sup> As sensibility uses the familiar, forms and isomorphisms set off dispositions that nudge intuitions (Itkonen, 1978). On hearing a rounded [w] in *winter* (as part of a larger Gestalt), one may be moved to ask, "Are you from Sweden?" Such responsiveness is triggered by phonetic details.<sup>19</sup> A push and pull of particulars prompt generals to set off and/or resolve uncertainties. Without any intent, we reduce entropy and, thus, what can be perceived as signs. In an astronomer's little world, an emerging blob on a computer screen can be seen as *red shift* (Cowley and Gahrn-Andersen, 2022). In an enchronic scale, one simplexifies as dispositions (and isomorphisms) prompt one to think or say *red shift*. In this scale of talk and action, experience (viz. hearing *winter* or seeing red shift) both draws on and motivates push and pull. As we act, we move and are moved by responsiveness (or lack of responsiveness) based in rapid micro/pico dynamics. We accommodate and draw or social meaning as we modulate how we engage. We link assumptions, biases, beliefs, what we know, and what words (are taken to) mean. Events in the enchronic scale beget micro/pico isomorphisms as rhythm modulates doings and sayings (see Cowley and Fester-Seeger, 2023). Each variety of languaging, including use of inscriptions and silent thinking, brings musicality as the tonic and phasal engender unfolding action.

Hearing *winter* may evoke memories and attitudes. Given past experiences, we feel and judge the present against what is recurrent. In an image due to James (2013), experience is a saddle on which we perch (as we use isomorphisms). As we move, we may bring experience and sense to, for example, how a sound (or movement) appears. This even applies to infants. As shown by Trevarthen (1979), Bråten (2007) and others, human infants continuously feel and judge other peoples' responsiveness. While many focus on accord and communication, dynamics, details of form, undergird all relationships, social organization and languaging. We gain situation-sensitive powers (Vukov and Lassiter, 2020) as we become familiar with how settings change. Fester-Seeger's (in press) systems-in-the-person prompt one to cope with contingencies in ways that may be interindividual. In enlanguaged worlds, ways-of-acting are planned *and* phasal. Micro/pico dynamics set off noticings, novelties and ways of acting. One traces creativity to, not mind or grammar, but how praxis informs both experience and responsiveness. Given a duality of plan/execution, the sociodialogical nudges people to orient to each other in talking and acting. Humans continuously rescale how they perceive, and thus, how they engage with each other. As they actualize practices, they perform in ways that are unique, idiosyncratic and, thus, of considerable interest.

### 3.3. How people actualize practices

Having recognised that agency is distributed, dialogue can bind generals and norms into linguistic embodiment (Cowley, 2014). In Nigel Love's terms, first-order (coordinative) activity features what we hear as second order constructs (Love, 2017). This happens as isomorphisms instantiate phonological (and, thus, verbal) aspects of distributed phenomena that may include dialogical push and pull. Since these events can be multi-actional and multi-scalar, only analysis divides the formal from the perceived. Flow is nudged as systems-in-people prompt parties to actualize practices and, at times, perform as agents. In so doing, they can set goals and, indeed, act or speak in line with (so-called) plans. Unfortunately, Linell's ontological individualism oversimplifies by stressing utterances or turns. If these have an inner origo, one must focus on: (a) response to an other and his/her prior actions or utterances; (b) addressing an other; and (c) anticipating possible next actions from the same other. By contrast a turn to distributed agency allows for scaling down by placing the multi-actional *within* utterance acts (which, as public, have interindividual aspects). Sociodialogical consciousness permeates practices as they are actualized or, as Anward and Linell (1971) saw, draw on acts that are prosodic, sensory and motoric. As these derive from praxis, ways of acting come to be entrenched as one learns to participate in distributed cognitive systems. As parties speak and act, they orient to actualised responsiveness. Experiential (psychologically valid) description will aspire to capture both linguistic and nonlinguistic flow. With respect to vocal, one can ask how wordings used in particular vernaculars (morphological operations), draw on leeway that appears as the modulation of pause, loudness, pace, tempo, intonation and voice quality etc. Taken together, this can bind the said into experience in ways that have a degree of (normative) appropriacy.<sup>20</sup>

A key insight of Linell's early work lies in highlighting audible particulars that elude both nomothetic-deductive and pure induction. In overlooking what can be heard, such methods become abstract and unfalsifiable. Accordingly, he sought a model based on what people could (agree that they could) hear. The lagom approach allowed morphological operations to bring

<sup>18</sup> Here and subsequently I use the case of the rounded [w] emblematically; my claim is, of course, that this is heard, if at all, as part of a wider gestalt; it is just one isomorphic detail that a phonetician can learn to identify.

<sup>19</sup> A referee links this with Bakhtin's work. However, what Linell shows is how bodily agency (not a 'speaker') co-functions both between parties (using responsiveness and 'plans') and in enacting the agency of larger systems (including 'speakers' who use what I-R coding described). Hence, one moves the other while being moved in ways that evoke, but do not explain, how an utterance, syllable, or burst of utterances can have the 'quality of being directed to someone' (Bakhtin, 1986:95).

<sup>20</sup> A referee asks if this is phonological and/or phonetic. While it can be described both ways, the labels assume structured linguistic entities and not the events of languaging (and Linell's 'psychological reality').

rhythmicality (pico-dynamics) to how syllables are uttered (micro-dynamics). Hence, prosodic and utterance-based regularities could exhibit isomorphisms (e.g. kinds of rhythmicality) that spread between people and across communities. These contribute to accommodation, social meaning or, generally, normative variations and intuitive understanding. Far from scaling up to sociodialogical consciousness, push and pull ‘scales down’ to a person’s enlanguaged world. On such a view, I–R analysis shows how, in actualizing practices, we mesh speaking, vocalizing and other doings. By scaling down, we trace how, as we perform, we exhibit affect, attitudes, beliefs and, above all, knowledge. Experience uses the music of dialogue, and the dance-like embodiment, in ways that appear semiotic. Far from relying wholly on ‘intersubjectivity’, a system-in-the-person can also use:

- Activity by another that sets off other orientation (as part of praxis)
- As *part* of a larger system, responsiveness unites pulling (i.e. responding or initiating to responsiveness) with pushing (e.g. initiating responsively or responding with initiative)
- Just as anticipative moves affect the other, selving can arise for/by the anticipator
- Anticipative and responsive moves by parts of a system (self and/or other) can call forth absent parties with whom one can engage in many ways

Leaving aside empirical evidence,<sup>21</sup> I now contrast Linell’s work on phonology with his entry into dialogism. In his focus on morphological operations (saying things) ‘plans’ set off phasal expression (and micro/pico dynamics) that do not reduce to design. Rather, responsiveness moves a system-in-the-person to making and inhibiting judgments. Culture, Williams’s (1989) ordinary, brings forth gesturing and shifts in gaze and prosody as social meaning arises in the course of how parties attune, accommodate and co-regulate. Within an interaction order, norms accrue to the phasal and use linguistic expertise. Rhythmical flow is actualised as plans, experience and felt particulars set off and use operant isomorphisms. Having intended to say X, I may say x (or, perhaps, not Y). In a distributed system, I can be moved to anticipate actions and re-call experiences that, often, involve absent others (known to those present). We use multi-actional timing as wordings enact affect, attitudes and implications. In saying, *winter*, even a rounded [w] can inform experience and attitudes. Pre-reflective experience is like a kaleidoscope that engenders plans as isomorphisms set off responsiveness (or nonresponse). Embodiment links Love’s (2017) two orders: moving sets off cultural norms as wordings evoke semiotic moves. The multi-actional nature of events is such that, for the rider on the saddle, goings on enter into experience. Having scaled down, signs are traced to natural responsiveness or Yu’s (2023) innate capacity for culture. In enlanguaged worlds, dialogical activity enables humans to coordinate by pooling experience and making use of wordings as they actualize practices.

#### 4. Knowledge added

Chomsky recognised that purely inductive models cannot clarify linguistic knowledge and, I add, is equally limited in clarifying how we actualize practices. In phonology, form conditions action and, as Linell shows, brings psychological ‘reality’ to what we have *learned* to hear. His speech performance model rightly places ‘plans’ against linguistic isomorphisms (and forms). However, I claim that these serve, not autonomous agents, but how parties use distributed agency to draw on languages, particulars and, thus, knowledge. *Sprachphilosophie* mistakenly attributes an origo to utterances –an imagined elephant distracts us from events and experience. It blinds us to how isomorphisms make a flag appear *red* or a rounded [w] to have an intuitive sense. For Linell, to “understand the other’s utterance in real time, we must, to some extent at least, be able to predict the continuation of the other’s utterance and also to project one’s own (or others’) possible next actions” (Linell, 1979: 610). As whole organic beings, we mesh practices, dialogue, and musicality by drawing on brains that *enable* behaviour. We use distributed agency to simplify, coax with selves, influence others and gain knowledge. Within an enlanguaged world, we can bring facts together with other orientation in ways that are evocative, expressive and social or, indeed, ludic attitudinal and affective. As dialogical beings, we orient to others: ubuntu makes us who we become as we draw on experience with the humanity of others.

Those we admire enter our little worlds (or systems-in-the person). Hence in my re-reading of Linell, I was moved to re-echo my teachers, especially, Bill O’Donnell and Peter Matthews. In scaling down from praxis, humanity derives from the humanity through push and pull (initiative and response) and psychological judging. In opposing written language bias *and* ontological individualism, one traces morphological operations, sayings, to fusions that use aesthetic aspects of prosody, the evocative, expressive, social etc. Multi-actional experience informs what we do, feel and know. As we communicate, as Chomsky (almost) saw, our cultural resources are primarily epistemic. Practices bring embodiment to how dialogical beings refine their ways of life. If we start from praxis, with Li (2018), we can develop practical theories and, by aspiration, theories of practice. This leads to an ecolinguistic view where signs derive from the workings of human responsiveness. Recognition of how we use these interdependencies points to practical theories as exemplified by translanguaging (Li, 2018), bringing ecolinguistics to education (Cowley, 2024) and striving to better life-sustaining relationships between humans and

<sup>21</sup> Interindividual prosody may be mark of human responsiveness (Cowley, 1994b) that can be directed (Cowley, 2014); similar phenomena arise with social meaning, phonetic empathy, accommodation, intersubjectivity and appear in multimodal analysis. Thibault (2019) identifies *selving* and Fester-Seeger (in press) evoking the “presence” of absent parties or, more generally “othering” (Cowley and Fester-Seeger, 2023).

nonhumans (Alexander and Stibbe, 2014). One is bound to oppose paper's epigraph: there can be *no linguistic theory of praxis*. Rather, in scaling down from praxis, we reject structuralist models (including phonology) and ancient (Western) fixations with 'language.' Instead, we turn to how languaging serves to actualise practices within enlanguaged worlds. Human powers, we suggest, are rooted in the local, other orienting, distributed agency and the responsiveness of dialogical beings. On such view, the future prospects of Linell's work reach far beyond the language sciences.

### CRedit authorship contribution statement

**Stephen J. Cowley:** Conceptualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review and editing.

### Data availability

No data was used for the research described in the article.

### References

- Alexander, R., Stibbe, A., 2014. From the analysis of ecological discourse to the ecological analysis of discourse. *Lang. Sci.* 41, 104–110.
- Anward, J., Linell, P., 1971. Synpunkter På Betoningens Roll I Svenskans Prosodi. Department of Linguistics, Uppsala University. Working paper.
- Barsalou, L., 2008. Grounded cognition. *Annu. Rev. Psychol.* 59, 617–645.
- Bakhtin, M., 1986. In: McGee, V.W., Emerson, C., Holquist, M. (Eds.), *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. University of Texas Press, Austin, TX.
- Bråten, S., 2007. *On Being Moved: From Mirror Neurons to Empathy*. Benjamins, Amsterdam.
- Botha, R., 1971. *Methodological Aspects of Transformational Generative Phonology*. Mouton, The Hague.
- Bondi, A., Piotrowski, D., Visetti, Y.M., 2023. *Semiotic Perception and Dynamic Forms of Meaning*. Springer, London.
- Chemero, A., 2011. *Radical Embodied Cognitive Science*. MIT press, Cambridge MA.
- Chemero, A., 2016. Sensorimotor empathy. *J. Conscious. Stud.* 23 (5–6), 138–152.
- Chomsky, N., 1965. *Aspects of a Theory of Syntax*. MIT Press, Cambridge MA.
- Clark, A., 2013. Whatever next? Predictive brains, situated agents, and the future of cognitive science. *Behav. Brain Sci.* 36 (3), 181–204.
- Cowley, S.J., 1994a. The Place of Prosody in Italian Conversations. Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Cambridge.
- Cowley, S.J., 1994b. Conversational functions of rhythmical patterning: a behavioural perspective. *Lang. Commun.* 14 (4), 353–376.
- Cowley, S.J., 1998. Of timing, turn-taking, and conversations. *J. Psycholinguist. Res.* 27, 541–571.
- Cowley, S.J., 2011. *Distributed Language*. In: Cowley, S.J. (Ed.), *Distributed Language*. Benjamins, Amsterdam, pp. 1–23.
- Cowley, S.J., 2014. Linguistic embodiment and verbal constraints: human cognition and the scales of time. *Front. Psychol.* 5, 1085.
- Cowley, S.J., 2019. The return of languaging. *Chinese Semiotic Studies* 15 (4), 483–512.
- Cowley, S.J., 2024. *Ecolinguistics in Practice*. The Routledge Handbook of Applied Linguistics. Routledge, London, pp. 374–385.
- Cowley, S.J., Gahrn-Andersen, R., 2022. Simplexifying: harnessing the power of enlanguaged cognition. *Chinese Semiotic Studies* 18 (1), 97–119.
- Cowley, S.J., Fester-Seeger, M.T., 2023. Re-evoking absent people: what languaging implies for radical embodiment. *Linguistic Frontiers* 6 (2), 64–77.
- Derwing, B.L., 1973. *Transformational Grammar as a Theory of Language Acquisition: A Study in the Empirical Conceptual and Methodological Foundations of Contemporary Linguistics*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Dreon, R., 2022. *Human Landscapes: Contributions to a Philosophical Anthropology*. SUNY University Press, New York.
- Fester-Seeger, M. T. To Appear. *Human Presencing: Why Social Presence Is Not an Illusion, AI & Society*.
- Fowler, C., Rubin, P., Remez, R.E., Turvey, M.T., 1980. Implications for speech production of a general theory of action. In: Butterworth, B. (Ed.), *Language Production. Vol 1: Speech and Talk*. Academic Press, London, pp. 373–420.
- Gallagher, S., 2017. *Enactivist Interventions: Rethinking the Mind*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Graumann, C., 1995. Commonality, mutuality, reciprocity: a conceptual introduction. In: Marková, I., Graumann, C., Foppa, K. (Eds.), *Mutualities in Dialogue*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 1–26.
- Gustavsson, L., 1988. *Language Taught and Language Used: Dialogue Processes in Dyadic Lessons of Swedish as a Second Language Compared with Non-didactic Conversations*. Unpublished PhD dissertation. Linköpings Universitet.
- Harris, R., 1981. *The Language Myth*. Duckworth, London.
- Hegel, G.W.F., 2018. *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Holquist, M., 1990. *Dialogism*. Routledge, London.
- Hutchins, E., 1995. How a cockpit remembers its speeds. *Cognit. Sci.* 19 (3), 265–288.
- Ingold, T., 2000. *The Perception of the Environment*. Routledge, London.
- Itkonen, E., 1978. *Grammatical Theory and Metascience*. John Benjamins, Amsterdam.
- James, W., 1991. *Pragmatism*. Prometheus Books, New York.
- James, W., 2013, 1890. In: James, W. (Ed.), *The Principles of Psychology*. Dover Publications, New York.
- Kuhn, T.S., 1962. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Li, Wei, 2018. Translanguaging as a practical theory of language. *Appl. Ling.* 39 (1), 9–30.
- Linell, P., 1973. *w/on the Phonology of the Swedish Vowel System*. *Studia Linguistica* 27.
- Linell, P., 1974. *Problems of Psychological Reality in Generative Phonology: A Critical Assessment*. Unpublished PhD Dissertation. Institutionen för lingvistik, Uppsala.
- Linell, P., 1976. Is linguistics an empirical science? Some notes on esa itkonen's linguistics and metascience. *Stud. Ling.* 30.
- Linell, P., 1979. *Psychological Reality in Phonology*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Linell, P., 1982a. The concept of phonological form and the activities of speech production and speech perception. *J. Phonetics* 10, 37–72.
- Linell, P., 1982b. *The Written Language Bias in Linguistics*. Tema Kommunikation, Linköping.
- Linell, P., 1995. 1995 Trouble with mutualities: towards a dialogical theory of misunderstanding and miscommunication. In: Marková, I., Graumann, C., Foppa, K. (Eds.), *Mutualities in Dialogue*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 176–213.
- Linell, P., 2007. Dialogicality in languages, minds and brains: is there a convergence between dialogism and neuro-biology? *Lang. Sci.* 29 (5), 605–620.
- Linell, P., 2009. *Rethinking Language, Mind, and World Dialogically: Interactional and Contextual Theories of Human Sense-Making*. Information Age Publishing, Inc, Charlotte, NC.
- Linell, P., 2010. *Essentials of Dialogism: Aspects and Elements of a Dialogical Approach to Language, Communication and Cognition*. Department of Communication Studies, Linköping University.
- Linell, P., Gustavsson, L., Juvonen, P., 1988. Interactional dominance in dyadic communication: a presentation of initiative-response analysis. *Linguistics* 26, 415–442.
- Love, N., 2017. On languaging and languages. *Lang. Sci.* 61, 113–147.
- Löfström, J., Norén, K., 1977. *Teori-och Metoddiskussion Kring Projektet Språksociala Studier i en Talspråklig Databas*. Report fra Språkdata, 5 Göteborg.

- Margolis, J., 2016. *Toward a Metaphysics of Culture*. Routledge, London and New York.
- Marková, I., Foppa, K. (Eds.), 1990. *The Dynamics of Dialogue*. Harvester Wheatsheaf, Savage MD.
- Marková, I., Foppa, K. (Eds.), 1991. *Asymmetries of Dialogue*. Harvester Wheatsheaf, Savage MD.
- Marková, I., Graumann, C.F., Foppa, K. (Eds.), 1995. *Mutualities in Dialogue*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Marr, D., 1982. *Vision*. Freeman, San Francisco.
- Matthews, P.H., 1967. Review of aspects of a theory of syntax. *Linguistics* 3/1, 119–152.
- Matthews, P.H., 1979. *Generative Grammar and Linguistic Competence*. George Allen and Unwin, London.
- Matthews, P.H., 1993. *Grammatical Theory in the United States: From Bloomfield to Chomsky*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Maturana, H.R., 1970. *Biology of Cognition*. Biological Computer Laboratory, Department of Electrical Engineering, University of Illinois, Urbana (In *Autopoiesis and Cognition: The Realization of the Living*, Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Co., 1980, 5–58).
- Moore, T., Carling, C., 1982. *Understanding Language: Towards a Post-Chomskyan Linguistics*. Springer, London.
- Neisser, U., 1986. *Cognition and Reality*. W. H. Freeman, San Francisco.
- O'Donnell, W.R., 1974. On generative gymnastics. *Archivum Linguisticum* 5, 53–81.
- Reddy, M., 1979. The Conduit Metaphor: a Case of Frame Conflict in our Language about Language. In: Ortony, A. (Ed.), *Metaphor and Thought*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 284–324.
- Rommetveit, R., 1991. Dominance and asymmetries in *A Doll's house*. In: I Marková, I., K. Foppa, K. (Eds.), *Asymmetries of Dialogue*. Harvester Wheatsheaf, Savage MD, pp. 195–220.
- Ryle, G., 2009. *The Concept of Mind*. Routledge, London.
- Sacks, H., Schegloff, E.A., Jefferson, G., 1974. A simplest systematics for the organization of turn taking for conversation. *Language* 50, 696–735.
- Seiberth, L.C., 2021. The role of languagings in Sellars' theory of experience. *Rivista Italiana di Filosofia del Linguaggio* 15 (2).
- Sellars, W., 1979. *Naturalism and Ontology*. Ridgeview, Atascadero (CA).
- Steinberg, D., 1975. Chomsky: from formalism to mentalism and psychological invalidity. *Glossa* 9, 218–252.
- Thibault, P.J., 2019. Simplex selves, functional synergies, and selving: languaging in a complex world. *Lang. Sci.* 71, 49–67.
- Torre, E., 2014. Digital inscriptions as material anchors for future action: multi-scalar integration and dynamic systems. *Cybern. Hum. Knowing* 21 (1–2), 128–142.
- Trevarthen, C., 1979. Communication and cooperation in early infancy. In: Bullowa, M. (Ed.), *Before Speech*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 321–347.
- Vukov, J., Lassiter, C., 2020. How to power encultured minds. *Synthese* 197 (8), 3507–3534.
- Williams, R., 1989/1958. Culture is ordinary. In: Williams, R. (Ed.), *Resources of Hope: Culture, Democracy, Socialism*. Verso, London, pp. 91–100.
- Yu, H., 2023. A skeptic's guide to “intercultural communication”—debunking the “intercultural” and rethinking “culture.”. *Language and Semiotic Studies* <https://doi.org/10.1515/lass2023>.