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Languaging and Practices: Intimations of a Singular Ontology

Original Study

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Abstract: The paper rejects both mentalism and reduction of the trait of Language (capital L) to linguistic *phenomena*. What is termed *lingualism* is replaced by tracing wordings to practices that unite metabolism, coordinative activity and linguistic history. Like other partly cultural, partly natural traits (e.g. grazing), languaging enacts *modelling* (Sebeok 1988). In Yu's (2021) terms, it extends how *supersession* informs morphogenesis, agency, sensing and acting. Having challenged lingualism, one deflates reports of experience. Appeal to practices and *ontologies* (not *ontology*) posit linguistic 'objects' or, in Sellars's terms, versions of the Myth of the Given. With Sellars, therefore, I rethink the analytic/synthetic divide around the normative power of languaging. On such a view, practices, nonhumans and humans co-evolve with manifest and scientific modes of acting that are constituted by unknowable singular ontology. Knowing is inextricable from languaging and how the resources of cultural modelling are rendered and grasped by using the (simplexifying) powers of living human beings.

Keywords: ontology, ecolinguistics, languaging, distributed language, practice theory

> Ontology is the theory of what there is. To understand what ontology is, therefore, one must understand the phrase "what there is", which points to the question "What is there?" (Sellars 1979, 11)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Why ask, "What is there?" In times of accelerating ecosocial breakdown, many prefer to address social issues or, inseparably, how to mitigate the climate emergency. In the social sciences, fundamentals are out of fashion. One major focus is how scientific and other practices arise as humans engage with nonhumans in flat ontologies (e.g. Schatzki 2016). However, by stressing the observable, one is bound to leave aside the obscure, unknown, or unknowable. While some trace social and political ontologies to various ideational commitments, others bind the personal, the global and the local within computational ontologies such as that of Amazon's platform. In such cases, worldviews, theories, discourses and perspectives are traced to commitments arising in what is appositely called an enlanguaged world (Margolis 2016; Cowley, Fester-Seeger 2023). Yet, even if its origins are inorganic, evolution recharged ontological world-making. Accordingly, one can turn to how, in a world of practices, ontology applies to the ecosphere's being and becoming. My motivation is ecolinguistic: since practices transform *what there is*, humans bear responsibility for what happens. From such a perspective, our collective duty is to respond knowingly (Cobley 2016; Cowley 2021) in order to enhance life sustaining relations.

The relations that sustain life arise as happenings, appearances and living are affected by human practices in enlanguaged worlds. Life cycles use coordinative activity as, in animals with brains (or, a CNS), bodily functions attune to an Umwelt (Von Uexküll 1992[1934]). While humans use languaging and sensibility, many living systems act in ways that are disanalogous with human perceiving. In Von Uexküll's classic case, a tick waits in a tree until it detects a body with a temperature of around 37C and, when this happens, it falls on its prey;

its performance uses measurable traits that are highly variable. As Sebeok (1988) would say, it 'models' a world that, for the tick, is supersensible. Expanding this, Yu (2021) shows that, in all lineages, modelling carries the hallmark of enabling what he calls *supersession*.[1] The results allow a circular engaging with the world, changes of varying salience, and, often, non-random movement. In embrained species, primitive direct relations enable sense organs to influence a CNS and bring off *perception* and *experience*. In humans, modelling prompts orienting that unites sensibility, the sociocultural and the enlanguaged. We picture the world by many means (e.g. formalisms) and thus simplexify its nature (Cowley, Gahrn-Andersen, 2023). In this paper, I use Yu's argument to envisage this capacity as part of an evolutionary heritage. Thus, whereas coordinative activity suffices to feed a tick, humans add experience, wordings, sensibility and pre-reflective feels. In hominins, modes of performance brought phenology and development to a partly cultural, partly natural evolving Language trait. In spite of astounding variability, in its effects, human languaging can be traced to how over time, wordings have insinuated themselves into coordinative activity.[2] Today, we make inferences, perform utterings, think and act with practical understanding while also playing what, after Wittgenstein (1957), are called language games. Like the tick, we connect modelling with a first ontology (answering to what there is) and, as tensions arise, endeavour to fit what appears to knowing and doing. In such a context, Sellars asks, "what is there?"[3]

1.1 OUTLINE

Just as modelling directs a tick to its prey, similar relations prompt humans to perceive, attend, act and talk. In 2.0, I suggest that a tendency to overplay phenomena led tradition to underplay direct relations and, thus, supersession. As applied to a human trait of Language (capital L), this deflates linguistic phenomena. Appearances offer no answer to, "what is there?" In languaging, we link emplacement, wordings and coordinative activity. Thus, in 3.0, using Sellars's question, I contrast what he evokes with applications of *ontology/ontologies*. Hence, in 3.1, I track the history of what happens as their contrasting senses collide. Specifically, I trace how correspondence views of 'language' use foundationalist versions of lingualism. For Quine, informed subjective judgements replace 'language' and a (post-Kantian) analytic-synthetic divide. In a diluted lingualism, he posits that the tribunal of experience allows warranted assertions. In 3.2, I suggest, that, as the role of 'language' diminishes, scientific world-modelling gets merged with practical world making. As is clear today, *all* practices rely on distributed agency that can be presupposed by flat ontologies. Although the approach brings gains, it demands reports of sayings and doings. These show a residual lingualism that masks modelling and the unknown. Countering, I revoice *what is there*? Echoing Sellars, in 3.3, I show how he steps back after taking two steps forwards. In making a radical challenge to foundationalism, he contrasts meanings with facts by bringing the normative to the analytic/synthetic divide. Reaching beyond Quine, he rejects the Myth of the Given by tracing languagings to continuous judging. Empirical forms prompt us, at times, to get things right as we tie languagings to appearances. Whereas Sellars places weight on science, in 4.0, I turn to how modelling contributes to how people actualize practices. I suggest that we use supersession and languaging to unite the known with what appears as purport. We draw on extant practices that, in the context of the ecosphere, impact on humans and nonhumans alike. In 4.1, I claim that in life much is irreducible to appearances and, thus, scientific models. By making this move, I allow another collision between ontology and ontologies. Once resolved, one gains a clearer view of the analytic/synthetic divide can be used to demand responsible action that changes us and induces attempts to stop toxic human practices.

2.0 THE FAILINGS OF 'LANGUAGE'

Unlike birds, ticks or bonobos, humans make use of Language (capital L). As a highly variable *trait*[4], Language unites coordinative activity with overt and covert languagings. These have a verbal aspect that prompts us to conceive of things, events, situations, people etc. As a result, we both encounter what is familiar (to communities) and draw on observations to participate in language games. The results enable the social use of tools, texts, practices, knowledge frameworks and the like. Far from reducing to phenomena, Language includes activity, its products, its enablers and, thus, material and immaterial products (e.g. alphabets, laws, machines). It alters evolution, epigenesis and what humans perceive, do and

1 Yu (2021) critically extends Sebeok's (1988) modelling theory to highlight supersession as brought to the front "for salience, accessibility, and operability." At once, the modeled "inaccessible and inoperable" (2021, 639). Given unending circularity, modelling sustains epigenesis; coordinative activity and control of vicariance or what can be described as choice-making.

2 A referee asks if wordings are a 'product' of coordinative activity. Rather, they are integral to the activity – nonce events that are embedded in whole-body action (and can be identified in an actional or enchronic scale of activity). While nonce events, they permit description as types and as culturally derived aspects of how organic agency contributes to the Language trait.

3 Whilst Deely's 'signs' (2015) pervenate from the suprasubjective (see, Cowley 2023), for Sellars science discloses aspects of the supersensible.

4 As a trait, Language can be variously measured in individuals and as it varies across in many dimensions. It enables what Violle et al. (2007) call "ecological performance" with heritable components. Language is neither a distinguishing quality or an inherited characteristic; as with grazing in donkeys, say, the trait links physiological/morphological features with performing that is behavioural and, notably, phenological (see, Dawson et al. 2021). The trait of Language is also cultural and thus socioculturally conditioned.

become. Its descriptions inform coordinative activity, tools, texts and knowledge. Hence, the Language trait binds human life-cycles into evolution, development and history. One can compare it with, for example, grazing in antelopes. Construed as a trait, like Language, Graze lacks causal powers. While neurophysiological, it gives rise to phenomena as bodies draw on circumstances: like all traits, it depends, in part, on evolution and, in part, on ascriptions. In parallel, Language neither triggers 'speech' nor embodies a language faculty. Although necessary to speaking, signing, attending, inscribing and use of computer input/output, it is no source of agency. Rather, agency unites circumstances and social factors with the coordinative, feeling, orienting and pasts (idem listening, reading, thinking, singing etc.). Following English usage, the folk mistakenly separate linguistic phenomena ('language') from the nonverbal (and material). They adopt the indefensible view that 'language' refers to linguistic phenomena. Echoing critique of mind (i.e. mentalism), I call this error *lingualism*. In practice, emplacement, activity, experience and persons enact languaging. Hence, lingualism, suppresses coordinative activity, things, events and how history shapes practices (see, Gahrn-Andersen 2023). Oddly, it encourages the error of thinking that 'language' aka linguistic phenomena can *cause* a person to be seen as Johnny, a rabbit as an animal, or even, in certain cases, to grant a ship a name. Since this is indefensible, all technical uses of 'language' (c.f. Gahrn-Andersen 2023) tend to favour lingualism. Instead one can ask how, in hominins, *languaging* evolved. While relatively new to the academy, the term arises in folk tradition (Cowley 2019a). For Mulcaster (1582), languaging arises as the vernacular informs how one attends, speaks, hears, thinks and understands or, in contemporary terms, brings wordings to coordinative activity.

Having started with "What is there?", Wilfred Sellars allows languagings (plural) to be overt, covert, and hidden (for discussion, see, Seiberth 2021). We reach beyond appearances to agree that a person *is* Johnny, we do *not* serve worms at lunch and take for granted that, for English speakers, *green* is unlike *blue*. In an enlanguaged world, social practices enable us to simplexify: for example, we name ships while using champagne bottles, wordings, bodies and reason. Rather than inflate linguistic phenomena as scientific 'objects,' wordings inform coordinative activity. For this reason, it is mistaken to explain a folk construct ('language') by a language system. The move overlooks living, modelling (how, in the circumstances, we draw on multiple pasts), how we concert and how, in the instant, purport arises. As for Wittgenstein (1957) and Becker (1988), what is said/read has a particular sense. Many deny 'language' the status of a scientific object. In the first place, the move subordinates the indexical, the iconic and the multi-modal to code-like signs and/or symbols. Second, it neglects both context and how sensibility informs acting, thinking, understanding and attending. In hypostatizing *form* (or *words*), types gain unwarranted priority over how languaging co-evolves with the rhythmical, the recursive and, above all, emplaced experience. Third, it struggles to explain how narratives change, how people adopt and vary themes and use bodies in taking stances to quasi-mechanistic or statistically informed posits ('meanings').[5] It is all too easily forgotten that, as phenomena appear – say, re-evoking your mother – unrepresented pasts shape what is present in the present (for you).

Like Vološinov (1973), many reject hypostatization and the 'Language Myth' (Harris 1981). Whilst Harris rejects fixed codes and the appeal to telementation, my objection is more basic. I object to how lingualism seeks to rescue naïve realism. Like astrological signs, God, and law, linguistic phenomena are to be viewed as appearances which, once described, covary with language. Although, these descriptions have immense power, they are not scientific objects. Linguistic phenomena (and signs) allow for repetition and recursive language games where people frame expertise, spread valid and/or misleading beliefs and construct knowledge. The importance of such activities is, emphatically, not at issue. Rather, the error of lingualism lies in treating the phenomena (and/or their *designata*) as 'given.' A turn to languaging is a turn away from a focus on linguistic phenomena that denies privilege to propositions, grammar, philology or linguistic form. Rather, in rejecting lingualism these are traced to a special stance. Hence, languaging excludes 'linguistic objects' (Cowley, Fester-Seeger 2023). Yet this is rarely acknowledged: many glibly evoke the 'English speaking peoples,' apply a generation metaphor to a mental organ or, alternatively, statistical text processing. Yet material symbols are machine compatible: input/output functions assume human coordinative activity. As above, therefore, only modelling in an enlanguaged world allows any *construal*. Humans, and only humans, treat nonce events as wordings that, at times, draw on the normative functions of verbal types. Hence, to overplay the phenomenal is to suppress synthesis, embodiment and understanding. Further, such 'modern' use arose in what Deely (2015) sees as a poorly motivated rejection of scholastic tradition.

For English speakers, things could have been different, Rendering the vernacular aloud sets off understanding-based judging or what Mulcaster (1582) calls *languaging*. In the terms used above, this incarnates Yu's (2021) modelling. When extended by languaging, coordinative activity uses tension between what can be meant and, at an instant, what supersedes. The friction that drives languaging appears in the citations listed in the Oxford English Dictionary: these apply to, for example, bad poetry, the trumpetings of false prophets, childrens' talk, and how, early in a writing process, texts are chiselled (see, Cowley 2019a). Remarkably, tensional dynamics, or incompatibilities also shape academic

5 While a focus on purport uses Ilyin's (2023) rereading of Hjelmslev, the case is usually made with reference to Harris (1981), Linell, (2005), Love, (2004).

views of languaging.[6] This applies even if the term is not limited to either a given scale ('speech') or, indeed, a class of phenomena ('wordings.') Thus, for Maturana, an observer's languaging brings consensual domains (roughly, idealized languages) to how, as living systems, humans use structural coupling. As in most work on languaging, Maturana emphasizes its constructive nature. In parallel, Swain (2009) treats languaging as production that stirs utterly novel meaning making. Love (2004, 2017) hints at a reason by positing two interdependent but separate linguistic orders. Stressing the creative, function of disparate systems, Cowley (2017a, 2019a) defines languaging as *coordinative activity in which wordings play a part*. Similar frictions appear in the scales of macrosocial life. Thus, Pennycook (2018) shows how semiotic assemblages sustain ideologically oppressive languaging practices. By contrast, Li (2017) emphasises how translanguaging can exert self-realizing power. Finally, for Sellars, this is because languagings are Janus faced or connect the semantic and the transcendental (see Seiberth 2021. Since languagings embed the coordinative within domains of wordings, they can connect where/when to what is supersensible (for a person in a set of circumstances). In terms of modelling, things supersede –and supersession is unending. As we understand in a 'particular sense,' we are moved to go on in Wittgenstein's (1957) non-mechanistic sense. Further, as we attend to, not events, but what we can achieve (by languaging), we perform quite differently. We play language games, manage experience, and appropriate peoples' ways with wordings. Yet, given a historical focus on linguistic phenomena, philosophy, grammar, logic, philology and linguistics all tend to scrutinise form, words propositions, discourse etc. As with folk views, they underplay experience and tensional dynamics (assigning them to pragmatics, rhetoric or poetry). They miss the plasticity of a Language trait that derives from, and enables, coordinative activity to cofunction with wordings. By hypostatizing the phenomenal, lingualism masks how living channels supersession. It misses how languaging can be overt, covert and hidden because talking, attending, thinking and acting all draw on bodies, brains and appearances. Yet, as a fiction, 'language' lays a golden egg; like nature, law or God it can be treated as an inviable given. In Cowley's (2011) terms, one can take a language stance to utterances (or sentences) by treating them as saying something. This contrasts with spontaneous acting/perceiving. Indeed, it is because many miss the distinction (and the issue of scale) that many seek to explain linguistic phenomena in themselves. While some try to naturalise 'language' by reducing it to an autonomous system (or to affordances), others use reportings to trace practices based on sayings and doings. To start with langaugings is to change footing. Turning from what language is or what it concerns, one begins with "what is there?" and the opaque sense of 'what', 'is' and 'there'.

3.0 ONTOLOGY/ONTOLOGIES: TERMINOLOGY

On one view, *ontology* unites an older 'intransitive' or philosophical use with a 'transitive' counterpart (Bhaskar 1975). Highlighting the latter, Latsis et al. (2007) focus on how in social sciences, *ontologies* can be a buzzword or signal a paradigm shift (e.g. Winter 2001). At best, as a 'philosophical term of art,' it opens up ideational issues in, say, political ecology, linguistics or computer science. As Lastis et al. (2007) show, *ontology* took off when, inspired by Leibniz and Descartes, Wolff used *a priori* arguments to theorize being/becoming (cited Latsis 2007, 136). In asking, 'What is there?" Wolff orients to an older, unnamed *ontology* that is uncountable, singular and intransitive. Yet, the very move makes *a priori* assumptions that blur (later) senses. Accordingly, I do not oppose transitive to intransitive. Rather, I call the older philosophical sense a *first* ontology which, as for Wolff, aspires to escape the ideational. Conversely, in addressing epistemic commitments, I turn to 'world-making' and, thus, second ontologies. Often, the approaches start with one or other of these questions:

- What is there (and how, if at all, can it be known)?
- How do we know what there is?

Without belief in a Cogito, metaphysics unites what exists with what is known ('ontology'). Yet, if one adopts a concept of 'mind', one pictures an entity that (somehow) separates what there is from what is, or can be, known. After Descartes, explicit work on ontology showed that, as ideational commitments change, so do beliefs, worldviews and framings of the known. Hence, second ontologies contradict an immutable nature or, informally, is-ness. Further, in allowing that 'reality' adjusts to the known (as appearances change), one finds constructive power in second ontologies. While endorsing this claim, like Sellars, I too reach for a first ontology where, at least, physics is predictable. Since such an ontology is theoretical or supersensible, it treats what lies beyond appearances as answering, in part, to "what is there?" Hence, the reader should ponder what is being asked. Sellars (1979) offers a phrase, not a proposition or a 'meaning' –and follows up by striving to address 'what', 'there' and 'is.' In so doing, he needs neither an unknowable 'Ding an sich' nor a domain that can be 'found.' For a naturalist, of course, much may be, or currently be, supersensible.[7] In science, at best, part of *what there is* comes within our ken. We reach beyond appearances with a Scientific Image of the world (Sellars 1962) that differs from folk

6 Echoing Darwin, Lorimer (2013[1929]) traces tensional dynamics to how the fine and minute (i.e. the coordinative of microcognitive) co-emerges with the gross and the explicit (i.e. wordings).The d

7 Simonelli (in press) calls this transcendental idealism; yet, unlike Kant's, Sellars's originary world, if unthinkable, is modelled by science. As with Nigel Love's (2017) perspective (Cowley 2017a), one can posit two 'orders' that are each irreducible to the other.

descriptions that sustain a Manifest Image.[8] Thus, while many perspectives invoke a first ontology (e.g. that the world was created in seven days), Sellars starts with the Scientific Image and how the natural sciences address "what is there?".

Informally, Sellars focuses on 'whatness.' In this respect, he challenges both ancient views of is-ness and contemporary views of what is *there* for someone. The latter approach began with Heidegger's (2010) Dasein and its perceived unity of knowing and being. In this sense, Dasein has there-ness or, alternatively, there-ness participates in Dasein. Such views become possible, as Heidegger shows, when a philosophically informed methodology engenders what he deems a fundamental ontology. In showing how physics is enabled, one discovers 'there-ness.' In recent decades, many have used descriptions to engender second ontologies as, in given settings, practices are traced to networks of humans and nonhumans. Having rejected a rigid first ontology (e.g. one that is intransitive), theoretical gains collide with what second ontologies tend to obscure. The case can be illustrated when, for example, a naturalist posits human/nonhuman discontinuities as based in, say, gene-centred neo-Darwinism or, indeed, an I-language (see, Chomsky 2000). Whereas a naïve naturalism celebrates these as 'discoveries,' others treat them as methodological products ('formalism'). Warranted or not, as second ontologies, they enact world-making. Indeed, anything *said* about what there is –especially if 'reputable' –can have knock-on effects. Given the tool-like role of ontology/ontologies, much rests on the confidence that is, and should be, granted to assumptions/ implications. The reason is simply that no ontology could be made explicit or, indeed, possible, without the trait of Language.

On such a view, asking what there is cannot escape modelling and what comes to supersede. In juggling the is-ness of the ancients, the there-ness of second ontologies (however construed), and the naturalist's whatness, one can start with languaging.[9] As no ontology is 'reflected' in coordinative activity, it unites a history of practices that include language games. This is possible because, over time, semantic distinctions take on, sustain, and are divested of transcendental power. Before addressing the limits of second ontologies, I therefore sketch changing views of 'whatness.' I begin with how, after the 1950s, the fading of lingualism co-occurred with attacks on objectivity and foundationalism. Like Quine, many came to view scientific assertions as warranted by experience.[10] The move separates scientific world-modelling from appearance-based world making. Later, in order to heal the breach, I will reject the Quinean view.

3.1 FOUNDATIONS AND THE WAY TO ONTOLOGIES

Perception, experience and knowledge all change over evolving life cycles. Hence, there is no need to follow Descartes, Hume and others in tracing knowing to perception. Historically, Peirce turned to signs, James to lived experience, Dewey emphasized social habit, and Heidegger developed Dasein. Yet, foundationalism, and 'is-ness,' dominated into the twentieth century. In tracking the rise of second ontologies, therefore, I begin with a no longer tenable lingualism. In foundationalism, 'language' is identified with the designata of words (that can be written.) It is assumed that these either frame knowledge objectivity or, perhaps, around actual, possible worlds. For example, a proposition may include a *triangle* and *red:* these pick out *designata*. The lingualist view posits foundations that involve: (a) a model of perception as; (b) framed by verbal types that (c) correspond to real generalities; and hence (d) feature in propositions about objective reality or possible worlds. To this, positivists add: (e) a logical distinction between analytic and synthetic descriptions. While such assumptions can be challenged as based in correspondence theories, my concern is with how, as lingualism faded, it came to obviate a first ontology. I start with how Sosa (2020[1980]) traces 'language' to the tradition of the ancients.

Sosa presents knowledge as a pyramid of propositions (see, Figure 1 below). The apex represents a proposition (P) that, at time t, a subject s judges, correctly, to be true. In such a case, seeing a red triangle as a *triangle* that is *red* licenses saying "the triangle is red." The *designata* are categories (i.e. the foundations are red and triangular). At once, lower levels in the pyramid (P1, P2, P1.1, P1.2, P2.1, P2.2 etc.) indicate other true propositions. For Sosa, since these are both true and implicit, the designata of *red and triangle* are 'cognitively disclosed' (i.e. in a red triangle). Hence, the pyramid's foot is drawn with nodes whose openness shows the foundational status of triangles and redness. While a proposition p, "The triangle is red" can be correctly judged as true (e.g. in seeing a red triangle) the point is that the triangle *is* red just as, of course, the shape *is* a triangle. The pyramid's symmetries thus systematically show lower, equally propositional, nodes (e.g. "The shape is a triangle"; "the triangle's colour is red"). Overall, the pyramid's layers all correspond to possible true assertions (e.g. "there are

8 For Sellars, a philosopher uses both the everyday and science to grasp how things hang together; in O'Shea's terms (2015), he seeks a synoptic, fusion that links "two global or all-comprehensive 'images' of the nature of the human-being-in-the-world" (12).

9 A referee objects that this is unwarranted because Heidegger's ontology is fundamental in that,"there-ness is primary". The view taken here is that this stance can be used to argue *against* foundationalism or, in Sellars's terms, the Myth of the Given (see below). However, as here, one can argue that Heidegger's ontology is secondary and derived: it draws on, not what-ness' but modelling, languagings and a singular first ontology.

10 Putnam (1990) uses a consensus about 'warranted assertion' to oppose Rorty's 'relativist' conclusions (see, Rorty 1998). The debate shows that the fall of foundationalism led some to identify 'whatness' with how the world is described in 'language' or, later, by description of practices (such views imply that 'what there is' reduces to sayings and what thick descriptions evoke).

shapes; there are colours"); for Sosa, the terminals display the obvious (e.g. there *are* triangles and these can be *red*). Thus, while *red* and *triangle* can be used analytically ("a red triangle has three sides"), they can also be used in synthetic propositions (e.g. "the triangle's sides are 2 cm long").

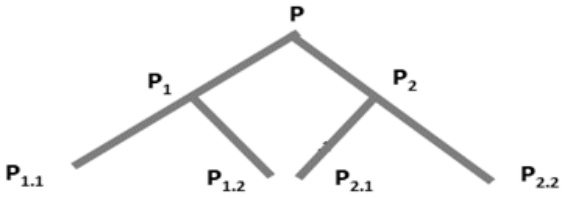

Figure 1: The propositional pyramid

As noted, my concern is with how 'language' is assumed by designata. In Sosa's case, as with mentalism, a hypostatized entity ('language') is taken to identify foundational generalities. For Sosa *red* (i.e. patterned marks) can trigger 'cognitive disclosure'. Yet, this is false: printed items *do* nothing (often, they rely on bundles of pixels). A foundationalist must therefore hypostatize 'language' such that, somehow, a form (or 'word') can pick out a static 'meaning'. While linguists have hankered after such simplicity, it is untenable. Seeing this, Chomsky (1959) rejected mechanistic views and, in their place, offered a mental grammar (1965). Later, lingualism was traced to written language bias (Linell 2005), belief in what was derided as 'telementation' (Harris 1981), and a view of 'literal reading that ignores what is present (e.g. visible triangles). In parallel, for Sosa, 'language' (viz. printed marks) discloses designata *qua* generalities of what there is. Ontology fits neatly with *red* and *triangle*. On this view, linguistic phenomena and, above all, 'words' are independent of places, observers, events, culture, and life-history.[11] In what he terms a 'moderate' view, Sosa's lingualism counters the 'radical foundationalism' that is assumed in the epistemology of Hume and Descartes. Turning from a mental theatre or ideas in the mind, ontology appears in and through 'language.' Since my case is that, although the view has faded, it never disappeared, I will move slowly. I show, first, how lingualism was diluted, and, today, sustains the reportings that constitute second ontologies. Since these omit languagings, they are limited or, as I suggest, suppress, 'what is there?'

Willard Quine has the reputation of being, "arguably the most influential analytical philosopher of the twentieth century," (Goldberg 2005, 66). His renown draws, in part, on tracing scientific knowledge to neither propositions nor correspondence relations. In a famous case, he invites the reader to imagine a linguist who visits a distant tribe and, as a rabbit crosses his path, hears 'gavagai.' Writing in 'the spirit of positivism', Quine spells out why this does not disclose the meaning of the uttering; technically, he calls this the 'indeterminacy of translation' (Quine 1960). Without knowledge of the vernacular, he argues, one cannot know what is meant. In Quine's diluted lingualism one must know how a community evaluates predicates (In 4.0, I make a comparison around the 'colour of a dog that runs away'). In a "shift towards pragmatism" Quine (1953) advocates a 'tribunal of experience' and meaning holism (Quine 1960). Judgements about sentences lack definite meaning because, for Quine, they presuppose to a speaker in a community. Even hearing 'gavagai' (or reading about the case) reaches beyond immediate appearances into community knowledge. Meaning is inscrutable (see, Davidson 1979) but, of course, not opaque. Subjective judgements arise in using an 'ideal language.' As shown in section 3.3, Sellars rejects both Quine's focus on experience and his ideal language by tracing correct construal to empirical relations that subtend, not perception, but normative judging. Yet Quine's view became, and is, dominant: while evaluations do not rely on propositions, they can be ascribed to meaningful statements. By appeal to 'immediate experience' these show residual lingualism. The case is plain in Quine's (1953) attack on the second dogma of reductionism:

> "the belief that each meaningful statement is equivalent to some logical construct upon terms which refer to immediate experience." (1953, 20)

Rather than treat *red* and *triangle* as corresponding to logical constructs (or foundational designata), for Quine, communities give warrant to assertions. They use, not 'language,' but stimuli that connect the immediately experienced (or given) with an 'ideal language'. The move suffices to challenge a fundamental negative target in that, for Quine, there is no categorial divide between general truths of science and those of everyday experience. Accordingly, he challenges the first dogma of empiricism:

> "a belief in some fundamental cleavage between truths which are analytic, or grounded in meanings independently of matters of fact and truths which are synthetic, or grounded in fact." (1953, 20)

The distinction posits a person who distinguishes statements of 'fact' ("it is a red triangle") from evidential counterparts ("Each side is 2 cm long"). On this view, like taking a measure of two centimeters, observing a triangle presupposes a 'perceiver'. Yet, for Quine, experience cannot grasp 'two centimeters.' It is false both that "synthetic categories correspond to experiences" and also

11 Lingualism enables (Western) common sense that seems to rest on what Cowley (2011) calls a 'language stance.' This is based in how languaging enables people to play language games as projected entities (words, meanings, ubuntu, unicorns) that inform practices, enable actions, shape beliefs and enable expertise. As Wittgenstein suggests a long tradition pursues how words and rules contribute to such games.

that the analytical and empirical are inherently distinct. Rather, truth just is "warranted assertibility." In this weak lingualism, the warranted presupposes experience, an ideal language and community knowledge. Brandt (2017, 111) puts it thusly:

> Quine thinks there is no principled distinction between ontological statements asserting the existence of categories of entities, such as 'There are material objects', 'There are propositions' or 'There are numbers', and more straightforwardly empirical existence statements such as 'There are wolves in Montana'. Both the question of whether there are wolves in Montana and the question of whether there are propositions are decided by what we quantify over in our most advanced scientific theories.

Since, for Quine, we quantify over an ideal language, judging remains linguistic. Thus, for a subject, just as a triangle appears red, a sentence can be meaningful. In Quine's view, judgements unite a community, a context, individual histories and, at times, a scientific framework (through an ideal language). The foundationalist's strong lingualism (and designata) gives way to the linguistic stimuli of 'immediate experience.' A behaviourist move invokes 'immediate experience' that is taken to be independent of history, training and place. With hindsight, the success of weak lingualism owes much to both naïve realism and how 20th century America viewed science. Today, claims of progress sow doubts and, not unreasonably, Demuro and Gurney (2021) regard Quine as having raised barriers that led to (second) ontologies.

3.2 REFOUNDATION AND SECOND ONTOLOGIES

Having rejected foundationalism, ontology can seem redundant. Turning from what is *there*, one can be sorely tempted to reject any analytic/synthetic divide. With Quine, one can ask how, in certain communities, synthetic methods (or discourse) come to warrant assertions. For some, this prefigures postmodernism (see, Patterson 1996) even if, as Leiter (1997) shows, the claim misses both Quine's focus on science and his naturalism. Nonetheless, in starting with communities who warrant claims, one brings lingualism to both world making and also scientific models. Even in the lab, as Latour and Woolgar (1986) show, practices use warranted assertions in knowledge construction. On such a view, while 'language' is thinned to sayings and, above all, reportings, lingualism is not eliminated. Rather, it is presupposed when the tribunal of experience and ideal language are taken to allow redescriptions of practices.

How does lingualism survive? Its robustness depends, in part, on folk beliefs in language, words, commonsense etc. Further, careful use of description from a participant perspective gives it a veneer of respectability. Today, many accept that scientific knowledge construction is captured by ethnographic and other anthropological methods. Reportings thus describe what Bhaskar (2008[1975]) once disparaged as 'flat ontologies.' In order to avoid an 'epistemic fallacy' based on mere description, Bhaskar argued, one needs to bring deeper forms of causality to the social sphere. Accepting residual lingualism, he invoked Humean notions of law that, after, Vico, Kant, and Wittgenstein, he thought, would grant access to a 'generative level.' Such a world was not to be "squashed into a flat surface whose characteristics such as being subject to atomistic facts" are "determined by the needs of a particular concept of knowledge." (Bhaskar 2008[1975], 45). Yet, after Latour and Woolgar (1986), quite the opposite happened. Many outcomes were shown to use, not generative mechanisms, but distributed agency. In a classic case of buying a postage stamp at the post office, Latour (1996) shows the minimal complexity of subjective decision making. Just as in laboratory science, buying a stamp links people, things and relations in a network of practices. In such a theory, ontology is flat or, for Schatzki (2016), "everything there is to a phenomenon of a general sort is laid out at the same level of reality." As Latour (1996) argues for primate societies, the approach clarifies basic issues in sociology. Whereas monkeys use a truly flat ontology to circularly rework situations, humans add what Latour calls 'interobjectivity.' Alongside circular decision making, humans localize and globalize or, at the post office, buy stamps by linking pure relations to practices. Unlike monkeys, humans interlace what I call languaging with the sayings and doings that are, for Schatzki (2016), constitutive of practices.

What are sayings and doings? While practice theory offers no answers, in work that explores practices 'close up', they become aspects of languaging that use coordinative activity. Their agential power enables people and societies to use semiotic assemblages. (Pennycook 2018). Agency unites systems with how other people act (e.g. Enfield, Kockelman 2017) as, at once, they use organic regulatory systems (Steffensen et al. 2024). Thus, far from needing generative mechanisms, subjective judgement, or mental content, cognition is social, uses artifacts and spreads in space/time (Hollan et al. 2000).[12] In a field like political ontology, practices enable plurality that is constitutive of cultural and historical diversity whose novelties drive what Blaser (2009) calls *worlding*. In work that accepts how Latour ascribes ontologies to human-world relations, he cites a Sociological dictionary.

> any way of understanding the world must make assumptions (which may be implicit or explicit) about what kinds of

12 In this work, 'mental representations,' are still assumed. Yet, as Sellars shows, the view can be replaced by empirically grounded history of judgings that prompt organic agency to grant personal experience, perceivings and ways of knowing that can be traced to a history of entrenching (Cowley 2017b). This allows sensibility to inform knowhow, ways of using a language stance and thus personal knowing.

things do or can exist, and what might be their conditions of existence, relations of dependency, and so on. Such an inventory of kinds of being and their relations is an ontology (Scott, Marshall 2005).

If "the world" is an inventory of kinds of being, the known and the knowable presuppose 'language.'[13] For the dictionary writers, this grants a commitment-based ontology and, thus, a pluralist view of knowledge. One needs no languaging because, for Blaser (2009), ontologies *are* what we know/understand as (social) reality. In taking this view, Blaser intends to use worlding to endorse an ontological plurality. Like Latour, he moves to challenge 'modern' views of culture –including those of Sosa, Quine and Sellars. In speaking for political mobilization, Blaser treats transparent sayings as indigenous understanding that brings "recognition of the non-modern on its own terms" (2013, 873). Leaving science aside, he asserts that "different worlds or ontologies strive to sustain their own existence as they interact and mingle with each other" (2013, 877). He justifies a turn to ontologies as progressive world-making. In bringing the work to the language sciences, Demuro and Gurney (2021) generalize to language/ languaging. They treat 'ontologies' as an already-plural form and, thus, override a first ontology. In so doing, they cite Quine's (1953) rejection of 'ontological truths' (i.e. a foundational view) and overlook his naturalism. It appears that, for them, language/languaging offers a sociological and pluralist answer to "what is there?" The answer, then, is "ontologies". While not dead, lingualism hides in how sayings and doings appear as reportings. One suppresses the messiness of how wordings enable people and societies to bring multiscaled judgings to coordinative activity (and vice versa).

Just as a sociological dictionary partitions the world, one can use anthropological methods to focus on appearances and, by so doing to separate a human observer from the environment (or Nature). Appeal to ontologies can, moreover, warrant non-compatible assessments. Ontologically, sayings can be statements and, in ethnography, narratives include reports. As Quine argues for science, they clarify sayings and doings or, in Latour's terms, how humans localize and globalize. Flat ontologies bring gains: the methods of practice theory demonstrably serve to:

- Validate perspectives at odds with the modern or the mainstream
- Legitimate perspectives from non-modern traditions
- Show the power of the non-lawful –of messiness, contingencies and particularities

As for Merton's (1942) ideal scientist who values communalism, disinterestedness and organised scepticism, practices use sayings, doings and reportings. Yet, plural world-making contradicts Merton's universalism. Indeed, for Blaser at least, it builds on a sociological 'world' or 'assumptions' about what exists (as in the dictionary cited above). These allow written accounts of how practices set off networked happenings. Countering this as lingualism, in 3.3, I turn to how languaging, and coordinative activity, connect a first ontology, or what there is, to how things appear (to living beings).

Flatness places actants (including people) in networks by using a methodology that engenders narratives. Accordingly, practices become relations between networked nodes. As Knudsen (2023) reminds us, this makes humans into actants in ways that echo methodological individualism. A focus on tellings omits both bio-functions and also physical and institutional enablers. In ethnography, many ignore particulars, events, history or, simply, how people happen. As Knudsen (2023) argues, for this reason, the approach is blind to power, structure, trends, shifts in expectations and changing patterns. Just as with Quine's (1960) subjective judgements, it overplays individual knowing, doing, and practices. Not only does the ethnographer assume an individualist ontology (of actors/nodes) but any judgements must be framed in terms that earn trust (in the community). In avoiding foundationalism, communities use infrastructure (and sociological assumptions) to suppresses dynamics by using shared assumptions. To ensure that reports generalize, one leaves aside how, for each and every part (or node), pasts serve to actualize the present. Given epistemic commitments, practices serve, to clarify appearances and, thus, what Sellars calls a Manifest Image. Narratives that present flat ontologies use lingualism: they ignore the obscure, the minute, the unknown and the unknowable. They suppress languaging by tracing events to organising, doings and sayings.[14] They leave out epistemic engineering and how languaging can be incarnated by human embodiment. In turning to a systemic ethnography, Cowley & Gahrn-Andersen (2023) offer a counter example. They show how, in an experimental setting, human subjects rely on an EEG device that sends signals to the antennae of a cyborg-cockroach. No lingualism is implied: without knowing how (or saying anything at all), epistemic engineering prompts a degree of mind-control over the animal's movements (Cowley, Gahrn-Andersen 2023). A subject gains new control parameters that are beyond the reach of participant based ethnography. The case is simple. While sayings, doings and knowings inform what happens, reportings cannot address what goes on brain side. They cannot address, "What is there?"

13 In the terms above, they conflate Language/'language' and fail to trace worlding to modelling or how languaging practices prioritise certain appearances (and ways with wordings that, for a community, are warranted).

14 A referee makes exception for Maturana's work and some of its uses. However, an abstract view of languaging leaves no account of agency or how, in languaging, collective life is transformed by how entrenchment brings the historically accrued expertise of groups/communities to structural coupling (or coordinative activity) and personal knowing.

3.3 SELLARS: ONE STEP BACK, TWO STEPS FORWARDS

Answers to what there is can, of course, inform descriptions and second ontologies. As a trait, Language includes much more than phenomena. For Sellars, languagings connect with a domain of reason as peoples' judgings use empirical forms (see, Seiberth 2021). In presenting this view, I start with a non-foundationalist analytic/ synthetic distinction (i.e. one opposed to lingualism). Later, I turn to how he leaves behind the Myth of the Given (Sellars 1956) to challenge 'language' and its (putative) designata.[15] I read this as suggesting that, like von Uexküll's tick, humans use unknowns, or simplex tricks, that lie beyond (and behind) perception and experience. While the results can be *described* as perception (and theorized as structural coupling), this throws no light on how the supersensible uses history. In humans, of course, simplex tricks enable use of cultural resources. In enlanguaged worlds, one can make judgements that synthesise outcomes as the Manifest Image informs perceiving; in Yu's terms, we rely on supersession. At root, 'empirical form' (Sellars 1967) connects thoughts and events as the supersensible grants human specific ways of doing things right by bringing unrepresented pasts in the present. All of this is intrinsic to languagings. Later, I will replace Quine's tribunal of experience with a normatively based distinction between analytic and synthetic predicative acts.

For Sellars, experience discloses only appearances. By contrast, warranted scientific assertions transcend both the experienced and the everyday. For example, in seeing a triangle with ten centimeter sides, one's judgement straddles two 'worlds.' One uses, not an ideal language, but what the Scientific Image discloses (i.e. shapes with definite properties and standardized ways of measuring). Warranted claims are normative and, as for Carnap (1950), knowledge frameworks stabilize general categories. In using a term like 'molecule,' instruments unite networks of warranted assertions under a Scientific Image. A *correct* usage must be consistent with how "atoms bind by using covalent bonds." Far from using meaning holism, Sellars treats evaluations as overt predicative acts or languagings. Broadly, the view aligns with Halliday's (2003) view of semogenesis or, technically, how experience construes lexicogrammar.[16] In a knowledge framework, assertions bring the emplaced to what a community warrants (correct 'meanings'). While some judgings fit the manifest and others a scientific counterpart, often, they are at odds. Appearances can contradict each other –and, often, appear incompatible with science. Yet, in answering to what there is, Sellars turns to Janus faced acts in rethinking the analytical/ synthetic divide (Brandt 2017). Given a history of languaging, he notes, meanings can be anchored to printed form (i.e. as inscriptions). Using these, members of a community play an analytical language game based in, not 'language', but judging that assumes a Manifest and/or Scientific Image of the world. They use modes of action and skills based on Cowley's (2011) language stance. Even in principle, sayings and reportings cannot elucidate *molecule* or *triangle*. Rather, one must orient to wordings as types that invoke generals: practices need to bear on networks of assertions. These allow language games where saying, "the triangle is red," can assert the Manifest. In acts of (what we can call) $type_1$ assertions, we use emplaced experience to attend to (or produce) nonce-wordings as wording-types. By contrast, another kind of judgement arises in predicative events that draw on the Scientific Image. What we can call $type_2$ assertions presuppose a normative history that is experience-free. In using the Scientific Image wordings must conform to tight entailments. With Brandt, if "X is a molecule", it follows that X is "an electronically neutral group of at least two atoms held together by covalent bonds" (Brandt 2017, 117). Whereas $type_1$ construals use what appears, $type_2$ counterparts are tightly embedded in an evolving framework of theoretical norms. They rely on, not 'language' (or reportings) but what, after Wittgenstein, Sellars calls picturings (and, thus, Cowley's language stance). In 4.0, I illustrate $type_1$ relations around ascribing colours to (what an English speaker sees as) blue/green triangles.

Judging appearances can be ascribed to a Cogito, practices and 'language.' Sociocultural circumstances condition changing tensional dynamics as a (distributed) Language trait is imbued with empirical form (as imagined in terms of is-ness, there-ness, what-ness and the like). In emplaced, coordinative activity, people connect the semantic, appearances and languagings. Since supersession results, the Scientific Image transcends perception. Even in the manifest order, seeing a (red) triangle *as* red binds the empirical with the conceptual. Like Kant, therefore, Sellars denies that perception is primary. Unlike Kant, however, he traces knowing to use of empirical form (i.e. neither sense-data nor affordances.) In challenging the Myth of the Given, he shows, strikingly, that appearances mask the supersensible (whatever that is). Addressing those who are puzzled, Simonelli (2022) explains the negative target:

> "The Myth of the Given, in general terms, is simply any conception of knowledge of some aspect of reality as simply given to us, and intelligible only as given in this way" (Simonelli, 2022, 1043).

15 Today, many adopt structural realism or, a process metaphysics that does away with things (see, Ladyman et al. 2007).

16 For Halliday (2003) semogenesis brings a social semiotic to acts of communication as exemplified by cases like an early act of infant communication or taking a selfie on a mountain (Cowley 2024). Since human emplacement permeates the expressed, Sellars can be seen to naturalise semogenesis by tracing 'thoughts' to languagings whose empirical isomorphisms make pasts present in the present. For a person, they disclose aspects of what there is and, at times, absent parties (see, Cowley, Fester-Seeger 2023).

Lingualism treats reality as immediately experienced such that appearances inform perception that uses designata, an ideal language, or sayings and doings. For Sellars, by contrast, ascriptions (or utterings) are phenomena that engender 'objects.' In Yu's (2021) terms, these supersede as judging links practices, a conceptual frame and an enlanguaged world. The case is straightforward as applied to, say, voices or the sounds of the forest. Far from perceiving objects, empirical form sets off judging of, say, "that's Johnny" or "that's a nightjar." For Sellars the view generalizes to how beliefs and knowing draws on perceiving and experiencing. Since discernment of empirical form is aided by recursive repetition, the same applies to, say, measuring a length of "two centimeters." However, in this case, unlike that of Johnny or the nightjar, the uttering (or thought) does not simply answer to "What is there?" While, as for the tick, construal attests to the supersensible, in this case, it *also* attests to a history of making normative use of a measuring instrument. Thus, given a languaging history, humans use frameworks of reason. These do not reduce to what appears or the Myth presents as Given. Simonelli puts it thus:

> The basic problem with any instance of the Myth is that, by thinking of knowledge of some aspect of reality as given, we preclude ourselves from thinking of what we hold of reality in having this knowledge as something that we hold rationally (Simonelli 2022, 1043).

Belief in the given covertly assumes that reason can grasp whatever-there-is or that reporting draws on immediate experience. It is a form of lingualism that aligns interrogation with what is assumed by the resources of reason. The alternative is to allow that languagings *inform* enlanguaged worlds that sustain both Scientific and Manifest images. Simonelli (2022) continues,

> Holding something rationally requires being able, at least in principle, to put it in to question and, in response to that question, articulate the reasons for holding it. If something is taken to be simply given, and intelligible only as such, then knowledge of it constitutes a stopping point in the inquiry into our knowledge of reality, at which no questions can be asked. But if no questions can be asked, then no reasons can be given, and so we cannot make sense of our knowledge of what is given as rational (Simonelli 2022, 1043).

Appearances bring world to a body, brain, and whatever is evoked by appeal to 'mind.' Hence, "what is there?" disrupts the flow of coordinative activity. In responding, we rely on frameworks that unite a Language trait, practices and the supersensible. Thus, what the Scientific Image discloses is bound to deflate mental concepts, 'language' and the intelligible. These are not 'stopping points in enquiry' because the Scientific Image projects a singular ontology. By contrast, yearning for the Given sustains mentalism and residual lingualism. Further, if one resists deep or generative structures, it becomes clear that, just as for the tick, a first ontology is largely opaque. Appearances unite conceptual judging, enlanguaged worlds and bundles of practices. Just as observations can link assertions about molecules with covalent bonds, they suggest that, given empirical form, supersession unfolds. Hence, whilst it can enable physics, empirical form does not reduce to what physics describes. Now, having recovered a first ontology, one can reconsider second ontologies, their scope, and how they emerge.

4.0 APPEARANCES AND THEIR ROLE IN PRACTICES

Rather than focus on representation, sense-making or affordances, Sellars turns to languagings. By hypothesis, these use empirical form that is, perhaps, unknowable. In the tick, of course modelling brings an animal prey; in enlanguaged worlds, humans gain ever widening domains of appearance. Unending supersession is controlled, by and large, as we move, coordinate activity and draw on languaging. Neither phenomena nor linguistic *designata* need causal powers because, as persons, we rely on living bodies, doings and practices. Thus, just as languaging can connect practices, these can be (and are) actualized through and together with coordinative activity. In languaging, bidirectional cycles set off tensional dynamics that, usually, bring purport to what is done or perceived. Often, vague and confusing coordinative activity triggers uncertain and fuzzy sayings and doings. Given a framework of practices, however, repetition and normative criteria bring sharper distinctions (and data-based models) to the supersensible. Once familiar, we can move from fuzziness to getting things right. The case clarifies how methodological individualism (Knudsen 2023) successfully informs flat ontologies. In many practices, reportings of sayings and doings align appearances to expected doings, sayings and reports. However, if we start with languagings, we can trace the same events to how ecosystems/institutions condition people who actualize practices as, at once, they act as themselves. Using bidirectional relations, they set off multiscaled cascades of outcomes. For example, practices that bring economic benefits may also be toxic and/or life sustaining (see, Steffensen et al. 2024).

Whereas a foundationalist ascribes the *red* of a triangle to redness (a designatum), for Sellars the description attests to a Manifest Image. Of course, the same applies to, "The triangle is red." While not disclosing or answering to "what is there" (or the Given), it can be a correct sociocultural judgement – if languagings align the empirical, the normative and the emplaced. Just as a *molecule* presupposes covalent bonds, seeing a *red triangle* implies languagings. In illustration, consider an experiment where subjects must name the colours of triangles that take on what English speakers see similar, but differing, shades of green from blue, With the same resources, for linguistic reasons, Italians classify the shades as 'verde', 'blu' and 'azzurro.' They use already framed appearances in a normative task that presupposes empirical form. In

Yu's (2021) terms, for Italians a detail/aspect can *look* verde/ blu/ azzurro. Even in silence, emplaced coordinative activity evokes wordings. Hence, just as concepts prompt a grasp of things (Gahrn-Andersen 2021), framings alert us to qualities. Response therefore reduces to neither:

a. perception of physical arrays and/or mental representations of colour categories
b. perceiving affordances (by evocation of (say) 'red' relations between an organism with its environment

Overt and covert languagings mesh with *past* judgings and, thus, certainties. Hence, multiscaled effects apply to, for example, bilinguals who come to see blue/ azzurro and blue/blu in varying ways. Not only does appearance influence thought/sayings (and vice versa), but, more surprisingly, it affects uses of empirical form. One might ask, therefore, how saturation, hue, brightness etc. (and the Scientific Image) affect reports of blue/green/ verde/blu/azzurro. Far from reducing to 'language' or sense-impressions, judging unites the empirical, sociocultural and conceptual. The case is especially clear where languagings are not standardized (or tied to modernity). In certain vernaculars of the Italian Oltrepo' Pavese, an item or glimpsed movement can have "'I culur ed can che scap" or, literally, "the colour of a dog that runs away." While restricted to certain 'frameworks,' these too are normative. Janus faced seeings/utterings enable correct, acceptable, entertaining, and other usage. One is bound to conclude that bodies, perceiving and communities *incarnate* the supersensible. Given a Janus face, languagings merge the conceptual with empirical form. Over a life span, the familiar comes to fits a Manifest Image (or, more likely a set of these). As in Section 3.2, languagings enable world-making: for multilinguals, sensibility shifts between familiar settings. As a first language English speaker, fluent in Italian and at home with Pavese, I can evoke *'I culur ed can che scap*. While echoing my place in a local world, use of the expression does *not* reduce to habit. Roughly, it unites (a) a community's praxis; (b) organized assemblages; (c) ongoing practices; (d) shared worlds; and (e) sub-systemic person regulators (e.g. neural dispositions). As part of lived experience, languagings link conceptual resources with the emplaced in bringing purport to utterings.[17] Hence, general standards are, at best, partly linguistic and, with time, the expression can be used in ways that have hedonic, aisthetic and, at times, practical value. Further what applies to so-called sayings (i.e. languagings) also informs thinkings, perceivings and, ultimately, all practices that allow leeway.

Since descriptions capture appearances based on inventories of concepts, practices can be taught and appearances used in evaluating performances. The outcomes connect certain criteria to folk views and, thus, individualist second ontologies. Yet, in omitting the emplaced and the empirical, much is lost. No flat ontology can show how languagings are actualized or, say, *exactly* how colour terms are used and with what purport. This clarifies Knudsen's (2023) complaint that practice theory cannot address issues of power, tendencies, changing trends etc. Given an unacknowledged ontological individualism (where nodes can be human actors) they position how judging uses events, places and circumstances. Such theories leave out macrosocial conditioning, coordinative activity and modelling or, in Simonelli's (2022) terms, posit what is "simply given, and intelligible only as such." Worse, practices become a stopping point in "inquiry into our knowledge of reality." One may cease to question by regarding conformity as rational, or one can look differently to ask how the familiar masks the supersensible and a singular ontology.

4.1 Ontology/ontologies: Collisions and Effects

Asking, "What is there" disrupts. As noted, having bet on human uniqueness, Chomsky used formalism in (claimed) discovery of a 'language organ.' Even if belief in I-language is unwarranted, he triggered world-making (Blaser 2009). Thus, today, while some seek evolutionary discontinuity in 'language', others place Language within a first ontology.[18] Likewise, recovery of the supersensible disrupts. It blocks how residual lingualism assigns knowledge to individuals (or nodes). It also forces one to challenge the view that perception, experience and practices reduce to subjective judgements, sayings and reportings. Indeed, to start with languaging collides with a conceptual network that, since the ancients, has conflated languaging with language games. Just as with postulating a language organ, many will be threatened by the move. For those who treat 'language' as Given, its manifest nature supports ontological individualism and, perhaps, an 'internal' mental organ. Equally, for others, the existence of a mental organ requires individualism for 'language' to contribute to the Given.

In pursuing "what is there?" Sellars highlights the Scientific Image. Given its power, warranted descriptions of molecules imply covalent bonds between atoms –they transcend appearance. The knowledge reduces to neither the foundationalist's *designata*, the tribunal of experience, nor practices based on appearances. As with all mentalist views, such accounts draw on lingualism. Rather, for Sellars, judgements are warranted by how a community normatively models aspects of what is there; it depends on how we simplexify. In the case of the Manifest Image, I show how judgings of colour shades bind the empirical into the socioculturally conditioned. Judgings draw, in part, on usage and, in part, on the

17 In the course of writing this paper, I found myself saying that the indeterminate colour of the autumn leaves was "I culur ed can che scap.' My Pavese speaking interlocutor laughingly said she had never heard trees described that way –though she could see what was meant; in flow, she suggested (wrongly, I think) that the term is used of a colour that is uniform.

18 Cowley (2019b) and Cowley & Kuhle (2020) trace how languaging evolves to wordings and coordinative activity.

supersensible. Hence, emplacement and the unknown/ unknowable inform how socioculture's simplex tricks complements the conceptual. Languagings connect empirical forms with "what there is". Over a life-cycle, appearances gain familiarity within an enlanguaged world We use a Manifest Image and ways of languaging that vary, can be replaced and, in evaluations, be correct (or not). While judgement arises in communities, networks, and persons, actualize practices that can be described by second ontologies (and shapes familiar worlds). The same applies to science or how English, Italian and/or Pavese vernaculars favour seeing and describing (or reporting) shades of colour. In one community, one *sees* that candles and movements, but not trees, can be *'l culur ed can che scap*. However odd it seems, supersession arises as semogenesis unites unknown empirical forms with languagings and the conceptual.

As framings of the known, appearances suppress the unknown and unknowable. With modern focus on the Scientific Image, ecosocial breakdown has accelerated. This co-occurred, I note, with the fading of lingualism. By contrast, a turn to languaging can be a step towards recovering a first ontology. Recognition of personal worlds and modelling challenges appeal to knowledge, goals and data-based predictions where the supersensible reduces to 'risk'. Indeed, once traced to Images (in frameworks), we see that many epistemically charged practices are toxic. Recovery of a singular ontology demands that we bear responsibility for the effects of practices. It shows both how unknowns ('risks') mark dangers and how languaging both brings out and masks human vulnerability. Given fragility and ignorance, we resemble the tick. In the evolving world, the supersensible leads us even when, in the play of languaging, things supersede and supersede, endlessly. The ontology/ ontologies collision triggers changes in knowing and what we become. We may be moved to unite languaging with knowhow to challenge toxic human practices and, thus, to use the Language trait to work for the future of evolution.

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