

Week 4: Theoretical Entities in the Philosophy of Mind

Plan:

- I. Recap and Follow-up.
 - a. Sellars's account of the use and function of 'looks' talk is:
 - antidescriptivist about appearances, and
 - expressed in a pragmatic metavocabulary.
 - b. Turning Descartes on his head: from cognition to agency.
 - c. Foundationalism: epistemological and semantic.
Evading the Agrippan trilemma.

- II. Myth of Jones.
 - a. Target: Behaviorism.
Argument: Behaviorism is instrumentalism about theoretical entities in the philosophy of mind.
Jones: Thoughts and sense impressions are theoretical entities, not paradigms of observable ones.
 - b. Sellars contra Platonism: The distinction between observable and theoretical objects is not *ontological* but *methodological* and *epistemological*.
 - c. Wittgensteinian and Rylean behaviorism in the philosophy of mind.
 - d. Myth of Jones I: thoughts. Postulated to explain semantic coherence and cogency.
 - e. Myth of Jones II: sense impressions. Postulated to explain systematic perceptual errors.
 - f. Two-ply account of observation: RDRDs with concept-applying responses.
What is observable in that sense.

- III. Phenomenalism
 - a. Traditional TwenCen phenomenism:
C.I. Lewis, Carnap in *Aufbau*, Goodman in *Structure of Appearance*.
 - b. Argument from proximity and error-freedom.
World shows up for us "painted in secondary qualities."
 - c. Sellars's argument against subjunctive conditional analysis of objective claims in phenomenalist terms:
 - phenomenalist concepts are not semantically autonomous, and
 - conditionals expressed exclusively in terms of them are not true.
 - d. Constructive pragmatic functionalist account of secondary-quality concepts (from Evans).

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I. Recap and Follow-up.

Sellars's account of the use and function of 'looks' talk is:

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Turning Descartes on his head: from cognition to agency.

Foundationalism: epistemological and semantic.

Evading the Agrippan trilemma.

1) Recap and leftover business from last week.

- a) Recap 'looks' talk: antidescriptivism. Look at what one is *doing* in saying how things look, or attributing a mere looking. (Compare: attributing knowledge.) Pragmatic MV. Don't assume representational or fact-stating semantic MV is appropriate (which obliges one to look for what is represented, the facts stated). Declarativism, but a narrower sense. Bifurcation thesis. Subject naturalism, but in this case, without the assumption that the pragmatic MV is naturalistic.

Recall antidescriptivism.

Instead of looking for the odd kind of fact being stated, or things being represented (appearings), look at what (else besides fact-stating or representing) one is doing in making looks claims, both first and third-personal.

Recall subject/object naturalism. I claimed there were two moves: to a pragmatic MV, and to its being a naturalistic vocabulary.

Sellars on 'looks' only makes first move: withholding or declining an endorsement or commitment is not, as such, put in a naturalistic vocabulary. But it is a nondescriptive doing.

- b) A further confirmation: 'tries' as not describing-reporting minimal doings (actions) but
- i. Characterizing end sought, and
 - ii. Withholding commitment as to one's success.

Descartes thought there were "acts of the will", *volitions*, which were minimal, safe *doings*.

They were *safe* in that, unlike non-mental actions, *willings* were not things one could merely *try* to do without *succeeding*.

Compare: *seemings* or *lookings* (appearances) are not things one could get wrong.

- c) Possibly: How merely *entertaining* claimables, or *supposing* is *also* not an autonomous language game—as Descartes and the tradition assumed it was.

This was another invocation of the will (cf. tryings and volitions, from last week): plumping for, committing oneself to some hitherto only entertained claims.

But entertaining or supposing is not pragmatically autonomous language-game.

Globally, semantogenic web of implications requires actual commitments and drawing of conclusions: actual claimings, challenges, and defenses.

LW on how one must commit oneself to some claims to mean anything by others.

Compare: must use risky 'is' claims in order to use risk-free 'looks' claims.

2) Epistemology: Sellars's distinction of two kinds of foundationalism.

Summary:

1. Can have epistemological foundationalism without semantic foundationalism, if one does not claim that the epistemological foundation is semantically autonomous: a language-game one could play though one played no other.
2. Sellars does take such a position, w/res to observation reports.
3. But one need not think there is some class of claims that all chains of justification end in. For all chains, there is somewhere they stop, not there is somewhere all chains stop. Mike Williams *Unnatural Doubts*.
4. But to evade Agrippan trilemma entirely, can move to a default-and-challenge structure of entitlement and entitlement transmission.

Justificatory privilege of observations, but observations don't form a semantically autonomous stratum.

But we can go more radical: each chain of justification ends, and observations are privileged (no empirical k. without them, and often they achieve consensus—Quine on varying degrees of sharing verdicts upon concurrent stimulation).

But chains don't always end there. Sometimes on firm theoretical claims.

Inversion of repeated quantifiers, for all there is, not *vice versa*.

More radically still: default and challenge structure of entitlement and entitlement inheritance (via justification and social testimony).

Evading the original Agrippan trilemma of justification by these structural maneuvers.

Part most missed is how one can allow epistemological foundation as long as one denies its semantic autonomy.

But, one should deny such a foundation, even of obs reports.

(This last vestige of WS's empiricism.)

Can allow the obreps have a distinctive kind of authority, which we cannot do without.

But that is not "ultimate court of justificatory appeal."

All chains of justification end somewhere, but there is nowhere they all end.

Quantifier inversion, Mike Williams. FSWS.

Avoiding epistemological Agrippan trilemma with **default-and-challenge structure of entitlement**.

This strategy, like that of analysis of 'looks' talk, and of the truth condition in JTB, understood from the point of view of *attributing* knowledge, looks to what one is *doing* in saying these things, to what is expressed in *pragmatic* metavocabularies, rather than first assuming representational or fact-stating semantics, and then looking for the weird items that are represented or the weird kind of facts that are stated. It is what is behind subject naturalism (without assuming the pragmatic MV must be a naturalistic vocabulary).

- II) Myth of Jones.
- a. Target: Behaviorism.
 - a. Argument: Behaviorism is instrumentalism about theoretical entities in the philosophy of mind.
 - b. Jones: Thoughts and sense impressions are theoretical entities, not paradigms of observable ones.
 - b. Sellars contra Platonism: The distinction between observable and theoretical objects is not *ontological* but *methodological* and *epistemological*.
 - c. Wittgensteinian and Rylean behaviorism in the philosophy of mind.
 - d. Myth of Jones I: thoughts. Postulated to explain semantic coherence and cogency.
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3) The main event: Sellars says he will **use a myth to kill a myth**. The myth he wants to kill is the myth of the given. (Italian: “Il Mito del Dato.”) In its purest form, that is the idea that there are even can be states that both:

- i) count as knowing something, in the sense that their occurrence and the subject’s awareness of that occurrence can justify or serve as evidence for conceptually articulated propositional beliefs—beliefs that things are thus-and-so, and
- ii) whose occurrence and the subject’s awareness of them presupposes no process of learning or acquisition of concepts.

The myth he proposes to use to kill the Myth of the Given is the myth of Jones, genius of our postulated Rylean ancestors.

The philosophical lesson we are to learn from the myth of Jones is that we *could* understand mental episodes by turning Descartes’ story on its head.

- b. For Descartes, thoughts and sensations are the paradigm and *ne plus ultra* of *observable* episodes. They are *so* observable that
 - we are **incorrigible** or inerrant about having them—can’t be wrong, in the sense that if we *take it that* we are having one, then we *are* having it, and
 - they are **self-intimating** in that they cannot occur without us being aware that they are occurring.

They are the states of immediate awareness in virtue of which we can be indirectly (representationally) aware of anything else.

- c. The idea behind the Jonesean story is that thoughts and sense impressions are at base and essentially *theoretical* entities. They are postulated to explain features of our behavior. They are only accidentally observable.

- 4) Background: To understand the argument here, one needs to appreciate two issues:
- *Instrumentalism* about the relationship between *observational* concepts and *theoretical* concepts in the philosophy of science, and
 - Wittgensteinian and the more specific Rylean *behaviorism* in the philosophy of mind.

Those topics might not seem like they have much in common.

Argument: Here is the relevant connection:

Sellars thinks instrumentalist skepticism about theoretical entities is a fundamental mistake.

And he thinks behaviorism's skepticism about inner episodes is a form of instrumentalism.

This is an important and powerful argument.

(I'll argue a bit later that a version of it can be applied, not to the philosophy of mind, but to semantics, where Wittgenstein's and Dummett's skepticism about *meanings* (in favor of use) shows up as also making the instrumentalist mistake.)

We'll look at these issues sequentially.

- 5) Observational and theoretical concepts, objects, and properties.

Sellars says "Grasp of a concept is always mastery of the use of a word."

Observational concepts, concepts of observables, are those expressed by terms that have some noninferential uses.

Recall from the discussion of the Myth of the Given last time that "noninferential" as applied to concepts has two uses: one good and one bad.

- The good one is causal and processual: some terms can be properly applied, not as the result of a process of inference—the making of what in SRLG Sellars calls "language-language moves" from other propositional commitments that provide reasons for them—but responsively, be exercising reliable differential responsive dispositions (RDRDs) to respond, for instance, to the visible presence of red things by saying "That's red."
- The bad idea is the semantic one: that there could be concepts that do not stand in any inferential relations to other concepts.

Sellars is a semantic inferentialist about conceptual content.

To be conceptually contentful is to be inferentially articulated, to be able both to serve as and stand in need of reasons.

It follows that there are no concepts *all* of whose uses are noninferential (in the good sense).

To be cognitively significant, noninferentially elicited observation reports must be able to serve as premises of inferences, as reasons justifying further inferential moves, the drawing of conclusions. And **every concept that can be used observationally also can show up as the conclusion of an inference**. Grasping the concept red involves not only being able to infer from something's being red to its being colored, but also to be able to infer from something's being crimson to its being red.

Ultimately, the argument against givenness is that it presupposes a kind of **semantic atomism** that inferentialism about conceptual content denies.

But while concepts one *can* be entitled to apply *noninferentially must* also stand in inferential relations, there *can* also be concepts that can *only* be properly applied as the result of inferential language-language moves.

These are the concepts Sellars calls “theoretical.” They are *only* inferentially accessible. You can’t see or otherwise noninferentially report, say, homozygous genes or individual electrons. Any claims you make about them will be the result of inferences—perhaps from things you *can* observe.

Theoretical terms have *only* inferential uses.

And here is the first big lesson, an absolutely pivotal claim for Sellars:

The distinction between *observable things and properties, on the one hand, and purely theoretical ones, on the other, is not an ontological distinction.*

It is a merely *methodological or epistemological one.*

Plato and Descartes read off ontological differences of kind from epistemological differences of kind.

For Plato, whether source of knowledge was by *senses* or by *intellect* (concept); for Descartes whether *error* was possible, or not.

One measure of this is that the status of a concept or claim as observable versus theoretical can change with time.

Pluto example: when introduced, one could only infer its existence from perturbations in the orbit of Neptune.

When we got better telescopes, Clyde Tombaugh could look and observe it being where it was supposed to be.

Instrumentalism is the mistake of treating the observable/theoretical distinction as ontological—treating ‘posits’ or ‘postulated entities’ as fictions, which could be useful or not, but denying that theoretical claims could be true or false.

Sellars is first and foremost a *realist* about *theoretical* entities.

Looking ahead:

On down the line I will question WS for treating the distinction between observable (or empirical, more broadly: thought of as concrete) and abstract objects differently than he does the distinction between observable and theoretical objects. The assimilating genus is that these are two ways of introducing new terms (singular and sortal) from old ones. What motivates the difference in approach? But it might be that he doesn’t think ontology applies to terms introduced by abstraction, because in that case we should think about what we are *doing*, and not what we are *saying*, in the sense of describing or descriptive fact-stating.

That thought raises the question: Shouldn’t the anti-Platonist maxim above be broadened:

Maxim: Do not infer *ontological* distinctions from distinctions concerning how new terms (singular and sortal) are introduced (defined, constructed, their conceptual content—reason relations: implications and incompatibilities—and so use determined) from old ones.

The broadened maxim would include terms introduced by abstraction along with those introduced inferentially, as theoretical (“postulates”).

Sellars’s argument must be: when you see what you are *doing* in introducing terms by abstraction, you will see that you should give a nondescriptive account of their meaning.

Compare: meaning statements. When you see that in making them, you are functionally classifying expressions, you will see that you are not describing-representing anything.

Compare also: ‘looks’ talk, as involving the withholding of endorsement or declining to endorse.

Q: What makes all these accounts of what one is *doing* in making the statement entail that one is not describing-representing (stating facts) about what is real or in the world “in the narrow sense”?

A: All of them essentially involve language-use (functional classification, reference to endorsement). They are accordingly not describing things *as they are in themselves*, that is, *apart from reference to our discursive activities* with respect to them.

If that is right, it is a Kantian point after all, but processed through the lens of a metalinguistic reading of the discursive.

[Not for this session:]

I have asked why Sellars distinguishes between the two ways of introducing new terms (singular and sortal) from old: postulating theoretical objects and by abstraction.

One he takes not to have ontological significance, the other does, and relegates the new terms to not referring to what is “real in the narrow sense.”

I have answered my question with a rationale:

Abstracting to get ‘triangularity’ (singular term) and ‘property’ (sortal term) is metalinguistic.

So the way of introducing the terms makes *essential* reference to discursive practices.

This involvement of *us* makes their use part of transcendental appearance, how things are for us, not reality, how things are in themselves.

I think this is a cogent rationale, and probably it is Sellars’s.

But I now realize that not *all* abstraction is like this. Only *metalinguistic* abstraction is.

Introducing directions, as Frege does, has nothing (evidently) metalinguistic about it, in the way that talk of properties does (on Sellars’s analysis of it).

This observation means that Sellars is *not* committed to treating all of mathematics as “second rate.” Rather, there are two kinds of abstraction: metalinguistic and non metalinguistic.

Meanings will go in the metalinguistic category, as will propositions—anything that depends on functional classification w/res to or by our practices. But *lots* of abstraction is not like this.

It is not obvious that ‘lionhood’ is like this.

6) Wittgenstein and then Ryle on the rejection of inner entities.

LW: pains and sensations as private “beetles in boxes”).

Ryle on talk of mental episodes as “category mistakes”: misleading ways of talking about behavioral *dispositions*.

Sellars’s “Ryleans” attribute states such as *anger* and *believing that touching hot stoves hurts* as “mongrel categorical-hypothetical” dispositional states.

LW and Ryle think that what there is to be explained is publicly visible *behavior*, and that one should *stay* at the level of behavior in explaining it.

Sellars identifies modern science with the method of postulating unobservables.

When Wittgenstein says (in the only sentence that appears verbatim in both the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations*) that “philosophy is not one of the natural sciences,” and insists that “philosophy must **stay on the surface**, and not look for anything deeper, anything below the surface” of linguistic behavior, he is expressing an *instrumentalist* rejection of the postulation of anything not directly and publicly *observable* in behavior in order to explain it.

The fighting faith of the **cognitivist revolution** of the ‘70s and ‘80s was to reject this sort of behaviorism in seeking a scientific understanding of human cognition.

Sellars as rejecting LW’s instrumentalism forbidding postulation of theoretical entities in the philosophy of mind.

Philosophical behaviorism or Logical behaviorism (Ryle) vs. Sellars’s scientific (i.e. theoretical) behaviorism.

How Jones applies this observable/theoretical distinction to inner episodes.

Contra Wittgenstein’s rejection of “inner episodes.”

This is “philosophical behaviorism” or “logical behaviorism.”

Sellars lumps these together, and calls his version “scientific behaviorism.”

It does not try to *define* the inner in terms of the outer, but to treat the inner as a theoretical postulate relative to the outer:

Inner episodes : outer behavior :: theoretical entities : observable entities.

Then, in the second step, those theoretical entities turn out to be (or to be able to become) observable.

Should reject *instrumentalism* about theoretical entities here, too, as we do as scientific realists about theoretical entities (as in (a) above).

A more recent example of this mistake concerns *meanings* rather than *minds*:

Wittgenstein is a *semantic nihilist*.

The task is to understand linguistic practice, the *use* of expressions, what we *do* when we are talking. That is specifiable in a *pragmatic* metavocabulary.

He rejects the *theoretical postulation* of *meanings* to explain observable *use*.

“Don’t look to the meaning, look to the use.”

He goes beyond antidescriptivism to *semantic instrumentalism*, *skepticism*, and *nihilism*.

Dummett’s semantic instrumentalism about meanings, which consists in insisting that claims about meaning be *translatable* into claims about publicly observable behavior.

This is essential to his semantic antirealism and his arguments for intuitionism as the correct logic.

Parallel: **Dummett's** semantic instrumentalism (key to his antirealism and endorsement of intuitionism): forbidding postulation of theoretical entities that cannot be defined or translated into behavioral terms. This is logical behaviorism in semantics.

His account of LW as a semantic nihilist in this sense: no meanings.

Semantic philosophical behaviorism says postulated meanings must *explain* (proprieties of) behavior—not that they must be *definable* in terms of it.

But *Dummett's* “*manifestability*” requirement on *meaning*, relative to *understanding* (which is preKantian, in looking at our grip on concepts, rather than their grip on us), is a version of semantic instrumentalism.

What is right is that meanings are *postulated* to *explain* such behavior. But that is different.

Here **the good antidescriptivist emphasis on what one is *doing* is pushed too far**, into instrumentalist rejection of explaining observable behavior by postulating anything unobservable.

7) Genius Jones rejects behaviorist instrumentalism.

He postulates inner episodes to explain features of behavior.

Note that Sellars is willing to accept Ryle's account of **intentional states** of believing, desiring, and intending. What Jones addresses is *episodes of thought* and *sense impressions*.

And his story is in two parts, because these two very different kinds of episode are postulated to explain quite different features of behavior.

8) How Sellars exploits that for Myth of Jones I.: thoughts.

First phase: thoughts as theoretical postulates. To explain sense-making contributions to conversations and consecutive thought in the absence of prior speech.

[Tell story of what it would be like without this, for pure Ryleans: have to talk out loud to think.

Objection: don't you have to think beforehand, to say something sensible, relevant, consecutive?

Reply: well, do you have to think before you think? Here is another potential regress. Must assume that at some point one has a know-how ability.

Q: But how do we do it?

A: Our job is to say what the trick is, not how it is done. (But how *this* is done is *really* interesting—but so is saying what this trick is, in nontrivial terms.)

Second phase: Come to be able to observe our own thoughts.

Q: Need this have happened? Sellars's answer seems to be No.

For discussion of Myth of Jones:

Don't you need to think before you speak, in order to speak consecutively, to make sense, given the topic and stage of the conversation?

Well, do you need to think before you think, in order for your *thoughts* to be consecutive, on topic, and make sense?

Think of thinking as late-coming.

Like reading silently.

If we first had to ‘read’ in the sense of pronouncing words out loud, and then understanding what we heard (as seems to be the case: Julius Caesar, Augustine), could it not be the same with thinking: first we had to do it out loud. (Easier for secret police, but otherwise merely inconvenient.)

I think at the other end in a line of sophistication, that I can essentially only think by writing. (Makes jury duty excruciating.) But it makes *writing* come much more easily, because that is basically what I do all day.

9) Myth of Jones II: Sense impressions.

They are postulated, as inner replicas, with properties red* and octagonal* structurally analogous to visible properties, in order to explain the occurrence of systematic mistakes.

10) The shift: What were postulated as theoretical, purely inferentially accessible entities now acquire an observational role.

Sellars says “it turns out (need it have?) that people could learn reliably to report noninferentially on the presence of thoughts and sense impressions.

11) In order to discuss methodological-epistemological (not ontological) character of observable/theoretical distinction, and the corresponding possibility of some concepts crossing the line and becoming observable:

- a) 2-ply account of observation (“Bobservation”).
- b) On the account of observation here, need only RDRDs and to key the applicability of concepts to the RDRD.

Q: How is it determined what we are reporting, of the whole chain of reliably covarying events? How do we get distal, rather than most proximal (and so error-free), as Quine has it?

A: The concepts we apply connect to other concepts, some of which have observable uses too.

- c) Consequences for observability of mu mesons and Toltecness, and observability of norms. Hearing meanings. Cruelty.

But this means that *lots* more is observable than one might have thought.

How much more is observable in this sense than one might think:

- Mu mesons (in a bubble chamber).

Theoretical entities with instruments (which just become part of the reliably covarying causal chain, and not requiring inference on the part of the one reporting:

- Toltec potsherds.
- Norms: only need RDRDs and the concepts. Cruelty (and other thick normative concepts).
- Meaning: Hearing the norms in meaningful speech, and not just the noises. (Contra Davidson.)

- Cruelty and thick normative concepts. Might not count as fully mastering the concept cruelty if one cannot observe it in clear, paradigmatic cases.
- d) Two-ply account of observation reports, and its alternatives. Refer to the McDowell alternative—a distinctive mode of *ex post facto* justification is what makes observation claims “noninferential.”

III) Phenomenalism

1. Traditional TwenCent phenomenism: C.I. Lewis, Carnap in *Aufbau*, Goodman in *Structure of Appearance*.
2. Argument from proximity and error-freedom.
World shows up for us “painted in secondary qualities.”
3. Sellars’s argument against subjunctive conditional analysis of objective claims in phenomenalist terms:
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Phenomenalism:

12) For transition to “Phenomenalism”:

- a) Distal/proximal: countering the line of thought that all we really report is the most proximal elements of the reliably covarying causal chains that lead to observation reports, since those are the least error-prone. (Quine on “irritations of sensory surfaces”.) How distal elements get picked out by inferential triangulation, and why they must.
- b) The world as “painted” for us in secondary qualities.
- c) Functional account of **secondary quality concepts** as *essentially* observational: unless one can use them observationally, one cannot fully master those concepts. (NIK PESQ)
Another move: to secondary quality concepts, where capacity to use them observationally is a criterion of adequacy of using *that* concept. (Red versus square.)
- d) Possible Q: What does this mean for “consciousness studies”? Does this field necessarily commit to the MoG (knowing something by having something that presupposes no concepts?).
Can there be nonconceptual content? (McD: demonstrative concepts have a kind of conceptual content. Inference and anaphora.)

13) In connection with the then-influential tradition of technical constructive phenomenism, which comprises C.I. Lewis’s *Mind and the World Order*, and *Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation*, Carnap’s *Logische Aufbau der Welt*, and Goodman’s *Structure of Appearance*, in which Lewis is remarkable for using subjunctively robust conditionals, where Carnap uses extensional first-order logic and Goodman uses mereology (not even set theory).

In moving to discussion of ‘Phenomenalism’, I should talk about the phenomenalist project common to i) C.I. Lewis in *MW* and *AKV*, ii) Carnap in *Aufbau*, and iii) Goodman in *The Structure of Appearance*.

This is a good opportunity to repeat the lesson of how the analytic or true-by-definition statement X is red =_{df.} X would look red under standard conditions,

does not in fact give aid and comfort to, cannot serve as the principal instrument in, a phenomenalist project of defining ‘...is red’ in terms of ‘...looks red.’

Repeat that although the phenomenalist project is mostly dead, it is worth seeing how it can be decisively refuted.

I say “mostly dead” because Frank Jackson, in his Locke lectures, and Chalmers, in some of his two-dimensional modal semantics stuff, depend on “translations” of all discourse into phenomenal discourse about things we are immediately conscious of, in order to fix the second dimension.

Here is a curiosity:

This tradition, spanning the first half of the twentieth century, co-existed with a tradition of direct realism, representational realism, and critical realism about perception and empirical knowledge that flourished 100 years ago in the U.S., pursued by the trinominals: Roy Wood Sellars, Ralph Barton Perry at Harvard, William Pepperell Montague, and Edwin Bissell Holt—now all but forgotten. This peculiar academic WASP naming convention (conceit) is in striking contrast with the roughly corresponding British tradition of the bi-initialed. It spans the three generations from T.H. Green and F. H. Bradley, through G.E. Moore to A.J. Ayer, C.D. Broad, and H. H. Price. Q: Did this latter have anything to do with how lectures were announced and advertised in the Oxbridge of the day?

“Phenomenalism”. Another lesson about what is wrong with trying to treat phenomenal vocabulary as foundational w/res to ordinary empirical descriptive vocabulary. Once again, the lesson is that while one might be tempted to treat it as prior in the *epistemological* order of *justification*, via the principle that *Being X* just means *Seeming* to be X, under standard conditions, it is not a *semantically autonomous* stratum of discourse or concepts.

C. I. Lewis, in *Mind and the World Order* (MWO) and *An Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation* (AKV) understands “nonterminating” judgments in OED vocabulary, such as “There is a pen on my desk,” in terms of “terminating” judgments in phenomenal vocabulary, such as “If I walked around my desk, I would seem to see the pen like this...” That is, in terms of an infinite set of subjunctive conditionals couched entirely in phenomenal terms.

But (punchline), **if the antecedents of those subjunctive conditionals, and not just their consequents, are in phenomenal vocabulary, they are not true.**

To be true, they need antecedents (about my actions and the standard conditions) that are couched in OED vocabulary.

But that show the semantic dependence (non-autonomy) of the phenomenal vocabulary in terms of which one aims to reconstruct the use of OED vocabulary.

The point of the “Phenomenalism” essay is that phenomenal-quality talk, like secondary-quality talk, is not an *autonomous* language game: a language game one could play though one played no other.

It is not *semantically* autonomous because it is not *pragmatically* autonomous.

Looking at the subjunctively robust, explanation-supporting implications (Lewis’s “terminating judgments”) shows this.

How this line of thought complements and completes that of the “looks”-talk analysis.

14) Secondary quality concepts.

Galileo is the first to distinguish primary/secondary qualities, based on whether or not they depend on the perceiver.

One phenomenalist version of the “veil of appearance” has the world “**painted** for us in secondary qualities.”

The idea is that they are like the paint in a painting: everything else is represented by them.

This idea fits well with the Cartesian thought that they are epistemically privileged, since we cannot *misrepresent* them.

Following an idea suggested by Gareth Evans—though he does *not* endorse the view I am about to sketch—we can give a use-functional or functional classification account of secondary quality concepts, couched in a pragmatic metavocabulary, which specifies features of their *use*.

Q: What is the difference between concepts like square and concepts like red, in virtue of which the first is a primary-quality concept and the second is a secondary-quality concept?

After all, both have observational uses.

A: Arguably, one cannot count as fully mastering the use of red unless one *can* use it observationally. By contrast, a blind geometer could *fully* master the use of the concept square, could understand full well what it is to be square, even though she could not distinguish squares from triangles by looking at them.

Put another way, it is *essential* to the use of ‘red’ as a secondary-quality concept that things can *look* red to observers. That is not essential to ‘square.’

Notice that if and insofar as this account is right, one can *define* a secondary-quality concept from any concept that has an observational use.

That is, we could define ‘square*’ so that although a blind geometer could fully master the use of ‘square’, only someone to whom things could *look* square* could master the use of *that* concept.

As to the idea that the world is *painted* in secondary qualities for observers:

It would be a mistake to think that *behind* every observable property there must necessarily be a possibly hidden secondary-quality property. We could always *define* such a property.

But the use of *any* secondary-quality concept is parasitic on the use of the corresponding merely observable property, in the way in which ‘looks’-talk is parasitic on ‘is’-talk.