

# **New Directions in Philosophy of Language and Linguistics**

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## **Abstracts** (in alphabetical order)

### **Re-integrating Second Language Learning**

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Noam Chomsky famously acknowledged in 1966 that modern linguistic theory did not have much to say to foreign language teachers. Hector Hammerly added in 1991 that "in the two and a half decades since then, linguistic theory has become, if anything, more esoteric and less applicable."

This paper offers a view from the other side of "theory" - the often precarious dimension of second language learners and second language teachers - by outlining a situation which could benefit considerably from certain core elements of integrational linguistics. A picture of the dimension of second language learning and teaching is given which resembles a semiological disaster zone. Severe or total lack of "integration" is manifest on different levels. An array of crimes are routinely perpetrated by those evils well-known to integrationists: decontextualization, scriptism, the overthrow of first-order experience replaced by the unwarranted dictatorship of second-order categories, and an obdurate conviction, on all levels, that languages are codes and must be taught as such in the name of theory and science.

This paper contrasts the all-natural dimension of the "temporal and communicational stream" - which is the (only) life of language if *language*, and not *codes*, is what we are after - and an emerging ontology of semantic-semiotic dislocation and displacement wherein learners and teachers find themselves at variable "distances" from Meaning. Notions of *correctness* and *rules* are examined under a working principle of differentiating between spoken and written language or, better, language experienced versus language represented.

Keywords: flow, immediacy of experience, languaging, correctness, rules, context, speaking, oracy, hearing, listening, writing, text-making, codes, L1 and L2 acquisition, cognition, surface structure, deep structure, semantic/semiotic fields, semantic entropy, symbolic and symbolistic language, symbol grounding, referent grounding, scripting, monitoring, editing, linguistic structuring, grammatical teaching, terminal pidgin, scollamento semantico, visuality

### **Computational Codes & Cultural Creativity: How Inimical to Integrationism?**

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At least three US citizens of Indian origin have recently suggested that significant similarities exist between the creative processes involved in writing poetry and in producing computer codes. They are Satya Nadella, CEO of Microsoft; Vikram Chandra, an Indian novelist who is a professor of creative writing at the University of California as well as a computer programmer; and, finally, Manjul Bhargava, winner of the iconic Fields Medal, who uses poetic rules framed by the Jain logician Hemachandra (12th century AD) to teach principles of mathematics to his students at Princeton. This paper asks how this sort of thinking across cultural and disciplinary lines might contribute to present day Integrationism. The idea that 'creativity' relies on grasp of complex grammatical/linguistic/cognitive rules and extends to an imaginative ability to break or reconstitute these very rules and, sometimes, to combine them with other embodied modes such as music and dance, is not, of course, new. Indeed, this theoretical premise was explored in various Indian treatises from Bharata (circa 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, first proponent of the *rasa* theory of performance) to Nagojibhatta (grammarian, 18<sup>th</sup> century AD) who may be said to have been enthusiastic advocates of Integrationism in the pre-modern world. That these ancient thinkers have now found influential modern descendants in Nadella, Chandra, Bhargava and others who seem dedicated to rethinking notions of 'code'- fixed, linguistic, embodied, mathematical, etc. – is not entirely surprising. But could these Indian theoreticians, who wrote in parallel to a Greek tradition that ran from Plato to the Enlightenment, also find takers amongst current Integrationist thinkers? My paper explores some of the consequences of drawing on unfamiliar 'non-western' modes in order to augment a possible 21<sup>st</sup> century Integrationism.

Key words: code, computation, cognition, embodiment, Indian cultural traditions, *rasa* theory, performance, poetry

### **Integrating the participants' perspective in the study of language and communication disorders**

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In an integrational perspective, meaning is considered experiential: “signs are not given to us by Nature” (Harris 2009, p. 87) - they require a process of continuous creation, performed by the language makers. Experience, knowledge and meaning are closely tied together. This stated, signs articulate the complexity of our own situation and “their creation is itself the creation of knowledge, and, more importantly, the creation of untold possibilities for its further expansion” (Harris 2009, p. 87). This questions the observation of other humans' language: Who are the experts? This methodological problem is discussed in a new approach to the study of language and communication disorders (Klemmensen 2018). My ph.d.-research investigates the pros and cons of an interdisciplinary practice approach incorporating three different schools, which claim to study the persons communicating, their actions, and their agency are the point of departure. Concepts from Integrational Linguistics are discussed in a joint framework and aligned with Practice theory and methods from Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis, resulting in the introduction of a new applied integrationism.

By revisiting the key theoretical concepts: contextualization and integrational proficiency, and inserting these in a practice research-framing, the emergence of an applied integratism is conveyed and applied to the study of language and communication disorders - minus The Language Myth. With an emphasis on key theoretical and meta-theoretical questions involved in the above research project on language and communication disorders, this presentation, overall, aims at discussing the project's theoretical approach, pointing towards a new analytical approach based on concepts from integrationism.

Harris, R. (2009). *After epistemology*. Gamlingay: Bright Pen.

Klemmensen, C. (2018). *Integrating the participants' perspective in the study of language and communication disorders: Towards a new analytical approach*. Cham: Palgrave Pivot.

### **On sign making as a foundational concept for linguistic inquiry**

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I argue that linguistic inquiry after Harris must be based on a better understanding of the sign making activity, and that this understanding should not be founded on Cartesian dualism. I present an account of the action of sign making inspired by philosophies of experience such as pragmatism, gestalt theory and phenomenology and talk about what the consequences of such an account would be for inquiries into language and communication.

### **The temporality of sign making**

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In integrational theory, the temporality of the sign is seen in relation to the particular communicational episode in which the sign was created, and it is pointed out that the sign does not outlast that episode, and that it has no existence outside of it (e.g., Love 2007: 706; Orman & Pablé 2016: 598).

The sign is made at a particular time by a particular situated person. "The act of contextualization and the establishment of the sign are one and the same" (Harris 2009: 72). That is, once the sign is established, it institutes a temporal difference. It marks a point in time separating the time before the sign was made from the time after it was made. Exactly when this happens can only be determined from the perspective of the sign maker, because "each of us contextualizes in our own way, taking into account whatever factors seem to us to be relevant" (ibid. 71).

This means that as far as the sign goes, its temporality is what defines it and explains its uniqueness. But this way of looking at the sign only sees it from the perspective of completion. It sees it as contextualized, not from the point of view of sign making, i.e. as contextualizing. The sign not only marks a point in time, it also takes time to make a sign. Sign making is temporally conditioned because sign makers are "time-bound agents" (Harris 1996: 154), and the integrational process, "the fitting together of various patterns and features

of communicational behavior in ways which make sense to the participants” (Harris 1984: 280), in itself takes time.

This durative aspect of the temporality of the sign is generally not considered by integrationists, and the ways in which it affects the notion of ‘signhood’, the distinction between integration and reintegration, and the consequences it has in practice for interpersonal communication is not very well understood. The paper discusses how these questions may be addressed in order to include the temporality of sign making in integrational semiology.

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## **Harris on Questions: Interrogating Integrationism**

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One of Roy Harris’s fundamental contribution to linguistic theory is the recognition of the temporal integration of all and every linguistic act in the non-linguistic, a parity for which he introduced, in 1981, the ‘principle of cotemporality’. This principle (‘There are no timeless signs’, Harris 1996: 97), along with its apparent ‘denial of the possibility of iteration’, a seeming ‘Heraclitean’ doctrine, has been much discussed among integrationists – and by integrationism’s best critics (Toolan 1996; Wolf & Love 1997; Davis & Taylor 2003).

Harris’s later preoccupation with semiology, philosophy, and rationality at large, has seemed to promote a dissolution of linguistic into non-linguistic (Pablé & Hutton 2015, p.43 e.g.), also on the basis of this all-encompassing significance of time.

So how and why does ‘cotemporality’ emerge in Harris’s reflection? Going back to *The Language Myth*’s (1981) fateful chapter “Demythologising Linguistics?”, we see it emerge from a rich treatment of rationality, time, deixis and ellipsis (among others!).

We also notice questions play a crucial part in establishing temporality as an incontrovertible given of theory (‘Can you meet me at seven o’clock?’ example, p.156), as the distinction between question and answer (as distinct from question-as-answer) hinges on their temporal succession. And, to the latest of Harris’s writings, we find questions *also* treated as fundamentally linguistic acts (‘There are no languageless questions’, 2011: 93; ‘question-and-answer, the basic linguistic mechanism’, 2014: 66).

This communication is intended as modest (personal) retrospective look on Harris’s treatment of questions-and-answers; considering, first, its importance for cotemporality (as theoretical acknowledgement of time’s centrality in integrationism), but also how fellow integrationists may have taken up this subject; and lastly, more general references which Harris may have overlooked or neglected — among others, Harvey Sacks’s early treatment of the subject.

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### **Integrated sociality: communication and social organization**

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In this paper I hope to focus on the implications of Roy Harris's perspective on communication for a critical examination of conceptions of human sociality and social organization. The paper begins with a discussion of the sociological presuppositions of mainstream, segregational linguistic theorising, showing how such views of language and their associated methodologies already contain or imply perspectives on 'the social' which are problematic in terms of the communicational principles they embody. More generally, it is argued, any notion of 'the social' or 'social organization' presupposes the operation of particular communicational principles and is therefore vulnerable to integrationist examination and critique. Indeed, it is argued that Harris provided a series of clear guiding principles from which a penetrating critique of social theory can be mounted. More specifically, the paper explores the relevance of Harris's notions of 'internal' and 'external' integration and his conception of 'priorities of presupposition' for a critical understanding of the interlinked chains of integrational complementation through which large scale processes of social action and organization are communicationally orchestrated, focussing in some detail on economic activity as an illustration.

### **In what sense is integrational theory radically lay-oriented?**

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In this paper I would like to reflect on the nature of Harrisian integrationist terminology, in particular some of the core concepts ('sign', 'communication', 'initiative-sequel',

‘circumstantial-macrosocial’, etc.), as set out in Harris’ landmark book *Signs, Language and Communication* (Harris 1996) and elsewhere. I shall take as my point of reference some of the questions raised by integrationists Toolan (2017) and Hutton (2016) regarding the issue categorisation and the lack of precision of key explanatory terms central to Harris’ theorising. I will argue that integrationist theory is radically lay-oriented, i. e. that there are limitations as to what such a lay-oriented theory of communication can explain. The limitations, however, are at the same time its strength. Furthermore, taking as my point of departure this lay-oriented conception of the sign, I shall consider the question whether a general ‘science’ of signs (semiotics) is possible. For this I will look at some of the ideas expressed by semiotician Susan Petrilli (2015) on what Thomas Sebeok has called ‘global semiotics’.

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### **Deferred Imitation, Event Representation and Language Production in One Child's Socio-dramatic Play**

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Piaget demonstrated the frequent occurrence of deferred imitation in children's behaviour from around the age of 18 months. Piaget wanted to assess when children become able to move beyond the early manifestations of deferred imitation and into the kind of conceptual representation that characterizes the way children play once they have become linguistically accomplished (from the age of 4 to 7 years). Piaget followed Saussure in distinguishing between symbols and signs. In recent research, Nelson (2007) follows Piaget in proposing that children below the age of 4 years cannot yet represent. Although Nelson mainly refers to Peirce's distinction between icon, index and symbol, the assumptions behind Piaget's claim are emphatically upheld. Nelson suggests that "the learning of large numbers of indexical relations is necessary before the symbolic system can be discovered by the individual learner" (Nelson 2007, p. 146). The assumption is that children at first learn words indexically. They point to an object and the name of the object is suggested to them. They then continuously associate the object with that word and such relations become the basis of their discovery of the symbolic system.

There is no doubt that the pointing to objects and the naming of objects constitute an important part of children's early experiences with language. It is, however, doubtful that this activity could be characterized as children's learning of indexical relations. It is even more doubtful that representational language depends on indexical relations or indeed that a symbolic system is ever "discovered". Piaget and Nelson both dismiss children's early representational accomplishments in order to preserve a particular definition of language that separates the ongoing and dynamic interpretation and production of speech by individuals from the notion of conventional language as a shared system of signs (Saussure) or a shared system of symbols (Peirce). Along the lines of integrational linguistics, I suggest

that the somewhat comparable distinctions made by Piaget and Nelson are misleading and that they get in the way of an exploration of young children's ability to imaginatively imitate and intentionally and linguistically represent by way of action.

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### **Perceiving Context While Integrating Signs: The Retinal Image Myth and the Language Myth**

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A basic tenet of integrationist linguistics is that human beings whenever they communicate are constantly and ongoingly integrating language with its context, broadly construed over various lengths of time (Harris, 2002). Any theory of language must at some point encounter perception, whether as implicit assumption or an explicit component. J. J. Gibson effectively laid bare the myth of the retinal image as the basis of visual perception (Gibson, 1966, 1979), and spent his career detailing a workable alternative: the ecological approach to perception. Harris worked diligently to expose the myth of language as a conduit for the telementation of ideas from one person to another, and spent his career describing an important alternative: integrationist linguistics. However, Gibson made some assumptions about language that are part of the language myth; he assumes “spoken and written words presuppose a code” (1966, p. 321). And Harris certainly seems to assume the retinal image theory of perception. For example, he refers to “apparent size” of an object depending on one’s distance from it (2012, p. 10-11), an idea that is entailed by a retinal image theory of visual perception. How can integrationist linguistics avoid the conundrums and pitfalls of the retinal image approach to perception? What is the perceptual basis of integrating language into its context in communication? This paper lays out the two theorists’ assumptions about the other’s field, and endeavors to mesh the two approaches so that we have a more complete theory of perception and a more coherent theory of language. Linguistic theory, which has always focused on the complexities of language and communication, will have a coherent grounding in perception-action, and, specifically, the epistemology that grows out of critical direct perception. And, also, Ecological Psychology will be extended into a complex and comprehensive area of human interaction, that is, communication and language.

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### **Gramsci and the arousal of consciousness through language**

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Since the first years of the century a particular group of Bolshevik revolutionaries gathered around Lunacharskij, Bogdanov and others. The group, called “Vpered” (forward), supported the promotion of a new specifically proletarian culture, endowed with its academic institutions and capable of inheriting the bourgeois domain. The solution proposed was the creation of a *myth* that should have re-invented a narration of the world, taking the bourgeois culture as an element of self-construction. It was a process of self-consciousness arousal. In Gramsci, as it is widely known, this process will be the center of his most important doctrinal book, the 13th “Prison Notebook”, where the construction of a political hegemony depends on the *awakening* of a proletarian consciousness through the creation of a proletarian culture mediated by popular culture, narrative, and myth. “The hegemony of bourgeois ideology beyond the immediate workplace rendered workers unable to act as a revolutionary collective because it prevented them from perceiving their actual position and role in society. [...] proletarian culture would organize human perception and action, *overcome mere spontaneity* and so move society towards the classless culture of the future”.

Not only a culture, but also a language had to be created anew in the new communist society. Who would forge this enormous new creation, given that workers were mainly analphabets and that schools and bureaucracy were torn down after the Revolution? Some assigned the task to a class of social engineers, later called *soul engineers* by Stalin; but some others, and Gramsci was among them, proposed the creation of a new kind of intellectual, arising from the working class and interpreting its self-awakening. The birth of a new language, in other terms, should be a popular initiative rather than a hierarchical and technical imposition.

### Communicative Creativity

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For integrationism, communication is the overriding context for the understanding of language. Harris writes: “As Peter Matthews aptly points out in his entry on integrational linguistics, for integrationists the term *integrational* implies that ‘languages are not conceived as systems independent of their use in communication’ (Matthews 2007: 197). This highlights what the primitive languages postulated by Saussure, Wittgenstein and Chomsky have in common. They are attempts to set up languages as systems, in advance of describing any such system in working order. This move is typical of orthodox linguistics: systems come first, applications later.” (<http://royharrisonline.com/INP27.html>). Yet recently, some new arguments have been advanced to support the idea that language evolution has been independent of communication (Chomsky 2014, Reboul 2015). These arguments centre around the claim that essential aspects of language architecture cannot be explained on the basis of the requirements of communication, and actually seem to hinder communication, namely the basic features of linguistic creativity: decoupling, recursivity, semantic underdetermination; also neither code-based, nor ostension-based theories of communication can explain language evolution (Reboul 2015). These arguments bring back to life, or rather raise from the dead, Fodor’s theory of a language of thought, *mentalese*: language developed as a cognitive tool removed from any communicative function or context, working on thought as it were, that enabled complex conceptual structures to be articulated to enhance the mental functioning of *homo sapiens*, alone with his or her thoughts. This cognitive ability was then externalised in the higher-order communicative behaviour that enables complex



human social environments to arise. I will examine some of the arguments and some of the assumptions behind this “minority view” as Chomsky has called it, and argue that, rather than seeing communication as the externalisation of the language of thought, a theory of the internalisation of sign-making explains the relation between language and communication much better. The chicken-or-egg question of the relation between language and communication can be replaced by a dynamic, co-dependent, integrational account of both as being equiprimordial, provided we change some of the basic assumptions of what we mean by “language” and “communication”. Language is not primarily a structure that gets applied, nor is communication primarily a matter of the instrumental coordination of behaviour; it, too, is fundamentally creative. Recursivity, decoupling and semantic underdetermination are not basic (partly computational) features of universal grammar as it comes to express complex conceptual structure, but epiphenomenal features of emergent codes, grounded in the temporal dimension of symbolisation, without which no complex conceptual structure can get off the ground.

### **Towards a dialectical theory of context**

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Integrationism has not convincingly addressed the subtle dialectics between the individual and social realms of human praxis, whereby each individual is shaped by communal practices while simultaneously shaping and realizing these practices. As a consequence, the relationship between biomechanical and macrosocial factors in integrationism has been left in an unsatisfactory state of ambiguity. To this end, this contribution sets out to explore the relationship between ‘context’ and its concomitant ‘contextualization’, which are both central constructs in integrationism.

The Russian biologist Anokhin suggests that action proceeds in the following stages. In ‘afferent synthesis’, sensations from the external world, triggering impulses, previous experiences, and motivation are integrated into a multisensory percept, which may be conceived as the *context* for the action. Based on this percept, a decision of *what* to do, *how* to do, and *when* to do is taken. ‘Decision making’ involves two functions – anticipation of the expected result and the formation of an action program. In ‘efferent excitation’ the action program is executed, after which the result is evaluated against the expected result via ‘back-afferentation’. The experience is retained in memory for acting relevantly in future, similar situations.

This conception of action presumes at least two biomechanical factors. The first one is *contextualization* - the neurobiological ability to attend relevant sensations and disregarding irrelevant ones. The second is *context formation* – the integration of past, present and future experience as a prerequisite for the formation of an action program. Accordingly, context is seen as an *inherent element of action* rather than, as is usually done, preexisting and requisite for action.

The external sensations involved emanate from the cultural-historical specific communal practices the individual encounters. Acting according to these practices brings about an ongoing clustering of individual contextualizations around communal observable elements – macrosocial factors. Consequently, both biomechanical and macrosocial factors are requisite for context formation. These factors need to be seen as dialectically related – neither can develop without the other. The central message is that such a dialectical conception may address lingering issues in integrationism, and open up new windows for its future advancement.

### **(Visual) signs do not have fixed meanings**

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We can describe a painting as a unique icon, an icon that once created will remain the same. What representational paintings represent, on the other hand, are non-identical tokens of (virtual) non-unique icon types. Such an icon type can be, for instance, a cat, or a garden, or in my example of a Caspar David Friedrich painting, a monk. A (virtual) icon type covers all tokens (in this case, monks and monk representations) held together by (perhaps naturally acquired or, in most cases, discursively constructed) similarity relations (cf. Rosch’s prototype theory). The entirety of icons and their distribution across the painting is what Erwin Panofsky calls the painting’s denotation. According to Peirce, icons (whether unique in the case of a painting or as icon tokens in the case of what paintings represent) are not symbolic. As language is symbolic, talking about icons as icons is not possible. However, as an *icon* or the *icon of a monk* is an expression, we can talk about icons as (lexical) signs. Thus paintings are not just unique icons; they can also be conceived as (visual) signs. Unlike a (non-symbolic) icon, a sign has an (arbitrary) meaning; it does not represent discourse-external reality (in case of something visual, icons), but displays sign types (corresponding to the respective icons). A painting as a sign, or, in Panofsky’s words, its connotation, means what has been said about it. By the way of deixis, a painting becomes a sign once people start talking about (paraphrasing) it. (Similarly, an image of a monk is not just an icon, but also a sign, signifying to me all I have been told about monks [at least to the extent I still remember it]).

As an icon, Caspar David Friedrich’s *Mönch am Meer* shows exactly that: a monk on the shore, looking at the sea. To read the painting as a sign, we have to know what has been said

about it and the context to which it belongs. It is an expression of the Sublime, which, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, became a way to situate the human condition in its confrontation with the boundlessness of the inhabitable nature or, particularly in its German variant, with what is beyond the reach of our thought, thus oscillating between Edmund Burke's 'delightful horror' and the delectable awareness of one's moral inviolability of one's intellect. The shore, as the no man's land between the realm of morality and the domain of hostile corruption, became a topical locus of this confrontation. The fashion of the Sublime was rather short-lived, transmogrifying swiftly into *petit bourgeois* Biedermeier in Germany, or popular Gothic romance in Britain. What had signified the Sublime, namely the mixed feeling of elation arising from one's might to withstand the perils of unbounded hostile nature, or unthinkable thoughts, came to signify the misery of us puny human beings, exposed to forces over which we have no control. While paintings as icons remain the same, as signs their meaning is never fixed. Meanings evolve, and only in a hermeneutic fusion of earlier horizons with our own we can attempt to fathom their diachronic dimension.

Treating a painting as a sign (deictically linked to its iconic nature), everything that has been said about it makes up its meaning (i.e. the [virtual] sign type). Every time someone talks about it, this utterance constitutes a single token of the sign (type). As meaning is never fixed, no token is like another. It differs in terms of its paraphrastic content (i.e. in what is said about it [in John Sinclair's words, the verbal context in which it is embedded]), in terms of its intertextual links (references to previous and subsequent occurrences (tokens) of the sign (type)), and in terms of the wider context of the utterance in which it occurs.

What I say about a painting will be a reaction to what I have been told by others. Normally I will only react to something said if I want to endorse, reject or modify it. What I say will therefore add something new to its meaning and thus effect a change of the sign. This is *mutatis mutandis* also the case for words, text segments and even full texts. Only by being paraphrased, explicitly or implicitly, they acquire a meaning. Once a painting, or a book, ceases to be talked about, it may still hang, as an icon, in a museum, or acquire dust on a bookshelf in a library, but it had lost its meaning.

In SLC, Harris talks about 'communicational content': "What we call 'content' is always a function of the integration of two or more communication processes. And the reason why content is often hard to pin down is that the integration itself is complex and open to more than one interpretation." Each interpretation of a painting (type) recreates the sign in form of a new token, not identical with any previous token. We cannot escape the fact that every sign (type) has a diachronic dimension, its succession of sign tokens.

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### **What do they talk about when they talk about tax? The changing narrative about taxation in the *Mail* and the *Times*.**

Michael Toolan  
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My interest is in the discursive representation of everything to do with taxation in the UK in two influential centre-right newspapers, the *Times* and the *Daily Mail*, especially their editorial sections, since 1970. Everything to do with taxation includes newspapers reactions to the introduction of new taxes, tax rises or reductions, tax-avoidance, commentary around estate duties and inheritance tax, and, crucially, acknowledgements of the direct links between taxes gathered and goods and services returned (pensions, healthcare, social care, education, infrastructure, etc.) I will aim to show, using corpus evidence, that, mirroring and advancing a low-tax inequality-friendly mindset, there have been significant shifts in these newspapers' narratives about tax and taxation over the decades. My presentation is part of a corpus-assisted Critical Discourse Analysis of the shifting discursive representation of increasing wealth inequality in the *Times* and the *Daily Mail*, from 1971 to the present day (see <https://dinequality.com/>; and Toolan, forthcoming, *The Language of Inequality in the News*, CUP). What Roy Harris would have thought of such a study, and whether he would have found it sufficiently intellectually absorbing, is hard to say. But given his continued interest in 'Orwellian' linguistics, his discussion of the *Darkie/Darlee* toothpaste episode, and his advocacy of a 'lay-oriented linguistics', he might have seen some sense in it, despite the prima facie elements of 'fixed-code segregationism' he might have also found in it.

### **Attentional actions and assertions**

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According to integrationism, we are language *makers* rather than *users* of a determinate language. In this paper, I explore an aspect of what we do when we make language, based on ideas from post-cognitivist approaches to cognition, in particular enactivism and ecological psychology. The goal of this paper is to bring ideas from integrationism into fruitful conversation with these post-cognitivist approaches.

We are not born as language makers. We have to learn to talk. But what do children learn, if it is not the abstract meanings of decontextualised words? Based on the *constraint-view of language* (Verbrugge 1985; Raczaszek-Leonardi 2011) and the ecological conception of learning as the *education of attention*, I take a child's 'first words' to be *attentional actions*: social actions that function as enabling constraints on attention (Van den Herik, under-review-a). Attention is understood ecologically, as selective openness to the field of affordances (possibilities for action) in relation to a task or goal (E.J. Gibson & Rader, 1979; Rietveld & Kiverstein 2014). An attentional action functions by indicating some aspect of a situation to someone else in order to do something together (cf. Reed 1995). Attentional actions function akin to ostensive gestures, and therefore cannot be segregated from the situation in which they are performed, nor reduced to the child's behaviour or knowledge.

The paper ends by proposing an extension of the account of attentional actions to the practice of making assertions. Making an assertion is pointing something out, 'putting it on exhibit, so to speak' (Haugeland 2013, p. 67). In order to be able to make an assertion, a child also needs to be able to participate in metalinguistic reflexive practices in which the semantic content of assertions is (re)negotiated. This *content-sensitivity* can be explained by means of the education of attention with respect to attentional actions (Van den Herik, under-review-b).

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### **Information science and integrational linguistics: new directions for scholarship**

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Full text searching and retrieval since the early 1990s has revealed the unpredictability of searching. Word meanings revealed in recalled documents may not correspond to the intended meanings held by the searcher. For instance, a search in 1993 through the files of *The Guardian for university AND library AND finance* recalled a review of a translation of the *Kama Sutra* (Warner, 2010, p.75). Since 1993, there have been highly significant changes in scale, in the development of search engines, which can be regarded as quantitative transformations with qualitative effects.

Amongst these effects is the further questioning of language as a nomenclature, of the word as a unit of meaning, and of the adequacy of current theoretical conceptions of the word. These questionings have been developed into points of departure and theories have been developed to understand full text retrieval.

- A theory of semantics has been developed. Word meaning is understood to be primarily determined by human mental labour on the intersection of syntagm and paradigm. The meaning of a word is distinguished from evidence of having understood that meaning. Meaning itself is understood as connected with human consciousness.
- The view that, '*multiplicity of meanings is the constitutive feature of [the primitive or prehistoric] word*' (Volosinov, 1986, p.101) is incorporated into the semantics. A primitive consciousness of language can also be found in the cave dwelling Polyphemus, one of the Cyclops, in the *Odyssey* and in his deception by the double meaning of Nobody, a name to Polyphemus and a word meaning *no one* to the other Cyclops.

- The word of printed English is understood from the perspective of information theory as a ‘cohesive group of letters with strong internal statistical influences’ (Shannon, 1951/1993, pp.197-198).

These understandings have proved robust for understanding full text retrieval. The further issue then arises of whether they can sustain their robustness and informativeness outside of that context. The paper explores this issue and invites contributions from integrational linguistics. An analogy between the semantics developed for retrieval and the insistence that ‘*language is a site with no exterior*’ (Barthes, 1986, p. 114) is indicated. The paper is then intended as an opening into new directions for future scholarship.

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