

Week 14 Handout

Plan (in 3 parts, with an optional 4th):

- I. Recollecting Rorty
- II. Tasks for Post-Rortyan Linguistic Neopragmatism
- III. Adjudicating the Dispute of Naturalistic vs. Normative Pragmatic MVs
- IV. Kant and Hegel on Normative Attitudes Instituting Normative Statuses

(I) Six phases of the development of Rorty's thought on representation:

- 1) *The Linguistic Turn* (1967):
Ideal vs. ordinary language philosophy.
Eventually motivates pragmatism with a linguistic turn, *metalinguistic pragmatism*: the pragmatism of the 'vocabulary' vocabulary.
- 2) "Incorrigibility as the Mark of the Mental" and eliminative materialism (1970):
An ontological category—Cartesian minds and the mental episodes they comprise—is understood in *normative* terms of the *authority* structure of the *vocabulary* used to discuss them.
- 3) *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (1979):
Traces out the deleterious consequences of working in a representational semantic metavocabulary of the sort inherited from the Enlightenment, for the philosophy of mind, epistemology, and the philosophy of language.
- 4) *Consequences of Pragmatism* (1982):
Principal target is the idea that different vocabularies-in-use can be compared and normatively assessed as better or worse, just *as vocabularies*: as more or less accurately representing what they represent. Pragmatism is the alternative.
- 5) *Contingency, Irony, Solidarity* (1989):
The romantic power of redescription becomes visible when one adopts the 'vocabulary'-vocabulary as one's *pragmatic* metavocabulary.
- 6) *Girona Pragmatism: A View* (1996):
Pragmatism as antiauthoritarianism, so as a second Enlightenment.
Representation understood as a normative concept.
Reconstructed punchline:
No longer just reject representational semantic metavocabularies in favor of pragmatic metavocabularies.
Now **social pragmatism about normativity is applied to a normative *pragmatic* metavocabulary for representational *semantic* metavocabularies for naturalistic OED vocabularies generally.**

(II) Constructive theoretical philosophical tasks for post-Rortyan metalinguistic pragmatists:

Price objects that theoretical *quietists*, while on the negative side properly rejecting the assumption that *e-representational semantic* metalanguages are universally applicable or appropriate, shirk the positive task of providing accounts of potentially problematic vocabularies in *pragmatic* metavocabularies.

Some such tasks:

1. Using pragmatic metavocabularies (whether naturalistic or normative or something else) to characterize *autonomous* vocabularies (ADPs) in general.
2. Using pragmatic (meta)metavocabularies to characterize *i-representational* semantic metavocabularies (applicable to all vocabularies-idioms with declaratives) generally.
3. Using pragmatic (meta)metavocabularies to characterize *e-representational* semantic metavocabularies (applicable only to some vocabularies-idioms) generally.

Five candidate conceptions of semantic e-representation:

- i) *Isomorphism* of constellation of representings and constellation of representeds.
- ii) Subjunctively robust *tracking* of representeds by representings.
- iii) *Empirical* structure of justification (special authority of observations = noninferentially elicited reports).
- iv) (ii) + (iii)
- v) *Eliatic* criterion: Must adequate semantic metavocabulary *use*, and not just *mention*, the terms of the vocabulary is an MV for?

4. Using pragmatic metavocabularies to characterize *naturalistic* vocabularies (and MVs).

Q: Are (3) and (4) different descriptions of the *same* task? I will claim ‘Yes’ below (III-6-ii).

5. Using pragmatic metavocabularies to characterize *normative* vocabularies (and MVs).
6. Brandom: Using pragmatic metavocabularies to characterize *categorial* metavocabularies: vocabularies that are *elaborated from* and *explicative of* (LX for) every autonomous discursive practice (ADP). It is claimed that included among vocabularies that are categorial in this sense are:

- Logical vocabulary
- Alethic modal vocabulary (paradigmatically, subjunctives)
- Deontic normative vocabulary.

(III) Adjudicating the Dispute of Naturalistic vs. Normative Pragmatic MVs:

- 1) Among constructive post-Rortyan metalinguistic pragmatists:
 - Price favors *naturalistic* pragmatic metavocabularies, while
 - Brandom favors *normative* pragmatic metavocabularies
- 2) Rorty himself seems to endorse using *both* kinds of MV:
 - naturalistic ones while channeling Dewey and using the “coping rather than copying” trope for replacing representational semantic MVs with pragmatic MVs,
 - normative ones in the form of the ‘vocabulary’ vocabulary.

There is more grey area or “no man’s land” between naturalistic and normative MVs than might at first appear:

- 3) Understanding normative statuses as socially instituted by normative attitudes—in accord with *social pragmatism about norms*—is naturalistic in a broad sense (cf. McDowell’s “relaxed naturalism”). The implicit norms or statuses so instituted will not be found in any natural scientific theory. But we can understand them as the emergent products of social practices.
- 4) The *teleosemantic* program of Millikan, Papineau, Sterelny and others is in effect a natural scientific account of the institution of discursive norms.
- 5) Suggestion: ***Natural language naturalism*** specifies the use of vocabularies in natural language (*any* ADP) as a pragmatic MV, rather than in any scientific vocabulary. It allows appeal to any idiom not currently being explicated (any potentially problematic target vocabulary-idiom), in the natural language pragmatic metavocabulary it uses to articulate the use of the target idiom.
 - It is a less committal version of the *ordinary language philosophy* Rorty studied in *The Linguistic Turn*.
 - *Regimenting* the natural language used as a pragmatic MV, by stipulating some implications and incompatibilities among what then become technical terms, yields a less committal version of the *ideal language philosophy* Rorty studied in *LT*. (It is less committal because it doesn’t start from an artificial calculus *all* features of the use of which is settled by initial stipulation.)
- 6) Suggestion: ***Categorial metavocabularies can do all the explanatory work hitherto done by both semantic and pragmatic metavocabularies.***

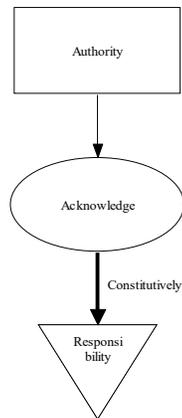
Strategy:

- i. Specify the use of e-representational semantic metavocabularies in *all* of senses (i)-(iv) in (II-3) above, using categorial normative vocabulary and categorial alethic modal vocabulary.
- ii. Argue that this suffices to specify the use of *naturalistic* vocabulary, because naturalistic vocabulary just is vocabulary that expresses conceptual contents specifiable in a semantic metavocabulary that is e-representational in *all* those senses.
- iii. Conclude that both naturalistic and normative pragmatic metavocabularies can be reconstructed using categorial metavocabularies.
- iv. Argue that no matter what standard of *legitimacy* of a vocabulary one uses, one cannot condemn *any* categorial vocabulary as illegitimate without thereby becoming committed to the absurd consequence that all autonomous discursive practices, and therefore *every* vocabulary whatsoever is illegitimate. For the use of any categorial vocabulary can be algorithmically elaborated from the practices and abilities implicit in the use of any autonomous discursive practice. If the ADP is legitimate by the standard being applied, so is any vocabulary whose use can be built on it in this way.

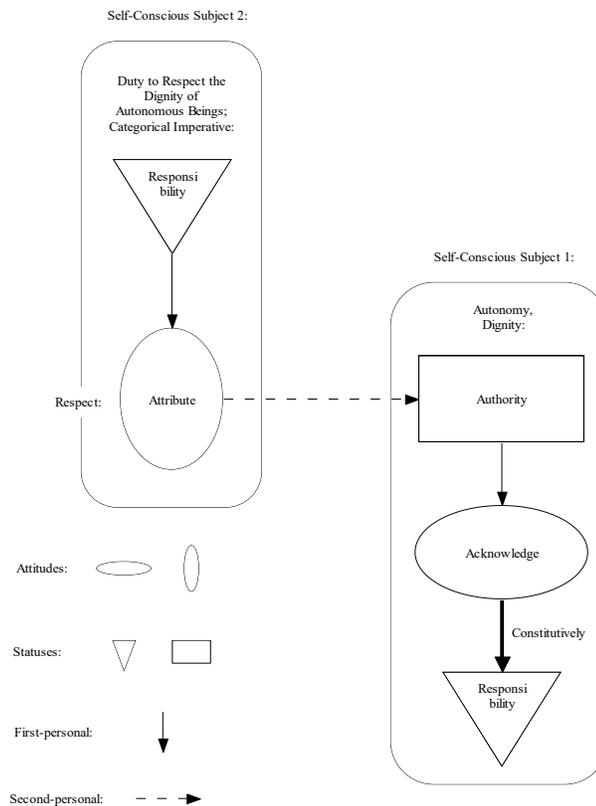
(IV) [Time permitting!] Two models of the institution of norms by practical attitudes:
 See Brandom “The Fine Structure of Autonomy and Recognition:
 The Institution of Normative Statuses by Normative Attitudes”

1. **Kant’s individual autonomy model:**

**Autonomy:
 The Basic Kantian Normative Status**



**The Social Dimension
 of the Kantian Autonomy Model**



2. Hegel's social reciprocal recognition model:

Robust General Recognition
is Attributing the Authority
to Attribute Authority
(and Responsibility)

