RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE WITHIN JÜRGEN HABERMAS AND COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate studies of

The University of Manitoba

In partial fulfillment of the requirement of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Religion

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg

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ABSTRACT

Religious language has been theorized in multiple ways. I will look at how religious language has been theorized in the work of Jürgen Habermas and in the field of cognitive linguistics. I will compare these approaches to religious language and assess the results. In doing so, I will indirectly assess the confluence of these two theoretical approaches. My conclusion is that even with the similarities between these theoretical frames, religion is thematized differently under each method. Jürgen Habermas's definition of religion as the output of ritual praxis is not compatible with the normative place of religious language found in cognitive linguistics.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Kenneth MacKendrick for assisting me to provide an accurate exposition of Habermas's work, and for guiding the direction of the whole project. I am also in the debt of Dr. Terry Janzen, who has been a tremendous help in putting together the section on cognitive linguistics. I am also very appreciative of all of the support my parents have given me throughout my academic pursuits thus far.

INTRODUCTION

Religious language can be theorized in multiple ways. Two approaches to religious language are found within the work of Jürgen Habermas and cognitive linguists. Although there is confluence between these approaches they are not identical. Both their scope and the methods of approach vary. Habermas's theory of formal pragmatics grounds his larger social theory of communicative action. Alternatively, cognitive linguistics argues for a model of language that is embodied and derived from bodily experiences. Within these theories religious language is thematized differently.

My thesis then, is as follows: Jürgen Habermas and cognitive linguists have different approaches to religious language. Where Habermas divides religion between a functionalist and substantive approach, cognitive linguists see religious language as fitting into a normative linguistic framework. This disagreement rests upon whether or not religious language, untranslated, can take the form of a detranscendentalized truth claim. The cognitive linguistics model does not account for Habermas's substantive approach. In order to move beyond this disagreement, cognitive linguistics could be merged with Habermas's framework in a way were it has no bearing on Habermas's substantive approach. This allows cognitive linguistics to give some empirical justification to Habermas's functional approach to religion, but remains distinct from Habermas's substantive definition. It is this substantive aspect that resists translation, and because cognitive linguists are only approaching religion functionally, their work cannot account for the substantive aspects of religious discourse.

Chapter 1 will be a literary survey of the positions held by Habermas that are relevant for my thesis. The first part of this chapter will present an exposition of Habermas's theory of formal pragmatics. This theory is where most of Habermas's work on language is rooted. The theory of formal pragmatics is an attempt to reconstruct how communicative competence develops.[1] It is an attempt to articulate the pragmatic elements of language in a formal manner. For Habermas action oriented towards communication is the primary mode of action. Formal pragmatics allows us to understand what makes communication and understanding possible. In order to articulate how these pragmatic elements of language still allow for understanding Habermas implements a tailored version of Austin's thesis of speech acts. It is through speech acts that we are capable of defending, and arguing against, validity claims.

The second part of this chapter will discuss Habermas's thesis of postmetaphysical thinking. The distinction between pure reason and practical reason (for Habermas, transcendental and speculative reason) is the first step in the path of postmetaphysical thinking.[2] The removal of metaphysics as the foundation for objective claims creates the opportunity for alternative methods of discourse. All empirical knowledge is therefore fallible, even if it is backed by reasonable validity claims. Habermas loosely adopts the categories implemented by Kant (rephrased as: the objective world, intersubjective world, and the subjective world) but rather than relying on an appeal to universals in the form of metaphysics for *a priori* knowledge, we find an appeal to pragmatics in Habermas's theory of formal pragmatics.[3]

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[1] Ibid., 22.
[2] Jürgen Habermas, Between Naturalism and Religion (Malden: Polity Press, 2008), 210.

[3] Jürgen Habermas, On the Pragmatics of Communication (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998), 36-37.

Language has usually been seen as something external to the content of thought.[4] This contention is challenged in the theory of formal pragmatics. Habermas opts for a more intersubjective approach to language as it assumes a status independent of the intentions and ideas of speaking subjects.[5] Formal pragmatics does not utilize a top-down theory of propositions. Instead language comprehension as takes place through a communicative context. Habermas sees the traditional semantic approach to language as ignoring multiple factors such as the role of the speakers, the linguistic context, the claims, and the positions of the speakers.[6] Because of these faults Habermas finds linguistic meaning in communicative discourse and not in the accuracy of a word to its extension within the world.

The third part of the first chapter will discuss Habermas's view of religion. Habermas uses religion in various ways, each originates from an alternate thematization. The two approaches I will focus on are i) his sociological approach to religion, through the linguistification of the sacred, and ii) his history of religion. These two approaches best illustrate where Habermas diverges in his use of religious language from cognitive linguists. Each of these approaches points to Habermas's perception of religion as being ritual praxis.

The "linguistification of the sacred" illustrates how ritual practices and religious worldviews release rational imperatives through the establishment of a communicative grammar that conditions how believers can and should act with one another. Religion is seen as a normative source of ethical and moral commandments. This does not mean that religion holds the same status for Habermas as it does for religious affiliates. For Habermas religion no longer

[4] Jurgen Habermas, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1992), 45.
[5] Ibid., 60.
[6] Ibid., 46.

has any metaphysical claim to truth instead defining religion as ritual praxis.[7] Religion fits into the category of the social (or intersubjective) world.[8] This postmetaphysical sense of religion recognizes that philosophy can neither replace nor reject religion because religious language evades philosophical inquiry. This results in the continual search of philosophy into the universal dimension of human existence.[9]

Chapter 2 will be a literary survey of the primary works within cognitive linguistics. My research will use the work of George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, Eve Sweetser, Chris Sinha, and Alan Cienki among others. I will discuss the primary positions of cognitive linguistics and the consequences these assertions have on the status of religious language. Then I will look at an alternative to both subjectivism and objectivism. This theory is what Lakoff and Johnson call experientialism.[10] Finally, I will also demonstrate that religious language in this framework is a normative phenomenon and may be theorized in the same way as any other use of language.

The first part of this chapter will present an exposition of what Lakoff and Johnson see as the dominant conceptual approaches to philosophical problems, objectivism and subjectivism. They suggest neither approach accounts for the empirical evidence within the field of cognitive linguistics.

The second part of this chapter will discuss how cognitive linguists use the term metaphor. According to Eve Sweetser, metaphors end up becoming conceptually restricted to a poetical method of speech, creatively comparing one thing to another where it may not be

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[7] Jürgen Habermas, *Religion and Rationality* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002), 73.
[8] Maeve Cooke, *Language and Reason: A Study of Habermas's Pragmatics* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1997), 69.
[9] Jürgen Habermas., *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays,* 51.
[10] Mark Johnson and George Lakoff., *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 227.

applicable in a literal sense.[11] Though the second part of the definition may be true, the first part is troublesome upon closer examination of how we speak. Metaphors are not simply an alternative, and more poetic, method of speech. They are a *primary* method of proposing abstract concepts. Cognitive linguists suggest this supports the theory of an embodied mind.[12]

The third section will present an exposition on how we categorize terms in an embodied framework. The categorical methods I will focus on are prototype categories and radial categories. Our language tends to profile our world in a particular way. We are presented with a target concept, and a given causal relation to its source concept.[13] These methods of categorization are utilized in the sciences, for example, biological categories. According to an objectivist position there is only one right way in which we are capable of profiling the world and anything else is simply a misinterpretation of the facts. This structure becomes messy once we begin to look at it more closely. This presupposition is what a majority of contemporary scientific discourse is based upon.[14] However, this does not imply that it is necessarily correct in an objective sense.

The fourth section will present a brief exposition of image schemas. The concept of image schemas may be explained as imaginary structures that connect concepts with precepts.[15] This section will also discuss the varying sorts of schemas, such as image, gesture, and mimetic schemas.

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[11] Barbara Dancygier and Eve Sweetser, Figurative Language (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2014), 1.
[12] Eve Sweetser, *From Etymology to Pragmatics: Metaphorical and Cultural aspects of Semantic Structure* (1998, New York: Cambridge University Press), 25.
[13] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, Metaphors We Live By (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 14.
[14] George Lakoff, Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal about the Mind (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 187-190.
[15] Cienki, Alan. "Image Schemas and Mimetic Schemas in Cognitive Linguistics and Gesture Studies." *Review of Cognitive Linguistics* (2013: 417-432), 419.

The fifth section of this chapter will present Lakoff and Johnson's alternative to the objective/subjective dichotomy, experientialism. The evidence provided by cognitive linguists supports the theory that how we think is not capable of being divided into subjective things and objective things. One alternative is called experientialism, as proposed by Lakoff and Johnson. This view rejects the dichotomy between subjective and objective domains.[16]

The final section in this chapter will explain the place of religion within the cognitive linguists frame. My argument will be that religion has no special place in cognitive linguistics. Rather, it is a normative phenomenon that fits our use of metaphors and schemas in the same manner as any other use of language.

My third chapter will discuss the similarities, and differences of these two approaches. I will begin by arguing that the theory of formal pragmatics is very similar in its goals and methods to the theoretical framework utilized by cognitive linguists. Each works under a similar definition of pragmatics and each is determined to articulate the underlying presuppositions in the pragmatics of speech.

The first part of this chapter will compare formal pragmatics and experientialism. Each approach to language is an attempt to find the underlying presuppositions upon which communication is based. This is done through a different means by each theory, but each approach does not have to be mutually exclusive. For example, Sweetser argues that our methods of explaining our emotions to others through things that are less subjective, (such as

[16] Mark Johnson and George Lakoff, *Metaphors We Live By.,* 225.

texture or a relationship coming to a dead end) are how we are able to discuss concepts intersubjectively.[17] This does not hinder Habermas's theory, but expands it.

The next part of this chapter will discuss the primary differences between these approaches. Where Habermas omits any discussion on images and gestures in communication, Sweetser and Cienki assert that these are parts of how we communicate and understand one another. Their differing approaches to gesture are not complimentary, but neither are they incompatible. I will argue that Habermas's omission of gesture has no bearing on the confluence of these approaches.

Once we establish a general confluence between these theories, I will compare and assess how religious language is theorized in Habermas's work and in cognitive linguistics. For Habermas, religious language is rooted in cultic praxis. It is a private implementation of language that can only be understood by participants in the same cult. Habermas's sociological approach is always historical in nature, never theological. It requires the translation of religious praxis into a discourse understood beyond the limits of religious participants in order to propose a validity claim in the political sphere.

Cognitive linguists theorize religious language in a different manner. Under the framework of experientialism, we are capable of understanding a particular method of speech regardless of its background presuppositions because we all speak in reference to similar embodied experiences. Habermas's contention that only adherents of a religion can understand their discourse is not compatible with the cognitive linguist's contention.

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[17] Jürgen Habermas, *On the Pragmatics of Communication* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998), 24.

The final part of my third chapter will assess these different approach to religious language found in cognitive linguistics and the work of Habermas. I will argue that religion as cultic praxis is not confluent with a view of religion that fits the embodied mind model. Religious language for cognitive linguists is something that is normative, not special. For Habermas, religious language is rooted in experience and cannot be explained, only translated.

CHAPTER I: LITERARY SURVEY OF HABERMAS

The purpose of this chapter is to give a survey of Habermas's work as it pertains to his theory of formal pragmatics and how he thematizes religion. I will focus my discussion on Habermas's *The Theory of Communicative Action vol. 1* and *vol. 2, Religion and Rationality, Between Naturalism and Religion, Postmetaphysical Thinking,* and *On the Pragmatics of Communication.* Using this as my base, I will then look at some other scholars who have engaged Habermas regarding his work on formal pragmatics and religion, such as Eduardo Mendieta and Maeve Cooke.

This chapter will use the following outline: 1) I will give an exposition of Habermas's theory of formal pragmatics and explain how reason and validity claims that do not fall prey to the charge of objectivism. 2) Explain his concept of communicative rationality and how our approach to rationality can change depending upon which "world" we are discussing (objective, intersubjective, or subjective). Despite this decentered view of reason it is still unified in the diversity of its voices under formal pragmatics. 3) I will then explain what Habermas means by religious language and the linguistification of the sacred. This will lead to Habermas's definition of religion as ritual praxis.

Habermas's concept of reason is rooted in a critique of metaphysics and rejects the position that language is something external to the content of thought.[18] He develops an alternative, intersubjective, approach to language called formal pragmatics.[19] This theory assumes a status independent of the intentions and ideas of speaking subjects.[20] Habermas sees

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[18] Jurgen Habermas, 1992. *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press., 45.
[19] Formerly called "universal pragmatics."
[20] Ibid., 60.

the traditional semantic approach to language as ignoring multiple factors and finds meaning not in the accuracy of a word to its extension within the world but through speech acts in an attempt to come to an understanding.

1.1 Theory of Formal Pragmatics

The theory of formal pragmatics is a reconstructive theory that illustrates how communicative competence develops.[21] Habermas implements a majority of the work on language from multiple sources of twentieth century scholarship including sociology and analytic philosophy. He argues that these are insufficient for creating a full concept language. The primary goal of language for Habermas is to allow us to come to an understanding via communication. By appealing to Karl Bühler's functional scheme of language formal pragmatics can account for the validation of truth claims and provide an explanation of how sentences get their meaning. This approach divides a speech act into three parts 1) the speaker's intention 2) the objective world and 3) the addressee.[22] Habermas also thematizes the notions of subjective truthfulness and normative rightness. The speaker in a speech act makes use of subjective experiences which relate in some manner to the objective world.

Formal pragmatics focuses on language as a means to come to an understanding and attempts to reconstruct the universal conditions that make mutual understanding possible. The ability to reach understanding via language is crucial for Habermas's formal pragmatics and is the primary mode of action. The theory of formal pragmatics achieves universality, without an appeal to metaphysical essences or concepts. In order to maintain its postmetaphysical

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[21] Habermas's theory of formal pragmatics has undergone multiple name changes. In his 1975 essay *A Theory of Communicative Competence,* it went by the title communicative competence. When Habermas changed his approach to the theory to implement speech act theory, he changed the name to Universal Pragmatics. It has since been changed to Formal Pragmatics in an attempt to emphasize it is a formal analysis of the pragmatics of language.
[22]Ibid., 75.

universality, formal pragmatics grounds our ability to understand each other in J.L Austin's speech act theory. The appeal to Bühler's functional scheme allows us to classify and understand all types of speech acts where many other theories only account for one. This section will discuss the three parts of speech that make up the theory of formal pragmatics.

The removal of metaphysics as a grounds for objective claims creates the opportunity for alternate methods of discourse. Without any universals even our most objectivist assertions are fallible, even if they are quite likely to be true. Habermas adopts the categories implemented by Kant but rather than relying on an appeal to universals in the form of *a priori* knowledge, we find an appeal to pragmatics in Habermas's theory of communicative action. Habermas assesses Wittgenstein's use-theory, Searle's/Austin's speech act theory, and Bühler's functional linguistic approach, taking what is useful and criticizing what falls short.

The categories thematized by Habermas, objective, intersubjective, and subjective mirror those seen previously in Kant. However, the removal of a metaphysical framework favours an appeal to theories of language as seen in Habermas' concept of communicative rationality and formal pragmatics. These categories for Habermas extend to truth claims (objective), claims to normative rightness (intersubjective), and sincerity/preference (subjective).

Language has usually been seen as something external to the content of thought.[23] This contention is taken up in the field of formal pragmatics. Although this approach is still used frequently in certain studies of linguistics, Habermas opts for a more intersubjective approach to language as it assumes a status independent of the intentions and ideas of speaking subjects.[24] That is, an approach which does not utilize a top-down theory of propositions but rather sees

[23] Ibid., 45.
[24] Ibid., 60.

language comprehension as taking place through a communicative context. Habermas sees the traditional semantic approach to language as ignoring multiple factors such as the role of the speakers, the linguistic context, the claims, and the positions of the speakers.[25] Because of these faults, Habermas finds meaning in language not in the accuracy of a word to its extension within the world but through communicative discourse.

In order to accurately articulate what he means by formal pragmatics, Habermas contrasts his reconstructive approach with other methods. The main approach he uses to contrast his theory is the empirical approach to language, particularly that of Chomsky. The method of 'linguistic competence' developed by Chomsky refers to an abstract system of rules, based on an innate language apparatus which comes pre-equipped for all humans.[26] Habermas takes issue with Chomsky on three particular points. 1) The first is the monological approach taken by Chomsky's theory. Habermas suggests that in order for this to be a sufficient linguistic basis for speech, we would have to be able to reconstruct the process of communication as a monological one. "I consider this model to be monological because it consistently attributes the intersubjectivity of meaning – that is, the mutual sharing of identical meanings – to the fact that sender and receiver – each and entity for itself – are previously equipped with the same programme."[27] For the approach taken by Chomksy, this notion of a universal grammar is the concept that makes communication possible. 2) The second of Chomsky's assumptions is what Habermas refers to as the *thesis of a priorism.*[28] This presupposes that "the inventory of ultimate meaning elements – as the condition which makes semantic differentiation possible – precedes

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[25] Ibid., 46.
[26] Jürgen Habermas, "Towards a Theory of Communicative Competence," *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy* (1970, 360-375), 361
[27] Ibid., 361.
[28] Ibid., 363.

all experience."[29] That is, there are elements of our linguistic comprehension that we know intuitively, independent of any experiential basis. 3) The final assumption is the *thesis of elementarism*. This assumes that there are a finite number of meaning components that make up the semantic content of all possible natural languages.[30]

Habermas argues that each of these assumptions fails to take into account various pragmatic elements of language. 1) The *thesis of monologism* fails to take into account the proposition that semantic universals could also be aspects of an intersubjectively produced cultural system.[31] 2) The *thesis of a priorism* cannot account for the ability for a universal semantic field to reflect the universality of specific elements of experience.[32] 3) Finally, the *thesis of elementarism* fails to account for the ability for a semantic field to be formed and remoulded in association with shifting views of nature and society.[33]

Habermas's rejection of Chomsky's universal grammar system does not mean that Habermas rejects the possibility of universal meaning. Rather than root such a concept in a neurologically static grammar system and *a priorism,* Habermas suggests we find meaning via communicative competence. "Universal meanings, which arise in all natural languages, neither automatically precede all experience, nor are they necessarily rooted in the cognitive equipment of the human organism prior to all socialization."[34]

In order to maintain the universal status of formal pragmatics, Habermas develops the thesis that "anyone acting communicatively must, in performing any speech act, raise universal

[29] Ibid., 363.
[30] Ibid., 363.
[31] Ibid.,363.
[32] Ibid.,363.
[33] Ibid., 363.
[34] Ibid., 363.

validity claims and suppose that they can be vindicated."[35] There are four universal validity claims that *must* be raised with the use of any speech act.[36] In order to act communicatively I must:

1) Uttering something intelligibly
2) Giving (the hearer) something to understand
3) Making oneself understandable
4) Coming to an understanding with another person[37]

If I were to argue against Habermas's four universal validity claims oriented towards mutual understanding I must first accept the four universal validity claims raised by a speech act mentioned previously. For example, to argue that communicative action is problematic I must first 1) utter something intelligible (my argument against communicative action) 2) make sure that the hearer understands my argument, 3) the hearer must make themselves understandable, and finally, 4) we come to an understanding of why we either agree or disagree regarding the validity of these four validity claims. It may be possible to reject this theory, but in doing so one must remove themselves from acting in a communicative fashion. Essentially one has to accept something very similar to this theory if one is to argue against it and continue to act communicatively.

Philosophical investigations of language can be divided into three camps. 1) The camp of formal semantics, which asserts that language accurately depicts real-world occurrences. 2) Intentionalistic theories of language, which argues that an utterance receives meaning via what was meant by the utterence, and 3) the use theory of meaning, based off of Wittgenstein's later

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[35] Jürgen Habermas, *On the Pragmatics of Communication* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998), 22.
[36] In this particular case, validity claim refers to four assumptions that are made if I am to act communicatively. The term 'validity claim' has changed in Habermas's later work. It now refers to claims that can be validated either objectively or intersubjectively.
[37] Ibid., 22.

work, and asserts a context of interaction where linguistic expressions serve practical functions.[38] Habermas argues that each approach is limited in its ability to accurately depict an actual speech scenario and opts for a theory which combines all three under the umbrella of Bühler's theory of language.

1.1.1 Formal Semantics

Formal semantics roots its theory of meaning in the grammatical structure of linguistic expressions, giving language a status independent of the intentions of speaking subjects and of any contextual or conceptual variation. "Correct usage and correct understanding do not result from the intentions of the speaker or from the conventions agreed upon by users of language but from the formal properties of the expressions and their generative rules."[39] Habermas takes this contention, initially implemented by Frege and Russell, in a more pragmatic direction. He suggests that participants in communication are capable of reaching an understanding by utilizing sentences that refer to something in the world. If the validity of a sentence uttered by a speaker is unable to be comprehended by the hearer, then they are an inadequate means of communication.[40]

The formal semantics approach to language understands, and accounts for, what other linguistic theories fail to recognize. Thoughts and intentions are made possible only through the medium of a grammatically structured language. In a sense, this creates a form of reality allowing for the possibility of understanding intentions and contextual frames.[41] Like the other

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[38]Jürgen Habermas, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 58.
[39] Ibid., 60.
[40] Ibid., 62.
[41] Ibid., 66.

theories of language Habermas discusses formal semantics alone is too limited in scope to account for all the subtleties of language.

> In its classical form, truth semantics is supposed to be able to ignore altogether the circumstances under which a hearer *is in a position to recognize* when the truth conditions of a sentence are satisfied. But, at most, the knowledge of truth conditions is unproblematic in the case of simple predicative observation sentences, whose truth can be checked in surveyable contexts by means of readily accessible perceptual evidence.[42]

Habermas does not believe that formal semantics is in a position to ignore the circumstances of an utterance. This limits this approach to language to only giving us very simple truths in the form of a subject-predicate relation. For example, Russell's popular "The present king of France is bald" example is not an issue if truth semantics must take into account the circumstances of an utterance. Rather than having to appeal to a complex theory of descriptions to allow the sentence to have meaning under an exclusively truth semantic approach, we merely need to understand that this is only *one* aspect of linguistic expressions. Therefore, truth semantics can only present us with simple truths such as, "the ball is red" where the truth claim can be empirically verified.[43] As I will discuss later, these sorts of empirically validated truth claims are still subject to fallibility.

1.1.2 Intentionalism

Under the intentional semantic frame subjects "influence each other in the same manner in which they always intervene in innerworldly processes: causally."[44] These subjects are capable of purposive activity that just so happens to be mediated by language. "A speaker *S*

[42] Ibid., 67.
[43] Ibid., 67.
[44] Ibid., 59

intends to call forth an effect *r* in hearer *H* by uttering '*x*' in a particular context, whereby '*x*' does not yet have a conventionally regulated meaning content, but has its meaning recognizably *conferred* by *S* for *H* in the given situation."[45] The speaker puts forth an intended effect which is to be induced by the hearer's recognition that the utterance of '*x*' is an utterance of communicative intention.

There are some drawbacks to this approach for Habermas. Independent of any other theory of language intentionalism presupposes that the meaning of claim '*x*' by S "is supposed to be explicated solely by means of the intention with which S utters '*x*' in a given context."[46] Therefore the hearer, *H,* must understand what *S* intended to mean by *x.* If *H* cannot identify what *S* meant by uttering *x* then the attempt at communication failed.[47] Intentionalist semantics presents us with the task of tracing the meaning of an utterance back to what the speaker intended. We therefore come to understand the meaning of something indirectly. Because there is no shared knowledge under this view, we end up with multiple ways to find meaning in an utterance. "*S* can only achieve the desired effect as long as the intention that *H* is supposed to take for the intention of *S* is not identical with the strategic background intention that *S* is actually pursuing."[48] This is salvageable if both the speaker and the hearer already possess shared natural meanings of language in the form of an intersubjectively known and conventionally regulated sign.[49] For Habermas, this allows for reciprocally reflected attribution

[45] Ibid., 59.
[46] Ibid., 60.
[47] Jürgen Habermas, *On the Pragmatics of Communication* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998), 107.
[48] Jürgen Habermas, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 65.
[49] Ibid., 65.

of propositional attitudes and contents, but we are still unable to possess intersubjective knowledge.[50]

1.1.3 Use-Theory

The theories of language we have looked at so far are all concerned with how language is capable of supporting a particular propositional claim. Use-theory in Habermas's view allows us to utter expressive claims that do not have any inherent semantic content. This view is borrowed and adapted from the latter work of Wittgenstein. The use-theory of meaning is a critique of the truth-semantic conception of language previously discussed. Language does not just communicate facts but it is equally adept at serving the purpose of telling jokes, greeting and asking questions.[51] These sorts of uses cannot be accounted for in a formal semantics view of language. This theory advocates for the need of the language game. This method of understanding language does not see language as a tool to assert a fact about the world. Rather, language becomes a form of life.[52] This theme is seen multiple times throughout *Philosophical Investigations.* Throughout the multiple examples of the ambiguity of language, from the bricklayers, to the indefinable concept of game, to the incomprehensible speaking lion, Wittgenstein wraps language tightly in its own game. This is an issue for Habermas. "Utterances are valid or invalid only according to the standards of the language game to which they belong. It is thus hardly noticed that the relation to truth of fact-stating discourse is also lost."[53] The potential for a universally understood validity claim is lost if we adhere to intentionalism alone.

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[50] Ibid., 66.
[51] Ibid., 62.
[52] Ibid., 63.
[53] Ibid., 69.

1.1.4 Speech Acts

This approach to language comes from Wittgenstein's use-theory, but was expanded by Austin and Searle. Of all the aspects of language that Habermas discusses, this is crucial for grounding his theory of communicative action and is connected with communication in all levels of discourse. Habermas alters the approach of Austin and Searle because he sees it as inadequate. This will be discussed in the next section.

Wittgenstein introduced the alternative use-theory approach to language that we have discussed previously. Under his theory, we are capable of having meaning and validity that is independent of a relationship between language and the world by disconnecting the meaning of words from truth semantics. Any relation to truth claims is lost under this approach.[54] Language achieves meaning through understanding the contextual standards that surround the utterance of a particular statement.

Austin expands on this concept by introducing two types of speech acts, illocutionary and locutionary acts. Locutionary acts investigate how language joins with the interactive practices in a given form of life, just as Wittgenstein's use theory suggests. Austin's addition is the illocutionary act, which allows us to preserve some of the benefits he sees from maintaining ties to truth semantics. "Austin takes the first step to a theory of speech acts that combines the insights of truth semantics with those of language-game pragmatics."[55] Locutionary acts allow us to assert validity claims about the world that are capable of being either true or false. An example of such a speech act would be "s." Illocutionary acts are speech acts exempt of any propositional content, for example "Oy vay," or even a simple greeting such as "hello." These

[54] Ibid., 69.
[55] Ibid., 69.

are performative expressions that possess a sort of force and emphasize how content is conveyed. These utterances are capable of possessing an emotional disposition, but this is something that is distinct from a validity claim in Austin's view.[56] We then have the following version of language:

Locutionary acts: constatives, true/false
Illocutionary acts: performatives, happy/unhappy[57]

There is a potential use for speech acts that Austin calls *perlocutionary effects.* This concept comes from the notion that speech acts are capable of producing side effects that are either intentional or unintentional in their nature. The perlocutionary acts that are of interest to Habermas are those that can be utilized in strategic action. Perlocutionary acts put forth an illocutionary act that possesses an *internal* meaning and adds to it an *external* meaning, not strictly seen in the illocutionary act.[58] In his later work, Habermas distinguishes between three types of perlocutionary effects. The first refers to all aims and effects that go beyond illocutionary success. The second exists only in a contingent way. That is, when "I understand a request to give Y some money and then accept a request to do so; I give Y some money and thereby give pleasure to Y's wife."[59] The final sort of perlocutionary act is a sort that cannot be achieved if the agent openly declares their aim.[60]

Although Habermas uses Austin's general theoretical frame, he does not see such a vast distinction between locutionary and illocutionary acts as Austin had originally proposed. He argues that "this demarcation of locutionary and illocutionary acts could not be maintained when

[56]Jürgen Habermas, *On the Pragmatics of Communication* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998), 70.
[57] Ibid., 73.
[58] Ibid., 125.
[59]Maeve Cooke, *Language and Reason: A Study of Habermas's Pragmatics* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994), 23.
[60] Ibid., 23.

it became apparent that all speech acts – the constatives included – contain a locutionary component (in the form of a sentence with propositional content) and an illocutionary component (in the form of a performative sentence).[61] Habermas contends that speech act theory, as proposed by Austin and Searle remains too close to the presuppositions held by truth-conditional semantics. The only way in which to utilize this theory is to distance it from truth semantics and place it in the framework provided by Karl Bühler. Using Bühler's system we may still provide grounding for the "appellative and expressive functions of language."[62] With this shift in methodology, Habermas reorients the theories of language discussed by analytic philosophers from appeals to truth semantics and metaphysics to an appeal to formal pragmatics.

1.1.5 Validity Claims

Every speech act puts forth a validity claim that is simultaneously composed of three claims to validity. A claim to truth, a claim to normative rightness and a claim to sincerity are all simultaneously put forth with a speech act. Only one of these three is usually at the forefront of the act. The interconnected nature of speech acts is asymmetrical. A locutionary act may put forth an illocutionary validity claim, but an illocutionary validity claim may not reciprocally put forth a locutionary act.[63] For example:

a) I promise (order) you that *q*.
b) He promises (orders) him that *q.*[64]

The first statement is one of locutionary force, putting forth a promise. The second is a modification which reconstructs the locutionary statement into one which exemplifies

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[61] Jürgen Habermas, *On the Pragmatics of Communication* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998), 73.
[62] Ibid., 110.
[63] Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action Vol. II: Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1981), 64.
[64] Ibid., 64.

illocutionary properties. Habermas suggests that this allows for a collapse of certain locutionary statements into the realm of illocutionary statements without losing their locutionary force. The same does not hold true for statements that may be seen as purely locutionary in nature. For example, "the ball is red." This is an utterance that proposes specific propositional content about the world. This content cannot be placed in an illocutionary form without losing its claim to validity.[65]

Each approach to language in the realm of analytic philosophy takes on the study of one of the three parts of a speech act in Habermas's formal pragmatics. Formal semantics discusses the role of truth claims, intentionalism discusses claims to normative rightness, and use-theory discusses claims of sincerity. All of these sort of claims are made possible in a pragmatic and postmetaphysical frame because we are all able to comprehend speech acts. Locutionary and illocutionary acts allow us to discuss all three elements of a speech act in such a way that each sort of claim is understood and may be responded with either a "yes" or "no."

Because Habermas sees locutionary acts as simultaneously putting forth an illocutionary act, the acts that Searle and Austin call illocutionary change definition in Habermas's theory. Rather than simply being performatives, they take on a major role in discourse in Habermas's intersubjective sphere. Here, they still purport a performative claim, but these performatives can be discussed communicatively and may require a claim to their validity.

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[65] Ibid., 66.

1.1.6 Types of Action

There are various sorts of actions that we can perform. Most of the time Habermas roots these sorts of actions in the work of Max Weber. Habermas is not directly interested in the philosophy of language as an end in and of itself. Rather, it is part of what grounds his theory of action because language, and communication generally, leads to action. Some concepts of action are borrowed from Weber's work and Habermas adds his own notion of action, communicative action. The sorts of actions he takes from Weber come in four types:

1. Instrumental: This sort of action justifies its act via the end it produces
2. value: actions oriented towards value are justified by a belief in a value, and thus act according to this belief for its own sake
3. affectual: emotionally motivated actions
4. traditional: actions rooted in tradition, or habit[66]

Habermas uses this structure to begin his discourse on action theory but he does not take this to be the definitive model of action theory.[67] He suggests that the insufficiencies of Weber's concept of action can be remedied by the addition of a sense of communicative action.

The sorts of action that Habermas wants to distinguish between in particular are those that are strategic, and those that are communicative. Habermas's use of strategic action here is similar to Weber's concept of instrumental action. This sort of action has the capacity to decenter itself from socially normative behaviours, or subjective/emotional decisions. This is where Habermas wants to insert communicative action as the primary method of action, where all other approaches to action may be considered parasitical. Rather than acting to receive a particular end, Habermas suggests that our actions are oriented towards understanding and agreement. "Processes of reaching understanding aim at an agreement that meets the conditions

[66] Jürgen Habermas, *On the Pragmatics of Communication* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998), 114.
[67] Ibid., 117.

of rationally motivated assent to the content of an utterance. A communicatively achieved agreement has a rational basis; it cannot be imposed by either party, whether instrumentally through intervention in the situation directly, or strategically through exerting influence on the decisions of one party on the basis of a calculation of success." [68]

If this is the case, then Habermas's appeal to speech act theory and his concept of postmetaphysical thinking become intertwined. Without a metaphysical background the ability to assert a teleological frame from one to the whole is removed. Communicative action and rationality are social endeavours, not objective ones. In a postmetaphysical society our alternative to communicative action is strategic action, which is an incomplete form of action.

We are capable of achieving communicative action in a postmetaphysical frame through speech acts. "For this reason, we can analyze the formal-pragmatic features of the attitude oriented toward reaching understanding in connection with the model of the attitude of participants in communication, one of whom – in the simplest case – carries out a speech act, to which the other takes a 'yes' or 'no' position."[69] The implementation of speech acts here allows us to argue about the validity of a claim even in a postmetaphysical frame. If we are still capable of action oriented towards understanding, and understanding is possible, this is our only way to pursue academic interests when we can no longer rely on transcendental reason.

1.1.7 Speech Act: Three validity claims

With every speech act, there are three validity claims raised. One directly and two indirectly, all three fitting within Habermas' division between objective, intersubjective and subjective worlds. The first sort of validity claim is a claim to propositional truth. The second is

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[68] Ibid., 120.
[69] Ibid., 121.

a claim to normative rightness, and the third is a claim to truthfulness (referring to the truthfulness of the speaker).[70] Each speech act raises these validity claims simultaneously. "A validity-theoretic interpretation of Bühler's functional scheme leads to the assumption that with a speech act '*Mp,'* S takes up relations *simultaneously* to something in the objective world, to something in the subjective world, and to something in a shared social world."[71]

An example of this property of a speech act is "it is raining outside." With this utterance the speaker raises a truth claim that is either true or false. Simultaneously, the speaker raises a claim to normative rightness, whether or not it is appropriate to say given the context and a claim that she is being truthful in saying that it is raining outside.[72] Only one of the three validity claims is emphasized in any given speech act. In the previous example, the emphasized aspect is the one that refers to the objective world. However, what is emphasized may change according to a particular language, or context.[73] This is where we see the strength of illocutionary acts as belonging to either assertoric, expressive, or regulative speech acts.[74]

1.1.8 Theory of Meaning

For Habermas, we receive meaning not from a transcendent rationality but from our ability to understand the claims raised via a particular speech act. That is, "to understand an utterance is to understand the claim it raises."[75] When asserting this, Habermas is looking at the same approaches to language he uses to build his theory of formal pragmatics, arguing that each

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[70]Maeve Cooke, *Language and Reason: A Study of Habermas's Pragmatics* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994), 59.
[71] Jürgen Habermas, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 76.
[72]Maeve Cooke, *Language and Reason: A Study of Habermas's Pragmatics* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994), 84.
[73]Jürgen Habermas, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 77.
[74] Ibid., 77.
[75] Maeve Cooke, *Language and Reason: A Study of Habermas's Pragmatics* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994), 94.

individually is insufficient in asserting a theory of meaning that encompasses all the variations available to be manifested in a speech act.

Meaning comes via language, but Habermas's theory of meaning is not limited to either the propositional, intentionalist, or use-theory models that he uses to develop his theory of formal pragmatics. Meaning can come in either one of these worlds, and for Habermas is summed up (for the most part) in Dummett's contention that "we understand a speech act when we know what makes it acceptable."[76] Habermas goes on to clarify that this occurs indirectly and is contingent upon the epistemic claim raised by a speaker for the validity of his illocutionary act.[77]

What makes it acceptable depends on the kind of speech act we are looking at. If we are looking at a speech act in the objective world, it is one that should be capable of being empirically verified. If it is a speech act regarding the intersubjective world, the act is acceptable with an appeal to communicative agreement and normative rightness.

1.1.9 Review of Formal Pragmatics

For Habermas, the primary function of language is oriented toward reaching understanding. We are capable of coming to an understanding through actions that are communicative in nature rather than those that are strategic or instrumental. These communicative actions are rooted in our ability to argue about validity claims via a pragmatically restructured notion of speech acts.

This concept of language relies on some presuppositions and idealisms. "Among these idealizations is the presupposition that the participants in the communicative exchange are using

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[76] Jürgen Habermas, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 77.
[77] Ibid., 77.

the same linguistic expression in the same way."[78] That is, pragmatically, we assume that when we speak we understand one another. There is an inherent assumption that we are capable of understanding validity claims outside of their life-world system, at least in ideal speech situations, in order for speech oriented towards understanding to function.

For validity claims to function within the recognized assumption that we can understand each other there is a division in the sense of validity claim between those which are universal and those that are contextual.[79] The sorts of validity claims that are not restricted to a particular context and remain restricted to a particular life-world rationale exhibit a sort of transcendence. Maeve Cooke illustrates this notion of contextual transcendence as follows:

> We can understand this context-transcendent power in a number of different ways, depending on which of the various strong idealizations implicit in everyday communication we focus on. We should bear in mind that some of these idealizations are implicit only in postconventional forms of communicative action (or, at least, gain a special meaning in postconventional forms).[80]

What Cooke means by postconventional is a disposition that is capable of distancing itself from cultural and life-world contexts. This approach is an extension of Habermas' concept of decentered rationality, and is itself a prerequisite to decentered rationality. In order for rationality to be placed in a self-critical context it must move beyond the conventional approach where it is culturally bound to a specific sense of rationality governed by the life-world in which it exists.[81]

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[78] Maeve Cooke, *Language and Reason: A Study of Habermas's Pragmatics* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994), 30.
[79] Ibid., 32.
[80] Ibid., 35.
[81] Ibid., 36.

1.2 Postmetaphysical Thinking

Habermas's theory of formal pragmatics and his theory of communicative rationality are rooted in his contentions regarding postmetaphysical thinking. I will therefore present a brief outline of what this entails. Postmetaphysical thinking for Habermas has two consequences. First, it demotes philosophy and promotes the reconstructive sciences. [82] Philosophy, as it stands currently, adheres to metaphysical claims and cannot be used to reconstruct empirical validity claims. Second, the reconstructive sciences are empirical insofar as their reconstructions and universal claims are hypothetical and may be subject to testing.[83] That these reconstructive approaches are fallible does not allow them to achieve metaphysical, or objective status.

Postmetaphysical thinking is procedural, rooting itself in practical discourse where metaphysical claims are treated like any other sort of truth claim. Habermas sees the field of philosophy as having accepted modernity unquestionably, creating new methodological foundations from which to inquire about the nature of reality.[84] These methodological alterations align many philosophical investigations (such as those of Russell, Moore, and contemporary figures like Dennett) with that of their scientific counterparts. That is, each has adopted a methodology that assumes the world is capable of being observed *as-it-is* and that practical reason is the means through which claims about reality are adjudicated. "True knowledge relates to what is purely universal, immutable, and necessary."[85] This leads philosophy to assume metaphysical truths.

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[82] Ibid., 5
[83] Ibid., 5.
[84] Jürgen Habermas, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 7.
[85]Ibid., 13.

The notion of postmetaphysical thought decentralizes our idealistic concept of reason and is differentiated between three separate, but interconnected, spheres. Each of these spheres deals with a particular part of the world, the objective world, intersubjective world, and subjective world. This decentering of an idealistic concept of reason comes from the intellectual movements founded during the Enlightenment. The capacity to become self-critical, and thus reconstructive in our intellectual pursuits allowed for the critical examination of a comprehensive rational structure and spawned the fractured rationality as discussed in Habermas' *Theory of Communicative Action*. Communicative action is at the root of all human sociality. Postmetaphysical thinking is a consequence of the rationality of communicative action.

This switch of rationality, for Habermas at least, contributed to the three spheres brought forth by Immanuel Kant. Although Kant still appealed to metaphysical structures, his work is the first step in the separation of communicative rationality from metaphysical authority.

1.2.1 Kant's Reconstructed Metaphysics

In order to have a pure objective reality, we must be capable of stripping ourselves of any social or linguistic frames that may alter the purity of our comprehension. We must be capable of a science of the universal. "Metaphysics had emerged as the science of the universal, immutable, and necessary; the only equivalent left for this later on was a theory of consciousness that states the necessary subjective conditions for the objectively universal synthetic judgements *a priori*."[86] How we perceive metaphysics changed with Kant's critique of reason. Kant's framework still utilizes metaphysics in a manner that would have been relatively familiar to his contemporaries, but limits our access to this metaphysical, or noumenal, realm. Metaphysics for

[86] Ibid., 13.

Kant is an entirely isolated and speculative cognition that obviates the limitations of experience and instruction, hidden in the realm of pure conceptualization.[87] Access to pure metaphysical claims was impossible for Kant, "the transcendent cognitions of reason neither allow what relates to their *ideas* to be given in experience, nor their *theses* ever to be confirmed or refuted through experience; hence, only pure reason itself can detect the error that perhaps creeps into them."[88] There is a strict divide between the phenomena and the noumena, we can only work within the phenomenal realm, but have intuitive access to claims from the noumenal realm. That is, we have *a priori* knowledge via the category of pure reason.

Habermas is not necessarily rejecting metaphysical claims, nor is he simply overcoming metaphysics. He is trying to get around the critique of metaphysics articulated by early members of the Frankfurt School, such as Horkheimer and Adorno, but also other metaphysical critics such as Heidegger and Marxist critiques of metaphysics. He suggests that these criticisms are methodologically similar to that which they are critiquing, and are therefore just as problematic.

1.2.2 Habermas's Postmetaphysical Frame

This sort of metaphysical appeal remains in empirical or objective claims, contrary to what objectivism itself claims. Objectivism has claim to universally indisputable facts "precisely because it is a metaphysical position, whereby I mean one program with scientific means."[89] The rejection of a metaphysical appeal to epistemic knowledge potentially leaves us open to all possible relativist views. If we have no means of appealing to universal "Truth," how then are

[87] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason,* trans. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 109.
[88] Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics,* trans. Gary Hatfield (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 81.
[89] Jürgen Habermas, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 21.

we capable of asserting any position? This is precisely what Habermas's formal pragmatics attempts to resolve.

1.3 Morality, Religion and Rationality

The removal of metaphysics is the liberation of morality based upon practical reason.[90] The categorically binding morality that comes out of a post-Christian framework gives way to Kant's maxim of a categorical imperative, as well as a hypothetical imperative. Habermas picks up on this postmetaphysical construction of religion. Kant sees the only value of religion to be found in its moral frameworks and reduces it to this. Habermas makes a similar move by accepting that religion is capable of contribution to secular discourse. Although this development comes later than his discussion on religion in *The Theory of Communicative Action,* Mendieta argues that Habermas's early work on religion is consistent with his current research on religion.[91] This contribution is quite limited, and is limited in a framework that mirrors Kant in that it is based on moral contribution, not metaphysical or universal truths. The role of religion in contemporary discourse is brought about by 1) the postmetaphysical disposition that decenters religious authority, and 2) the linguistic turn that reduces religion to validity claims of normative rightness and normative validity. At most, religion can point towards moral intuitions.

1.3.1 Durkheim, Weber, and Religion as Ritual Praxis

Habermas sees a relationship between how we perceive morality as something universal and the authority once held by religious institutions. In order to trace this relationship, Habermas assesses the theories of George Herbert Mead and Durkheim in order to suggest that the concept

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[90] Ibid., 210.
[91] Jürgen Habermas, *Religion and Rationality* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002), 28.

of a universal morality is a consequence of the linguistification of the sacred. Prior to this the traditional symbolically oriented notion of religion was assumed authoritative. By using Mead and Durkheim, Habermas demonstrates how the move from philosophy of consciousness to intersubjectivity has impacted the role of religion in discourse.

Durkheim's attempt to answer the question of the origin of modern morality led him to see a correlation between conceptions of morality and conceptions of the sacred. He suggested that religions consist of beliefs and ritual practices that create a notion of religion as the experience of a collective, supraindividual consciousness.[92] Out of the sacred arises the same attitude and authority as that which emanates from morality. Religion "frightens and attracts, terrorizes and enchants."[93] For Durkheim, what is hidden behind the mythical, divine, and sacred aspects of religion is a notion of society that is being symbolically represented.

Where the similarity to morality comes for Durkheim, as well as for Habermas, is through its perceived interactions between the sacred and the profane. The sacred is something which is wholly set apart and distinct from that which is profane. Any contact a sacred act has with something that may be seen as profane reduces the sacred act itself to one of profanity.[94] "Like the attitude toward moral authority, the attitude toward the sacred is marked by devotion and self-renunciation; in worshiping the sacred, in performing cultic actions, in observing ritual prescriptions, and the like, the believer renounces his profane action orientations, that is, those that are utilitarian and related to the self."[95] In the sacred's rejection of self-oriented acts, it

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[92]Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action Vol. II: Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1981), 50.
[93] Ibid., 49.
[94]Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action Vol. II: Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1981), 49.
[95] Ibid., 49.

becomes something that cannot be individually justified, but rather is justified via a notion of collective consciousness. That is, religious beliefs and representations are a formulation of beliefs that arise collectively. All symbols under a particular belief system come to be understood as sacred under the mutual understanding of a symbol's meaning within a particular communicative context.

Through this notion of mutual understanding, the sacred becomes an expression of normative consensus.[96] "Collective identity develops in the form of normative consensus; this is, of course, not a question of achieved consensus, for the identities of individual group members are established equiprimordially with the identity of the group."[97] These religious convictions are formatted linguistically and are expressed via normative consensus.

This collective identity brings us back to Habermas's removal of a metaphysical frame and the decentering of reason. Prior to the decentralization of reason, the conception of the unity of reason is somewhat paradoxical, Habermas refers to a problem pointed out by Plotinus: "The one is everything and yet not even one."[98] That is, metaphysical unity suggests one is everything insofar as it exists in everything, but equally distances itself from everything in an attempt to remain unified. Everything and the one that encompasses everything are therefore not the same.[99] Habermas follows this contention with:

> Metaphysics entangles itself in such paradoxical formulations because, thinking ontologically, it vainly tries to subsume the one itself under objectifying categories; but as the origin, ground, and totality of all beings, the one is what first constitutes the perspective that allows the many to be objectivated as the plurality of beings.[100]

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[96] Ibid., 52.
[97] Ibid., 53.
[98] Jürgen Habermas, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 121.
[99] Ibid., 121.
[100] Ibid., 121.

This extends to Habermas's thesis that the unity of reason can only be seen in the diversity of its voices.

With the rejection of a metaphysical frame of unity and rise of a decentered view of reason, religion can no longer appeal to a unifying authoritative frame. The sacred, once a metaphysical claim to unquestionable truth, becomes a claim to normative rightness. For Habermas, the linguistification of the sacred is a transition from this conception of sacred language to the notion of asserting criticisable validity claims. This removes the unquestionable authority once held by religion, deflating its metaphysical justification and replacing it with the need to justify itself.

With this move religion loses its authority, something which should come as no surprise under Habermas's contentions regarding post-metaphysical thought. However, through his analysis of religion through Mead and Durkheim, religion is still tied to normative moral thought. Religion can become postmetaphysical in some manner, if only to participate in political discourse within the public sphere.

Like religion, scientism also adheres to universals. In doing so, scientism presupposes that which it attempts to deny, an appeal to truth absent from normative, cultural influence. Any hardliner atheist would reject any notion of theology yet in order to assume the pure objective and universal power of science one must ironically adhere to a universal metaphysics. This is precisely what postmetaphysical thinking avoids. To wrap oneself up in their own ontological cocoon without room for secular discourse results in problematic views, particularly when such views become violently apologetic. With each life-world in a fallible state, none can be placed in a dogmatic position.

Habermas's substantive approach is in contrast to the normative place of religion within his functional model. The substantive concept of religion leads to the incomprehensibility of religious claims within postmetaphysical discourse. "The *religious* discourse conducted within the communities of the faithful takes place in the context of a specific tradition with substantive norms and an elaborated dogmatics. It refers to a common ritual praxis and bases itself on the specifically religious experiences of the individual."[101] For Habermas then, religion is a ritual praxis that is common to a particular group. The decentralization of reason does not hold within these communities, leaving religion as a metaphysically unifying force within these life worlds. Religious language used in public discourse is reduced to something metaphorical.

> These experiences could only be added to the fund of philosophy's resources, recognized as philosophy's own basis or experience, if philosophy identifies these experiences using a description that is no longer borrowed from the language of a specific religions tradition but from the universe of argumentative discourse that is uncoupled from the event of revelation. At those fracture points where a neutralizing translation of this type can no longer succeed, philosophical discourse must confess its failure. The metaphorical use of words such as 'redemption,' 'messianic light,' 'restoration of nature,' etc.' makes religious experience a mere citation.[102]

Religious discourse as ritual praxis protects itself from the profane praxis of postmetaphysical rationality. "If a functionalist description is permitted, then it could be said that faith is protected against a radical problematization by its being rooted in cult."[103] In other words, religions do not succumb to the claims of objectivity, normative rightness, and subjectivity. Instead, religious language keeps these three claims unified. Religious language as cultic praxis cannot take the form of a truth claim. Therefore, it cannot be placed equally in public discourse. Because public discourse is intended to be understood by all within the framework of a postmetaphysical society, religious language must be translated in order to be

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[101] Jürgen Habermas, *Religion and Rationality* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002), 73.
[102] Ibid., 75.
[103]Ibid., 75

understood publicly. Political theology attempts to do this. Theology separates itself from the religion of ritual praxis and allows itself to be subject to truth claims. However, it does so while attempting to maintain its holistic, metaphysical framework. "Under the conditions of postmetaphysical thinking, whoever puts forth a truth claim today must, nevertheless, translate experiences that have their home in religious discourse into the language of a scientific expert culture- and from this language retranslate them back into praxis."[104] Religious language remains private unless it intends to participate in a larger public discourse.

When it comes to discourse in the public sphere, each life-world ought to be tolerated as it stands in its own community insofar as it does not inflict violence upon other positions or customs. "Tolerance can exist only when the parties involved can base their rejection on a *reasonable* ongoing absence of agreement. Not every rejection is reasonable in this sense."[105] This allows for the toleration of all positions, creating a sort of post-secularist position.

Religious rationality is a sense of rationality that is not transcendent, but restricted to a particular life-world context. With reason decentralized, the claims of religion are claims to normative rightness, and are not universal validity claims. However, the language of religions can be adopted into moral discourse. Habermas suggests that there is a connection between religion and philosophy. He also suggests that religion is more suitable to a language that deals with moral issues, but only when it can be translated into something understood by all.

> The world religions, especially the monotheistic ones and Buddhism, attained a conceptual level on par with philosophical idealism. But when they put the world as a whole at a distance by means of a history of salvation or of a cosmology, the great prophets and founders of religions

[104] Ibid., 76.
[105] Jürgen Habermas, *Between Naturalism and Religion* (Malden: Polity Press, 2008), 258-259.

> were led by questions posed *ethically,* whereas the Greek philosophers made the break with the immediacy of the narrative weave of concrete appearances *theoretically.*[106]

Habermas ties together the origins of what are currently considered the main world religions with the developments in philosophy in the Greek era. He does so by assuming what could be called a surge of enlightenment that occurred during a relatively short period of time in human history. During this surge is where today's primary religious and philosophical traditions came from. This theory is called the Axial Age theory, initially proposed by Karl Jaspers. "For the religions to have their roots in this period made the cognitive leap from mythical narratives to a logos that differentiates between essence and appearance in a very similar way to Greek philosophy."[107] Religious insight is therefore not restricted to a singular instance within Christianity, but may apply to all religions. It also ties philosophy with a unitary method of thought encompassed by metaphysical thought. With this definition of religion, Habermas omits anything that does not have its historical roots from the Axial Age.

Out of the Axial Age, Habermas sees the Greek philosophical tradition as the primary mover for our contemporary notions of logic, and Christianity as our primary source for language related to morality. For Habermas, Christianity is religion rooted in salvation that places the world as a whole at a distance. This leads to religions rooted in salvation discourse to pose ethical questions.[108] Even though Habermas's theory of formal pragmatics decentralizes the position of religion, it has preserved something of our past that has been neglected by the pure rationalism of the philosophical tradition that grew alongside the Judeo-Christian perspective. This gives religion, and Christianity in particular, a special place for the conduct of

[106] Jürgen Habermas, *Religion and Rationality* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002), 119.
[107] Ibid., 141-142.
[108] Habermas thinks that Judaism, Islam, and at times Buddhism, also reach this standard of a promise of salvation.

moral praxis and argumentation, and provides an explanation for Habermas's particular approach to these discussions.

For Habermas "the idea of God – that is, the idea of the unified, invisible God the Creator and Redeemer – signified a breakthrough to an entirely new perspective. With this idea, finite spirit acquired a standpoint that utterly transcends the this-worldly. But only with the transition to modernity does the knowing and morally judging subject appropriate the divine standpoint, insofar as it assumes two highly significant forms of idealization."[109] In a single breath, Habermas reserves a special place for religious discourse while simultaneously making its claims subject to empirical scrutiny within the public sphere. The notion of a divine perspective is one that is partly responsible for the language we use to discuss morality. In a way, "the subject objectifies external nature as the totality of states of affairs and events that are connected in a law-like manner."[110] At the same time, "the subject expands the familiar social world into an unbounded community of all responsibly acting persons."[111] This allows for reason to creep into moral discourse, through cognitive rationalization of the objective world and social-cognitive rationalization of the "totality of morally regulated interpersonal relationships." [112]

The only other religion that achieves a similar feat to that of Christianity, for Habermas, is Buddhism, because it carries out a similar notion of the divine standpoint. According to Habermas, Eastern religions are not based on the same principles as the Western monotheistic traditions. Where monotheistic views are based on the acting persons, Eastern religions are grounded in "the impersonal consciousness of an entirely indeterminate Something."[113] Where

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[109] Ibid., 148
[110] Ibid., 148
[111] Ibid., 148.
[112] Ibid., 148.
[113] Ibid., 148.

Buddhism becomes similar in abstraction to Christianity for Habermas is justified by the following: "The same cognitive operation which led the Greeks to the 'Being of beings' in a theoretical intention, leads here, in a moral intention, to a 'Nothing,' which has shaken off everything constitutive of 'something in the world.'"[114]

Even though Buddhism comes close to allowing similar insights to Christianity, cultural and social modernization have not been completed by regions dominated by Buddhism. "In the West, Christianity not only fulfilled the cognitive initial conditions for modern *structures* of consciousness; it also demanded a range of *motivations* that were the great theme of the economic and ethical research of Max Weber."[115] This leads once again to Habermas's roots for our contemporary notion of rationality, dichotomized between communicative and purposive action. Because Christianity fulfilled a particular set of conditions, it produced a society that was capable of a new kind of economic growth and a sense of rationalization that decenters, or suspends, an individual's set of beliefs to adopt a more objective view. Even though Christianity gave rise to these sorts of perspectives they are not directly in line with Christian thought, "Christianity is far more deeply affected and challenged by the unforeseen consequences of this new infrastructure, as are other forms of 'objective spirit.'"[116]

Habermas's demotion of the place of philosophy is partly in reaction to its metaphysical ties, as it cannot stand in such an authoritative place in a world with a decentered concept of reason. Religion and philosophy are both decentered, and thus do not have the authority they once had. Even so, religion is not seen as simply a cultural phenomenon in Habermas's writings.

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[114] Ibid., 148.
[115] Ibid., 150.
[116] Ibid., 149.

As we have seen, it is decentered, but is still capable of providing a privileged view of morality because of its promise of salvation.

Essentially, Habermas is approaching religion from different vantage points. Although each is distinct, there is some crossover. Habermas proposes a sociology of religion, relying on the work of Bellah in his later work, but in *The Theory of Communicative Action* he is primarily using the work of Durkheim and Mead to present a view of religion as no longer appealing to a universal authority. From here he discusses how rationality is no longer unified, but has been shattered into the objective, intersubjective, and subjective realms. Habermas also proposes his philosophy of religion, using thinkers such as Kant and Hegel to propel him forwards here. In some of his essays in *Postmetaphysical Thinking*, this is part of how we arrive in a postmetaphysical epoch. Kant removes our direct link to metaphysical truths, and lays the cornerstone for postmetaphysical thought.

This crosses over into how Habermas articulates his History of Religion. When he discusses the philosophy of religion through Kant, religion is already stripped of its appeal to authority without reason as a mediator. Thus, religion becomes more apt to moral discourse than the approach of philosophy. The link to Habermas's history of religions from here is his division between Athens and Jerusalem. Simply put, Athens provides us with reason, and Jerusalem provides us with morality. This view is rooted in Habermas's appeal to the Axial Age.

1.5 Conclusion

Habermas defines religious language as ritual praxis. This notion of religion is based upon experience. This experience is one that unifies the truth claims, placing the world as a whole at a distance by means of a promise of salvation. As such, religious language does not

enter a discussion based upon validity claims. It is because everyone has a particular linguistic category that they use to speak within a particular group that Habermas bases his contention of tolerance. It is only in the justification of particular acts, such as wanting one's religious disposition to become political, that we must remove ourselves from our language group and speak a secular language to justify our position.

CHAPTER II: LITERARY SURVEY OF COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS

Within the framework of cognitive linguistics our capacity for rationality and argumentation does not come in the form of an *a priori* structure. Rather, our capacity for understanding comes through bodily mediated experience. This leads us to think in terms of an experiential framework. Our language reflects this frame. I will focus on the material that is pertinent to a comparison with Habermas's theory of formal pragmatics and his thematization of religious language.

In this chapter, I will outline some of the primary positions within the field of cognitive linguistics. From this, I will argue that religion is normatively constructed within the cognitive linguistic frame. This chapter will use the following structure: 2.1) I will present a brief summary of both objectivist and subjectivist views of reality in order to illustrate how cognitive linguistics does not fit in either of these ideologies. 2.2) I will then present examples of how figurative language, particularly metaphors, are not simply poetic methods of speech, but are used in normative discourse and consequently affecting how we think. 2.3) This will lead to a discussion of what Lakoff and Johnson see as an alternative to either objectivism or subjectivism. This is what they call experientialism. This alternative suggests that we are capable of validating truth claims via communication and argumentation. 2.4) I will then discuss how these metaphors affect our moral reasoning. 2.5) The final section will discuss how the concept of religion might fit into the framework of cognitive linguistics. I will suggest that religious language fits naturally within the theory of the embodied mind. The scholars that I will rely on the most are Lakoff, Johnson, Sweetser, Cienki, Posner, Givon, and Tversky. Certainly there are others that I will mention and have a significant amount to contribute to the

conversation. However, for the purposes of my current research these sources allow for a strong illustration of what cognitive linguistics is and what it has to offer for religious scholarship.

2.1 Objectivism and Subjectivism

The terms objectivism and subjectivism are utilized in philosophical discourse regularly. There are many interpretations of what may, or may not be, included under these categories. For my purposes I will define objectivism and subjectivism in the same manner as Lakoff and Johnson.

2.1.1 Objectivism

Objectivism is as old as Western philosophy. Starting from the Pre-socratics, its influence in contemporary philosophy is monumental. Within the objectivist position we can either use our capacity for reason to arrive at absolute truth (as rationalists suggest), or we may rely wholly on our sense perceptions to find a truth unaffected by cultural or linguistic variation. The work of Kant is a synthesis of these two notions, despite his claim that we have no knowledge of things as they are in themselves.[117] Kant's claim is that we are capable of possessing a universally valid knowledge, and universally valid moral laws. This concept of universally valid claims runs through the work of Frege, Russell, and Chomsky.

Under the objectivist frame, reason and knowledge are free of any variables distorting their view of reality. Truth is simply a matter of fitting words to the world in objectivism. This assumption is what has led many analytic philosophers to apply set theoretical models onto how language allows for an intelligible world. Words in-and-of-themselves are meaningless symbols.

[117] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 195.

Set theory takes these symbols and applies them to a single state of relationships that exist in the world.[118] We end up having sentences with meaning because they refer to things that exist. The statement "the ball is red," is a simple sentence with a subject predicate relation. The subject (ball) exhibits a particular property (red). From an objectivist position the words are arbitrary but they refer to things that exist *in the world.*

The argument proposed by Lakoff and Johnson against objectivism could be set up in the following manner:

> Premise 1: If reason is contingent upon our embodied experience, then reason is not objective.
>
> Premise 2: Reason is contingent upon our embodied experience.
>
> Conclusion: Reason is not objective.

The embodied mind theory proposes that our perception of our environment is largely determined through how we experience the environment. We interact with our environment by means of a human body that consequently determines our perception. "Change your brain, your body, or your environment in nontrivial ways, and you will change how you experience your world, what things are meaningful to you, and even who you are."[119] Meaning is something that we cannot attain extrinsically. That is, meaning isn't something we can point to directly, saying "*x* means *y.*" Rather, meaning is something that relies upon the interaction between our brain, body, and environment, and is thus embodied just like rationality.[120]

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[118] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 446.

[119] Mark Johnson, The Meaning of the Body (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 1-2.

[120] Ibid., 2.

2.1.2 Subjectivism

The primary view in opposition of objectivism is subjectivism. This view denies any universal human reality. Subjectivism may come in varying forms such as the traditions of phenomenology and existentialism.[121] There are a few particular tenets of subjectivism that run through most, if not all, of its manifestations.

Meaning is private: Meaning has no value outside of its value to a particular individual. This is based on an individual's feelings and experiences.[122]

Meanings have no natural structure: Any structure placed on our experience is artificial.[123]

Meaning cannot be naturally represented: Meaning has no natural structure and as a consequence it can never be fully known or communicated to another person.[124]

2.2 Metaphor

The concept of metaphor that will be discussed is not synonymous to that of the classical concept of metaphor. The classical view dates back to Aristotle, possibly further. It is the view that metaphor is simply using words with poetic tact.[125] This view holds on to certain presuppositions that are generally unquestioned, such as the following:

All conventional language is literal, not metaphorical.
All concepts can be discussed without appeal to metaphorical language.
All definitions are literal.[126]

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[121] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 223.
[122] Ibid., 224.
[123] Ibid., 224.
[124] Ibid., 224.
[125] George Lakoff, "The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor." In *Metaphor and Thought*, Ed. Andrew Ortony (202-251. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 202.
[126] Ibid., 204.

This sense of the word metaphor, and its following assumptions is not the position taken by cognitive linguists, nor does it fit the empirical data provided by this field. The sense of metaphor used by them entails metaphor as a structural system of thought utilizing concrete and physical concepts and typologies in order to explain abstract notions and ideas. This contention suggests we ought to question how we achieve intelligibility and what constitutes a theory of rationality.

2.2.1 Mind-as-Body Metaphor

Lakoff and Johnson's book *Metaphors We Live By* provides several examples of how prevalent metaphor is in common discourse. From the metaphor that GOOD IS UP to metonymical propositions of replacing the part for the whole as in PRODUCER FOR PRODUCT comparisons, our languages have many concepts that cannot be adequately explained utilizing an objectivist frame. Take as our first example the GOOD IS UP metaphor. It is not absurd to utilize spatial orientation such as up or down in order to describe one's mood. Similarly, we use such spatially oriented metaphors to discuss states of alertness.

GOOD/CONCIOUSNESS IS UP; BAD/UNCONSIOUSNESS IS DOWN

Get *up*. I woke *up* just after noon. I *fell* asleep during the movie. That *boosted* my spirit. You are in *high* spirits today. Why are you so *down*? I'm *depressed*.[127]

There are many examples of our language revolving around spatially oriented metaphors in order to discuss more abstract concepts, such as emotion or argumentation. Concepts such as social class are another great example, separation between upper, middle, and lower class falls into the HIGH STATUS IS UP; LOW STATUS IS DOWN frame. Even our concept of rationality is governed by such discourse.

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[127] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 15.

RATIONAL IS UP; EMOTIONAL IS DOWN
He couldn't *rise above* his emotions. This discussion is *over my head*. I can't *get over* breaking up with my girlfriend.

The metaphors discussed so far all have to do with the spatial directions of up and down. However, they are all interpreted very differently. These UP metaphors are all slightly different in their meaning, and all heavily depend on our experience. That is, the use of UP in terms of social status has different conceptual connotations than it does in the case of emotional disposition, or inability to grapple with a particular concept.

Another method in which our language is rooted in metaphor is through CONTAINER metaphors. These sorts of relationships use the spatially oriented concepts to separate something that is *in* a particular container from something *outside* of it. Examples such as "you're *in* the clear," or "get *out* of my way" are easy to think of and easily illustrate how we use spatial distinctions in more abstract ways.

Expanding on the work of Lakoff and Johnson, Eve Sweetser suggests that abstract metaphorical concepts utilize the simplicity of language that refers to materially existent things. This is what she calls Mind-as-Body metaphors.[128] These metaphors are based on our physical interaction with the world, but have been expanded over time to encompass more abstract concepts. She presents some of these concepts in what she calls puzzles.

The puzzles are as follows: 1) why do words regarding physical likeness come to mean probability? (E.g. *Like* and *likely*), 2) what does auditory language like "hear" come to mean "obey," 3) what connects physical contact with understanding (similar things happen with visual

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[128] Eve Sweetser, *From Etymology to Pragmatics: Metaphorical and Cultural aspects of Semantic Structure* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 23.

concepts), and 4) why do words meaning “path” come to mean “however.”[129] I argue, as does Lakoff, that these synchronistic meanings between concrete and abstract categories pose a problem for language as a system of strict categorization.

Each of these “puzzles” is the result of taking something relatively concrete, like our vision, and adapting it to fit abstract concepts. This is a major aspect of what Lakoff and Johnson are doing. Sweetser’s elaboration is the utilization of historical etymology to demonstrate the cognitive grounds for the structure of our current vocabulary and grammar. This means that polysemy and semantic change are related and includes concepts such as sight. We use the terminology related to vision in terms of actually seeing the world, and in terms of understanding. We use terms such as “I see what you mean” knowing full well that the sense of “see” being used refers to knowledge. Sweetser suggests that this correlation is deeper than a simple polysemous relationship, but that it is etymologically rooted in the experientialism purported by Lakoff and Johnson. [130]

We can see the same sorts of correlations between the meaning of the word “white” and our association to concepts such as honest, and candid. This is a concept that runs into many religious notions, such as purity as well. Her suggestion from this is that the lexical fields of perception verbs, modality, conjunction, and *if-then* conditionals are “inherently structured by our multi-leveled cultural understanding of language and thought. In particular, we model our understanding of logic and thought processes on our understanding of the social and physical world; and simultaneously, we model linguistic expression itself not only (a) as description (a

[129] Ibid., 24.
[130] Ibid., 25.

model of the world), but also (b) as action (an act in the world being described), and even (c) as an epistemic or logical entity (a premise or a conclusion in our world of reasoning)."[131]

These concepts become more tangible with the help of examples. Just as Sweetser has done, Lakoff and Johnson point out that there is a correlation between the language we use in reference to visual perception, and that used to discuss understanding.[132] The easiest example is the word *see.* We can understand the phrase, "I can *see* the cup of coffee on the table," and just as easily comprehend the phrase "I *see* your point, but I disagree." The first utilizes the verb *see* in a sense that refers to something that physically exists, a cup of coffee. The second is in reference to an abstract position, or idea. What Lakoff and Johnson attempt to demonstrate in *Metaphors We Live By* is just how often these metaphors come into our language unnoticed.

Sweetser suggests that words such as *see* are taken up in the field of historical semantics. Linguists like Fleischman and Mithun have studied the routes that words travel when their meanings change. The movement is *usually* from the propositional domain (morphemes stating what is said) to the textual domain (these morphemes set out the structure of discourse) and finally end up in the expressive domain (the speaker's affective commentary on a particular discourse).[133]

The ability to discuss one thing in terms of another is what is meant by metahpor in cognitive linguistics. What Sweetser notes that supports her Mind-as-Body metaphor is that these abilities only work one way. The physical domain has speech acts and mental state

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[131] Ibid., 21.
[132] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003),
[133] Eve Sweetser, *From Etymology to Pragmatics: Metaphorical and Cultural aspects of Semantic Structure* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 27.

meanings, these mental state verbs have speech act meaning in more abstract contexts but not vice versa. That is, we can view *x* as *y*, but cannot view *y* as *x*.[134]

Sweetser and Dancygier discuss the asymmetrical relationship between these metaphorical mappings in relation to the UP metaphor that we have discussed previously. What they suggest is that the asymmetry between uses of this metaphor are not just in terms of a gradience between something tangible and something abstract. There is also a cognitive asymmetry between these domains.[135] "Vertical Height is not more concrete than Quantity, but it is more assessable than Quantity and serves as a cue for assessing Quantity, rather than the other way around."[136]

2.2.2 LOVE-IS-A-JOURNEY Metaphor as a Reasoning tool

The LOVE-IS-A-JOURNEY metaphor is a great example of a metaphor that is very stable in a particular cultural environment. This concept of metaphor comes through in most of our expressions revolving around love:

Look at our *far we've come.* It's been a *bumpy road.* We can't *turn back* now. This relationship isn't *going anywhere.* Our marriage is *on the rocks.*[137]

Metaphors of this type are not simply entrenched in how we speak about relationships, but how we *reason* about them as well. We justify our relationships in terms of inferences that revolve around travel. This presents us with a particular concept of love, invented in the realm of explaining abstract concepts in a physically tangible way. This is the same sort of language

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[134] Ibid., 19.
[135]Barbara Dancygier and Eve Sweetser, Figurative Language (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2014), 64.

[136] Ibid., 65.
[137] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 64.

we use to justify making large decisions in our relationships. We justify a divorce by creating a cognate corridor between dead-end streets and our relationship. A dead end street in this sense doesn't allow for the pursuit of common life goals.[138]

Just because we conceptualize and reason about love in this manner does not imply that it can *only* be thought of in this way. These metaphors are easy to comprehend and digested within our linguistic frame, but this does not have to be the case. There are many cultures that do not see love in this particular light.[139]

2.3 Prototype and Radial Categories

There are many different approaches to how we are able to use categories in order to create a formal structure in language. In analytic philosophy, categories are seen as straight forward. That is, the category of dog includes all things that are dogs and nothing that is not a dog. However, cognitive linguists suggest that this method of categorization cannot account for some of the ways in which we use and comprehend language. This section will attempt to illustrate how we categorize things and explain the theory of prototype categories and the theory of radial categories. Understanding the cognitive linguist's understanding of categories will be important later on when discussing religion and its normative status within this framework. The primary aspect of all of the alternative theories of categorization used within cognitive linguistics is that the edges are not clear, but fuzzy.

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[138] Ibid., 65.
[139] Ibid., 66.

2.3.1 The Ambiguity of Categories

According to an objectivist view, our linguistic categories accurately mirror the real world. This presupposition is what a majority of contemporary scientific discourse is based upon, or a single correct taxonomy of naturally occurring things such as plants, animals, minerals etc. Dividing things into particular categories is inescapable. However, this does not imply that it is necessarily correct.

Properties in analytic philosophy are unchanging attributes that allow us to determine how objects ought to be categorized.[140] For example, the set of red things would include all things that are red, and nothing that is not red. The concept of red is not something which changes over time, or in accordance to subjective or cultural variables. Properties are static and can clearly be seen by all.

There are two issues that arise from set theory, the case of self-refuting sets, and set ambiguity. The problem of self-refuting sets is brought up in analytic philosophy, most notably in Quine's *Two Dogmas of Empiricism*. The ambiguity of these sets is also acknowledged in the fields of informal logic and fuzzy set theory. However, these two approaches generally accept another problematic concept, the correspondence theory of truth. This theory suggests that the validity of a claim is determined by how it corresponds to the world. This implicitly suggests a world that we can see uncensored, and objectively.

Take for example, the concept of zebra. Two primary groups who disagree on how the categories should be divided are pheneticists, and cladists. Pheneticists look at overall similarity in form, function, and biological role. Cladists on the other hand are concerned more with

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[140] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003) 187.

branching order in the course of evolution and look at shared derived characters (features present only in members of an immediate lineage).[141] Both methods of categorization are used in biology, but they aren't always compatible. There are three species of zebra, Grevey's zebra, Burchell's zebra, and the mountain zebra. Burchell's zebra and Grevey's zebra form an evolutionary group. The mountain zebra does not fit this method of categorization. It utilizes the phenetecists grouping method, making it closer to other horses than it is to the species of zebra.[142] No genealogical category of all zebras exists. Because these categories do not correspond to an objective world, the correspondence theory of truth is problematic under cognitive linguists frame.

Most of how we have viewed language comes from an assumption that words have the ability to possess an *a priori* truth, providing them with a definition and therefore meaning. Out of this notion of language comes the concept of analytic truths, or sentences which are true in virtue of their meaning. Adopting this perspective fails to take into account what has been illustrated in the cognitive model of language where categories are not clear cut.

2.3.2 Prototype Categories

Givón describes two extreme approaches to our methods of categorization, a) the Platonic method and b) the Wittgensteinian method. The platonic method assumes that categories are pure, unchanging entities. Each member of a category exemplifies the necessary conditions of that category. Givón says that these categories of understanding are "discrete, absolute, and

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[141] George Lakoff, *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal about the Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 119.

[142]George Lakoff, *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal about the Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 119

pristine."[143] Contrary to this approach, is the approach where the edges of any category are fuzzy, an approach Givón attributes to Wittgenstein's later work in *Philosophical Investigations.*[144] This view "holds that, first, categories are not discrete and absolute but rather fuzzy-edged and contingent – upon the context/purpose of their use; and second, that a family resemblance relation may often hold between the various members of the same category – or between the various categories within a supra-ordinate meta-category ." In this approach, a member of category *A* may resemble a member of *B,* and *B* may resemble a member of *C,* and so on.

Givón thinks that both of these views represent one important aspect of language, but neither can claim to account for all aspects of language.[145] This compromise is what has been called Prototype Theory. This theory concedes that categories are fuzzy, but not in the familial way that Wittgenstein implements. Instead, these categories are formed at the intersection of a number of "characteristic," or "typical" features or properties held by most members of the most typical members of the category.[146]

Prototype categories are superficial phenomena. "They arise when some subcategory or member or submodel is used (often for some limited and immediate purpose) to comprehend the category as a whole."[147] This is an aspect of prototype categories that is metonymic in nature, where the part stands for the whole. This approach has the following characteristics:

- There is a "target" concept A to be understood for some purpose in some context

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[143] Thomas Givón. "Prototypes: Between Plato and Wittgenstein." In *Noun Classes and Categorization*, Ed. Colette Craig (77-102. Philidelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1986), 77.

[144] Ibid., 78.
[145] Ibid., 78.
[146] Ibid., 79.
[147] George Lakoff. "Classifiers as a Reflection of Mind." In *Noun Classes and Categorization*, Ed. Colette Craig (13-52. Oregon: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1986), 33.

- There is a conceptual structure containing both A, and another concept B.
- B is either part of A, or is closely associated with it in that conceptual structure. Typically, a choice of B will uniquely determine A, within that conceptual structure.
- Compared to A, B is either easier to understand, easier to process, easier to recognize, or more immediately useful for the given purpose in the given context.
- A metonymic model is a model of how A and B are related in a conceptual structure, together with a function from B to A.[148]

Typical examples of prototypes are examples such as:

"Robins are typical birds. Apples and oranges are typical fruit. Saws and hammers are typical tools."[149]

Again, this may depend upon a particular context, either within a particular conversation or culturally. For example, robins are an indigenous species in North America, but not in northern Scandinavia. It would follow that the typical example of the category "bird," would not be a robin in northern Scandinavia.

2.3.3 Radial Categories

Radial categories resemble Wittgenstein's family resemblance model more than Prototype categories. This method of categorization differs from the prototype method in that it does not pick a member with typical attributes as the center of its category. Instead, radial categories explain the relationship between concepts and word use.

Lakoff suggests that there are many languages which do not fit the categorical model of Western languages that is typically studied in linguistics. The example he discusses is the language of Dyirbal, an aboriginal language of Australia.[150] When "a Dyribal speaker uses a noun in a sentence, the noun must be preceded by a variant of one of four classifiers: *bayi, balan,*

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[148] Ibid., 33.
[149] Ibid., 33.
[150] George Lakoff, *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal about the Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 92.

balam, bala."[151] Every object that is capable of being referenced in the Dyribal linguistic frame fits into one of these categories. Lakoff gives some examples of the Dyribal classification of objects:

> *Bayi:* men, kangaroos, possums, bats, most snakes, some birds, the moon, storms, rainbows, some spears, etc.
>
> *Balan:* women, bandicoots, most birds, some snakes, anything connected with water or fire, sun and stars, some spears, etc.
>
> *Balam:* all edible fruit, tubers, ferns, cigarettes, wine, cake, honey
>
> *Bala:* parts of the body, meat, wind, some spears, stones, noises and language, etc.[152]

These categories are learned on the basis of general principles that fit into a fairly simple schema as follows:

> *Bayi:* (human) males; animals
>
> *Balan:* (human) females; water; fire; fighting
>
> *Balam:* non-flesh food
>
> *Bala:* everything not in the other classes[153]

Lakoff suggests that these categories exist due to what he calls the domain-of-experience principle, "if there is a basic domain of experience associated with *A,* then it is natural for entities in that domain to be in the same category as *A.*"[154] Fish are categorized by the classifier *Bayi,* as are fishing tools such as fishing spears, fishing line, and so forth.[155] The same concept applies to categorizations that are made on a mythological basis, rather than material correlation. This is what Lakoff categorizes as the myth-and-belief principle, "If some noun has characteristic *X* (on the basis of which its class membership is expected to be decided) but is, through belief or myth,

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[151] Ibid., 92.
[152] Ibid., 92-93.
[153] Ibid., 93.
[154] Ibid., 93.
[155] Ibid., 93-94.

connected with characteristic *Y*, then generally it will belong to the class corresponding to *Y* and not that corresponding to *X*."[156] The classifier *Bayi* is typically reserved for animate things. Generally, birds should be classified under animate things. However, Dyirbal believe that birds are the spirits of dead human females, and so are classified as *Balan.*[157]

There are three directions that we can take this notion of classifiers. Either 1) they are simply a linguistic device, and have no bearing on conceptual structure, 2) they are historical relics, and are no longer part of a live cognitive system, or 3) the conceptual structures embodied in a particular cultural group are reified via classifiers, creating the conceptual structures.[158] Lakoff finds the first two proposals insufficient in that they do not account for all the evidence provided.

Lakoff proposes that the cognitive models such as that implemented in the Dyirbal language can be characterized using cognitive models of four types:

> *Propositional models* specify elements, their properties, and the relations holding among them.
>
> *Image-schematic models* specify schematic images, such as trajectories or long, thin shapes or containers.
>
> *Metaphoric models* are mappings from a propositional or image schematic model in one domain to a corresponding structure in another domain.
>
> *Metonymic model* are models of one or more of the above types, together with a function from one element of the model to another.[159]

If it is the case that our conceptual systems of categorization utilize a particular experiential basis from which we create and reify our categorical segregation, our categories are not objective. Instead they rely on the agreement of a group in order to provide their justification.

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[156] Ibid., 94.
[157] Ibid., 94.
[158] Ibid., 109-111.
[159] Ibid., 114.

2.4 Schemas

Mark Johnson understands image schemas as "structures of imagination that connect concepts with precepts."[160] This is a similar definition to that proposed by Cienki, who uses Johnson's notion of image schema. He suggests that image schemas are recurring patterns of perceptual interactions and motor programs that allows us to structure our experiences.[161] Image schemas are structures that frame our ability to reason and purport meaning onto sentences, social interactions, and our experiences. These schemas are what ground the notions of metaphor discussed previously in the work of Johnson and Lakoff.

2.4.1 Gesture and Mimetic Schemas

Cienki, as well as others, have taken the concept of embodied framing beyond simple linguistic acts and explore how gesture interacts with language and how gesture is embodied independently from language. "In gesture studies, too, we find the link of the schematic imagery in gesture serving as a source domain for various kinds of metaphoric expression."[162] Studies by Ladewig and Harrison analyse the gesture of cyclical hand motion in relation to speech acts. This gesture is utilized when conceptualizing a particular process or speech situation.[163] The use of image schemas in this way is not always correlated with metaphorical use in speech. What is key, is that the conceptualization of particular concepts is manufactured through bodily

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[160] Mark Johnson, *The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1990), 21.

[161] Alan Cienki. "Image Schemas and Mimetic Schemas in Cognitive Linguistics and Gesture Studies." *Review of Cognitive Linguistics* (2013: 417-432), 419.

[162] Ibid., 423.

[163] Ibid., 423.

expression and experience. Cienki adds to the concept of schemas by introducing the concept of mimetic schemas.

Mimetic schemas are a recent addition to the schemata family of research in cognitive linguistics. This concept is similar to the notion of image schemas in that it frames our world through our embodied experiences. However, rather than the schemas such as CONTAINTER, CYCLE, or FULL-EMPTY, these frame our conceptual schemas via our bodily ability to produce dynamic motion when interacting with the world. Mimetic schemas emphasise action.[164]

This correlation between schemas and orientation towards action is in the very early stages of research. Although the research is not yet conclusive it is a tentative possibility that the mimetic schemas are implemented in the development of children. "Zlatev notes that the close correspondence of the claimed mimetic schemas to the first verbs that Tomassello observed from an English-speaking child between the ages of 16 to 24 months, such as *hammer, kick, jump, swim, get-out.*"[165]

Mimetic schemas are prevalent in gesture. For example, we mimic a sweeping motion as if to dust or remove some undesired residue, when dismissing a particular concept, metaphorically wiping it away.[166] In Cienki's view, gestures are an aspect of communication that has not been fully researched at this point in time. Language as it is spoken or written is the general concern for linguistics, even of the cognitive orientation.

Sweetser and Dancygier discuss gesture in relation to how we perceive time. Time is seen metaphorically as something that remains static that we *pass through*. This notion of time

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[164] Ibid., 424.
[165] Ibid., 424-425.
[166] Ibid., 425.

also translates into our gestures. When I discuss something in the past I gesture to the left, and when I discuss a future event, I gesture right. Occurrences that are happening in the present moment are usually correlated with pointing down, meaning *here,* or *now.*[167] Our gestural articulation of time is correlated with the direction that we write. Western European models of time correlate with the left-right model of writing systems that these communities use. However, Hebrew and Arabic speakers/writers use gestures moving in the opposite direction to indicate the movement of time. That is, their gestures correlate with a right-left writing system.[168] Chinese writing traditionally goes downwards, which correlates with the Chinese vertical temporal metaphors where EARLIER TIMES ARE HIGHER.[169] Sweetser and Dancygier suggest that this also correlates to their reverence for the past. Although this is interesting, writing direction may not fit as a necessary or sufficient condition for such reverence to take place.

Meaning and our capacity for rationality are based on the experiences we have of our external world. These experiences are then used in the discourse of more abstract concepts such as argumentation, politics, and religion. What this entails is that there is an embodied grounding for meaning and rationality. We cannot know things in a purely objective fashion, because we cannot get *beyond* our experiential basis. However, this does not entail that there is no context for meaning and rationality, as human beings have experiences that are close enough to form a grounding enabling us to orient our discourse and understand one another.

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[167] Barbara Dancygier and Eve Sweetser, *Figurative Language* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2014), 178.

[168] Ibid., 178.
[169] Ibid., 179.

2.5 Experientialism

Neither objectivist nor subjectivist assertions stand if the concept of an embodied mind is true. If our language is embodied in our experiences, it has no direct cognate to the external world. But even without such a privileged position we are not reduced to pure subjectivism. We are still capable of validating a truth claim.

Lakoff and Johnson's alternative to objectivism or subjectivism is what they call experientialism. This view suggests that the dichotomy between subjectivism and objectivism is false. Experientialism dismisses the notion of absolute truth as a concept that exists independent of experience and understanding.[170] The notion of empirical truth is therefore one which is grounded in our understanding a concept based on a given context, and experience. Truth claims are therefore subject to criticism and are constantly tested via "our experiences and those of other members of our culture in our daily interactions with other people and with our physical and cultural environments."[171] Experientialism allows for us to question even established truth claims.

We cannot know *a priori* truths in the sense that many objectivists suggest, but neither we caught in a purely subjectivist frame. Rather, Lakoff and Johnson provide an alternative to these theories, given their inconsistencies with the data we have in hand.[172] This alternative provides us with a method of possessing reasons for believing a particular belief more accurately reflects our empirical data, without an appeal to objectivist metaphysics or being reduced to subjectivism.

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[170]George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 193.

[171] Ibid., 193.

[172] Ibid., 194.

The strength of experientialism is its emphasis on how we understand the world through our interactions in the world. This simple suggestion has no room in the objectivist's world, and is given too much freedom in the subjectivist accounts.[173] What does this entail for reason? Nothing can be true in virtue of its meaning, yet we can communicate with others, even those of an alternative cultural background that possesses different values, and even a different categorical classification. "Such understanding *is* possible through the negotiation of meaning, to negotiate meaning with someone, you have to become aware of and respect both the differences in your backgrounds and when these differences are important."[174] We are capable of discussions regarding empirical claims and normative claims even under a pragmatically embodied framework. However, instead of appealing to reason as the conduit to objectivating authority, reason is to become something manifested in acts of communication.

We are not limited to either an objectivist or subjectivist view of reality. Both possess flaws and to present the problem with only these two theories is unsatisfactory and incapable of accounting for the evidence I have previously discussed. What we have so far is the unsatisfactory notions of an objective/subjective dichotomy and the conclusion that intelligibility is neither purely objective, nor entirely personal, but somewhere in the middle.

2.6 Metaphor and Morality

It is natural to place moral concepts into the cognitive theory of the embodied mind. The embodied mind hypothesis and the use of metaphor in normative speech has many implications for our conceptual structures. How we discuss moral claims under this frame is relatively simple. Many of the moral assertions come in the form of just a few metaphorical structures.

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[173] Ibid., 194.
[174] Ibid., 231.

Some of the metaphors discussed by Lakoff and Johnson are: WELL-BEING IS WEALTH, MORAL ACCOUNTING, MORALITY IS LIGHT/IMMORALITY IS DARK, MORALITY IS STRENGTH, and EVIL IS A FORCE.[175] Another concept that I will discuss is Lakoff's family schema as it applies to ethical conduct. These approaches to morality will be of interest when we reach our discussion on religious language.

2.6.1 Moral Accounting

One of the primary metaphors for morality is WELL-BEING IS WEALTH. We see an increase in well-being as something of a gain, or profit. The loss of well-being then, comes as a loss. Our happiness becomes a commodity under this metaphor and leads to what Lakoff and Johnson call the MORAL ACCOUNTING metaphor.[176] This concept is consistent with much of our moral discourse. We reciprocate, or *repay,* moral acts done towards us because we *owe* it to someone, or else we are *in their debt.*[177] There are two principles governing morality under an accounting frame. The first principle of this metaphor is "Moral action is giving something of positive value; immoral action is giving something of negative value."[178] Secondly, "there is a moral imperative to pay one's moral debts; the failure to pay one's moral debts is immoral."[179]

Moral transactions of this sort work in the case of negative actions as well, although they become a little messier. The sorts of actions I am discussing here are those of retribution, or revenge. In these cases, we are left in a conflicted moral state because our MORAL ACCOUNTING

[175] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999)

[176] Ibid., 292.
[177] Ibid., 293.
[178] Ibid., 294.
[179] Ibid., 293.

metaphor suggests that we are in the wrong either way. Lakoff and Johnson suggest two horns to this dilemma, each relying on the two principles discussed in the previous paragraph.

First horn: Under the first principle, if you reciprocated my immoral action, you will have acted immorally and done something harmful towards me. Under the second principle, if you reciprocate my immoral act you have acted morally, because our moral books will be balanced.[180]

Second horn: If you do not repay my immoral act towards you, you are moral according to our first principle because you have avoided doing harm. However, you would have acted immorally according to our second principle as now our books no longer balance.[181]

Either way, one of the principles is violated.

The consequences of these sorts of moral dilemmas may be better understood with an example. An easy example is that of the trolley problem. Suppose you are standing at the side of a railway, and a train is coming. You look further up the track and see that there are five people who are tied to the tracks, unable to escape. It is inevitable that the train will run over all five and kill them. Beside you is a switch, and you are able to switch the train onto an alternate track and save the five people. However, there is one person who is tied to the alternate track, and if you switch the train, then they will die. The first principle we have suggests that moral action is giving something good, so you are (in a utilitarian sense) giving more good by switching the train to kill the one. However, the second principle suggests that by switching the train you are doing something immoral. There are no debts to be paid within the context of the problem. If we do not touch the switch, we see the consequences of the second dilemma. In

[180] Ibid., 294.
[181] Ibid., 294.

regards to the first principle, we do something immoral as there is less good to be had (if we assume that it is good to save more lives than less). According to the second principle, because there were no debts tampered with, we are in the clear, leading to a more deontological approach.

2.6.2 Morality as Family

Lakoff and Johnson discuss another structure that may potentially frame our concept of morality, the MORALITY AS FAMILY metaphor. This metaphor has two primary paths it can take, one which stems from The Strict Father, and the other, stemming from The Nurturing Parent.[182] Each of these has some similarity to a familial structure, but adopts a varied appeal to universal moral authority, either through The Strict Father, or The Nurturing Parent or some combination of these two approaches.

In The Strict Father frame, the father has the primary duty of protecting the family as well as supporting it. The father is the moral authority and as such determines the policies which govern the household. His commands are to be obeyed. "He teaches his children right from wrong by setting strict rules for their behavior and by setting a moral example in his own life. He enforces these moral rules by reward and punishment."[183]

The Nurturing Parent does not emphasise punishment to enforce moral regulations. Rather, the emphasis is on being cared for and living as happily as possible. "Protection is a form of caring, and protection from external dangers takes up a significant part of the nurturant parent's attention. The world is filled with evils that can harm a child, and it is the nurturant parent's duty to ward them off."[184]

[182] Ibid., 313.
[183] Ibid., 313.
[184] Ibid., 315.

Each family oriented structure assumes the importance of raising children in an authoritative moral structure.[185] This sort of structure always displays moral adherents as children in the familial structure, and never in the role of the parents. The parents are the authoritative role, dictating what is morally correct. This can naturally fits the institution of religion. The Parental figure may be seen as God, creating a morality that is authoritative given a particular structure. Depending on the sort of parental metaphor, either The Strict Father, or The Nurturing Parent, we may have different views of what our adherence to this moral code will look like.[186] Under this moral frame, the figures of authority (The Strict Father, or The Nurturing Parent) are figures that become universalized. This allows for religious morality to be something deemed True and unchanging.

For Lakoff and Johnson, this family metaphor is not only restricted to religious reification. After the shift of thought of the Enlightenment, the authoritative God was dethroned as moral authority and the crown was given to Universal Reason.[187] "Briefly, the key to this view is the idea that the father's moral authority can be internalised as Universal Moral Reason."[188] This use of the family metaphor still holds true to its need for an authority figure, but rather than asserting morality as synonymous with God, there is a transition to Reason as our source for authority.

Not all moral structures are necessarily authoritative, but the inclusion of such metaphors like the accounting metaphor and family metaphor help illustrate how moral structures have a tendency to be viewed as an authoritative structure. Each appeals to something extrinsic to our

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[185] Ibid., 316.
[186] Ibid., 315.
[187] Ibid., 319.
[188] Ibid., 319.

immediate experiences in order to justify its claim to authoritative moral status. Morality is not something that exists in and of itself. Rather, like all other concepts discussed in this chapter our approach and comprehension of morality comes through mappings of structures from other aspects and domains of our experience: wealth, balance, order, boundaries, light/dark, beauty, family etc.[189] These metaphorical mappings are used to justify a more abstract view of reality, and root it as something universal and indisputably True.

Most of our cognitive processes are not as independent from language as we usually think. We regularly perceive ourselves as seeing something as rational independent of cultural or linguistic factors. However, the more abstract the concepts we discuss, the more our language utilizes a metaphorical lens with which to comprehend the subject matter. When discussing moral concepts, we use the notion of the transaction of physical goods to rationalize our concepts of justice.

2.7 Metaphor and Religion

It is very natural to place religious concepts into the cognitive theory of the embodied mind. Most religious language is heavily rooted in metaphorical concepts such as those we have already discussed. What should be noted is how, structurally, religious language adopts nearly identical metaphorical concepts as its secular discourse (if such a distinction can be made). The main point I want to get across here is that religion fits naturally into their theory of language.

Under the cognitivist approach, religion would be seen as something similar to any other sort of prototype category. What we see as religious may have a centre of intersection where the most typical aspects of religion coincide. From this point, the edges of the category fade out into

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[189] Ibid., 328.

things that may not share these typical aspects of the category. What is important is that what is seen to be at the centre of the category, or the intersection point, will change depending upon the context, culture, and point in history. Such a view of religion is consistent with the trends in scholarship within the field of religion itself. Tomoko Mazusawa argues that religion, as it currently stands, is the construction of eighteenth century scholars.[190] I will not go into detail about the study of the history of religious scholarship here, but it is important to recognize that for the most part, experientialism and cognitive linguistics as a whole is not in opposition to this view. In actuality, some of the work by Sweetser may even be used to come to similar conclusions, and the concept of prototype categories would also be compatible with the religious scholar's contentions.

2.7.1 Religion and Moral Metaphors

The moral metaphors used in religious language are the same ones we discussed in the previous section, such as accounting metaphors, and family metaphors. Some of the comparisons made by contemporary scholars of religion follow the trends put forth by the theory of the embodied mind. Gregory Schopen, a scholar of Buddhism, has written multiple articles suggesting the Buddha was closer to a businessman than a spiritual leader.[191] Eugen Ciurtin has also used the concept of accounting metaphors to discuss the function of karma. As Lakoff and Johnson speculate, the accounting metaphor may be very close to one which is universal in our moral language.

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[190] Tomoko Masuzawa. The Invention of World Religions. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005. 6.
[191] Gregory Schopen. "Doing Business for the Lord: Lending on Interest and Written Loan Contracts in the Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (1994: 527-554), 535-538.

The family metaphors used to structure morality are also of significance in religious structures and institutions, as previously discussed. Monotheistic religions portray the moral authority as God. This concept can be interpreted in either The Strict Father, or The Nurturing Parent structure. God is a stern and unforgiving lawgiver who rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked under The Strict Father version. Under this view, we live morally by obeying Gods commandments and align our will with the will of God.[192] More than one metaphorical concept of morality is in place in this system. First, there is The Strict Father, who is the moral authority, but we also see elements of the accounting metaphor. In this view, God punishes wrongdoers and rewards those who follow his will under the structure of the accounting metaphor.

The Nurturing Parent view is also seen in monotheistic traditions. Here, God is an "all-loving, all-merciful protector and nurturer of his people. God is Love, and, in the Christian tradition, Jesus is the bearer of that nurturant and sacrificing love for all humankind."[193] Authoritative morality as law still exists in this view, but it is not central. This role of nurturing parent may be acted out by a female figure. "Most notably, in the kabbalistic tradition in Judaism the Shekhinah is understood as a nurturant female manifestation of God. In Catholicism the Virgin Mary is often seen as providing a female model of divine nurturance."[194]

These two notions of The Strict Father and The Nurturing Parent are compatible and often are seen in some blended combination. Take for example the Holy Trinity, dividing God into Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Father aspect can still hold the position of strict father,

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[192] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 321.

[193] Ibid., 321.

[194] Ibid., 316.

where the aspect of the Son and Holy Spirit perform the role of nurturing parent. When discussing the metaphorical structure of morality in confluence with religion, it may be important to note that we are usually unconscious of the metaphorical and cognitively embodied aspects to our processes of rationalization. These metaphors are therefore taken literally, God is the moral authority because God *exists.* Universal Reason is the moral authority because Universal Reason *exists.*

Thirteenth century Christianity saw a shift to the idea of judgement. Iconography shows Christ seated upon a throne surrounded by his court. Christ was judge of our lives.[195] "Two acts become increasingly important: weighing of souls and the intercession of the Virgin and St. John, who kneel, their hands clasped, on either side of Christ the Judge. Each man is to be judged according to the balance sheet of his life. Good and bad deeds are scrupulously separated and placed on the appropriate side of the scales."[196] This passage from Philippe Ariès encompasses all of the concepts of moral metaphors we have just discussed. God (in this case Jesus) is moral authority, The Strict Parent, the Virgin Mary and St. John take on the role of The Nurturing Parent. Our deeds in life are placed on a scale and weighed, checking to see if our good deeds outweigh the bad.

Ariès discusses the concept of a book in which all of our good and bad deeds are written down, such as an accounting book. He suggests that this book, *liber vitae,* may have initially been a "cosmic book," or something that is abstract and based upon embodied metaphors. However, during the middle ages, the concept of this book shifted from something cosmic in nature, to something tangible. "At Albi, in the vast fresco of the Last Judgement dating from the

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[195] Philippe Ariès. Western Attitudes Toward Death: From the Middle Ages to the Present (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 32.
[196] Ibid., 32.

end of the fifteenth or the beginning of the sixth century, the risen wear this book about their necks, like a passport, or rather like a bank book to be presented at the gates of eternity."[197] Again, such an account fits with our previous notion of embodied metaphor. Ariès even makes use of the term "bank book," suggesting a similar metaphorical structure. It is easier to conceive of the tangible than it is to conceive of the abstract. The theory of the embodied mind wholly accepts such occurrences. "Although in other contexts, analysts have seen figurative language as an 'extra' and literal language as the basic framework of meaning, this relationship is inverted in cases where literal language is seen as *radically insufficient.*"[198] Metaphor in religious language is essential. Theology sees God as something that is only partially accessible to human experience, and this partial experience cannot be articulated in literal language. Religion then, fits naturally into the cognitive linguist's framework. It fits nicely because "metaphor is such a pervasive aspect of human thought and language that it is part and parcel of human rationality."[199]

Generally, religious language simply incorporates more general metaphors into the domain of religion. Seeing the Divine as High, *above* humans, is something that is generally shared throughout religious traditions. This notion is simply an application of the POWER IS UP and GOOD IS UP metaphorical frames. Greco-Roman gods often personified abstract qualities, and Christian iconography of the saints used frame-metonymic markers to identify them.[200]

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[197] Ibid., 32-33.
[198] Barbara Dancygier and Eve Sweetser, *Figurative Language* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2014), 208.
[199] Ibid., 209.
[200] Ibid., 209.

The relationship of religion to metaphor is also manifested in religious rituals, artifacts, and buildings. "Why is the alter higher than the worshipers, and why do they bow or kneel to it? Presumably they are enacting POWER IS UP in both their architecture and their ritual."[201]

2.7.2 Embodied Religious Concepts

It is possible that even acts such as the veneration of saints may be placed in this model. When saints die, their body parts were seen as a kind of 'good luck' charm. That is, their bodies possessed a type of power after their death. Many churches and individuals have kept relics of saints, in the form of these body parts.

The use of metaphor in religious discourse differs very little in terms of structure than its use in the discourse of objectivism. Each in some sense, has the mistaken impression that we can clearly articulate the state of the world via language. As the classical sense of metaphor concludes, we can know the state of the world without the use of metaphor. This is a statement that objectivists and various religious affiliates can simultaneously adopt with contradictory conclusions regarding the state of the world.

Like other metaphorical uses of language, religion and ritual utilize physical language to explain abstract concepts. Relics are physical things which symbolize something intangible. This cognitive process may be responsible for many other aspects of ritual action, and religious action more broadly. When we see special objects, like relics, as having achieved some sense of agency, we immediately cross from the realm of materialism to the realm of metaphysics. The jacket, or the special staff, is no longer defined by its material makeup, but by its essence. Again, I think this is capable of an explanation. These essences are the consequence of a

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[201] Ibid., 209.

particular metaphorical frame, ESSENCES ARE IDEALS.[202] The use of this metaphor is nothing new. From what I can tell, it is first produced formally by Plato, and then utilized in a slightly alternative way by Aristotle. "We might naively think of religious discourse – particularly discourse about God – as highly abstract and disembodied. But examination of actual religious discourse shows us that it is spoken, written, and understood by embodied humans, using their Primary Metaphors and their cultural frames of experience."[203] Religion then, is not an exception to the research done in cognitive linguistics, but has a normative place and function within their framework.

Our metaphorical grounds for concepts such as "vision" have a significant impact on religious discourse as well. "In older Indo-European cultures, physical and spiritual 'vision' were so strongly connected that physical blindness was considered to be a necessary concomitant of the highest level of internal (intellectual and spiritual) vision."[204] In these cultures, the spiritual, or religious realm was considered objective, and indistinguishable from that of the material world, conceptually. Unlike today, this mode of knowledge took place in the objective realm. Sweetser notes that notions of religious "vision" have transitioned from the objective to the purely subjective with a "coloring of personal hallucination."[205] She emphasises this transition because it fits with the model constructed by historical semantics. A concept starts off as objective, but transforms into something subjective, or expressive.

[202] Mark Johnson and George Lakoff. *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 368.
[203]Barbara Dancygier and Eve Sweetser, *Figurative Language* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2014), 211.
[204] Eve Sweetser, *From Etymology to Pragmatics: Metaphorical and Cultural aspects of Semantic Structure* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 40.

[205] Ibid., 40.

2.8 Conclusion

Under the cognitive linguists' umbrella, our ability to reason is determined by our embodied mind. When we encounter abstract concepts, such as love, we reason from a particular metaphorical frame, such as "love is a journey." Some of these embodied frames are good candidates for being universal (in the sense that all cultures use this metaphor to conceptualize a particular subject), as mentioned by Lakoff and Johnson, such as the moral accounting metaphors. As we have seen, others do not have such a solid foundation. Love is a journey is not a candidate for universality, and as such, how we perceive some abstract concepts is entirely contingent upon how embodied concepts are manifested through a particular language and cultural frame. The theory of the embodied mind fits seamlessly with what we know about religious language. Language frames our world via our bodily experiences which limits us to metaphorical structures to articulate abstract concepts like time and morality. Religious concepts fit naturally into this theoretical frame.

CHAPTER III: Assessment of Confluence and Religious Language

The first chapter gave an exposition of Habermas's theory of formal pragmatics, discussing his appeal to speech acts, the linguistification of the sacred and his definition of religion as ritual praxis. The second chapter looked at the work of cognitive linguists and assess how religious language fits within their theoretical frame. Here I gave an explanation of what the embodied mind thesis entails. Our language and conceptualization of the world comes through the avenues of metaphor, prototype categories, and a rootedness in concrete concepts and our experiences which are then used to explain concepts that are more abstract. The embodiment of language extends to religious language as well, making it a normative phenomenon.

It is difficult to place these two theoretical approaches on a comparable level. Habermas's social theory utilizes philosophy of language in order to justify his social theory, but it is not his primary concern. On the other hand, cognitive linguists are not directly interested in the work of social theory but this does not mean that their work is not relevant to a social theoretic model. Many of the philosophical consequences discussed by cognitive linguists suggest that historical semantics has a cognitive base. This may illustrate many potential avenues for a social theory to take note of. If these theories are compatible, then cognitive linguistics must take the role of supporting a majority of Habermas's claims. This is because Habermas's social theory is so large that it tends to either reject, or simply take on that which it encounters.

This chapter will assess what things are compatible between these approaches and where there is tension. I will then focus on how each approach theorizes religious language. The

aspects that are being compared in the first section are relevant to the later assessment of religious language. I should note that the comparisons that follow are not comprehensive and are merely a sketch of where there is confluence and where some contradictions may arise.

3.1 Habermas and Cognitive Linguists

This section will attempt to provide a sketch of some of the areas between Habermas and cognitive linguistics that share some sort of confluence with one another. It will look specifically at their similar orientation towards understanding, and a comparison of formal pragmatics and experientialism. I argue that some of the points they share in common are at the heart of both methodological approaches.

3.1.1 Orientation towards Understanding

Perhaps the most salient similarity between cognitive linguistics and Habermas is their orientation towards understanding. This emphasis comes in the form of formal pragmatics for Habermas, and the experientialist hypothesis of Lakoff and Johnson. Each approach frames language in such a way that understanding is central.

For Lakoff and Johnson (as well as other cognitive linguists) the embodiment of reason and meaning connotes a similar orientation that may be universal to all cultures under some circumstances. They discuss the metaphors upon which morality has its basis as being strong contenders for such a universal status.

There are many universals throughout Indo-European languages as Sweetser notes in her examples pertaining to sight and hearing.[206] When we communicate that we understand another

[206]Eve Sweetser, *From Etymology to Pragmatics: Metaphorical and Cultural aspects of Semantic Structure* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 25.

speaker, we may say something like "I see what you're saying." This appeals to the SEEING IS KNOWING metaphor. These sorts of metaphorical structures allow for a certain amount of linguistic stability. It is this stability that structures how we experience the world, which allows us to understand one another. With this we may even create new metaphorical structures. Because our experiences are generally very similar, other hearers are capable of understanding these new metaphorical structures as well.

Lakoff and Johnson are the main thinkers in the cognitive linguist's camp that extend the embodied mind thesis to a theory of understanding. Under this frame, we may assess particular claims based upon what evidence we have. These assessments are done through comparing our experiences and data with those around us. This approach to mutual understanding, and communicative competence is one that is also seen in Habermas. However, cognitive linguists do not flesh out a theory of mutual understanding in the same way Habermas does. What this suggests is that although their assertions are similar, their research interests are not.

For Habermas, it is through discourse in the intersubjective world that we are capable of putting forth validity claims in order to justify a particular truth claim. This is demonstrated every time we implement a speech act, providing the base upon which we are capable of orienting ourselves towards understanding.[207] The deviation from one life-world to the next is not so great that understanding is unachievable. Habermas's thesis of a decentered concept of reason (dividing validity claims into the objective, intersubjective, and subjective) assumes that even subjective expressions are capable of being understood.

[207] Jürgen Habermas, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 74.

This position is something that Lakoff and Johnson adhere to as well. For them understanding across cultural boundaries is possible, but takes more work than communication between two individuals communicating within the same life-world.

> When people who are talking don't share the same culture, knowledge, values, and assumptions, mutual understanding can be especially difficult. Such understanding *is* possible through the negotiation of meaning. To negotiate meaning with someone, you have to become aware of and respect both the differences in your backgrounds and when these differences are important.[208]

If we take the example of the LOVE IS A JOURNEY metaphor, it may not be the case that people outside of a particular life-world are capable of comprehending something like "our relationship is at a dead end." The same may be said for the relationship metaphors utilized by Taiwanese speakers of Mandarin. They utilize a metaphor of ROMANTIC-RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT IS KITE FLYING.[209] This is a metaphorical frame that is unfamiliar to Western language. But this does not mean that we cannot understand one another.

For Habermas, as long as such speech acts are capable of being understood in their own life-word, there is no issue. In Habermas's framework, the different cultural metaphors can be accounted for by an appeal to an alternate life-world. Each particular culture, or religion, has its own life-world in which certain claims may be considered normative. However, the claims may require verification. The metaphor ROMANTIC-RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT IS KITE FLYING would be an example. It is a normative method of speech in a particular life-world, but would need some clarification outside of this. This notion of life-world does not hinder the implications of the embodied mind theory, or experientalism. Each approach provides a context with which to understand the meaning of a particular speech act. Without something to frame our ability to

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[208] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 231.
[209] Barbara Dancygier and Eve Sweetser, *Figurative Language* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2014), 8.

perform this function, there seems to be no reason we should be capable of recognizing the difference between something that is true in a particular life-world, and something that may be recognized more universally.

The similarity between their capacities for understanding comes from a similar pragmatic base. They both reject objectivism, yet does not slide into a subjectivist stance regarding reality. The implication is again the same. Each assumes enough empirical grounding from which we are capable of discussion, but not enough to validate objectivism. Each approach relies on our ability for communication in some way in order to ground a concept of understanding.

Sweetser argues that syntactical change over time goes from the concrete to the abstract and she presents an example regarding religious vision.[210] She suggests that vision (in the religious sense) was once so tightly woven with the objectivist sense (using contemporary terms) and this was due to the objective status of religion.[211] This implies that for Sweetser religion no longer has the universal status it once held, binding all claims to a universal claim to truth. Although she does not go into this approach in depth (it is not her focus), it is an approach that allows for concepts to change over time. The justification for such change for Sweetser has to do with the changes in how we perceive categories, and the changing relationship of polysemous words over time. This is something that fits with Habermas's appeal to Durkheim and Mead in discussing his theory of meaning and the decentered place of religion in contemporary discourse. Where Sweetser's assertions are based on historical semantics, Habermas's are based in

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[210] Eve Sweetser, *From Etymology to Pragmatics: Metaphorical and Cultural aspects of Semantic Structure* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 40.
[211] Ibid., 5.

sociology. Each decenters the place of religion as a unifying objective force, and allows for the implementation of a more pragmatic and communicative approach.

In order to possess complete confluence, cognitive linguists would have to agree to Habermas's notion of validity claims. As it stands, their dispositions are almost identical in their orientation towards understanding. The difference lies is how well the theory of communicative competence is fleshed out. Where cognitive linguists tend to end here, this is where Habermas begins. It might then be argued that cognitive linguistics provides a strong empirical backing for Habermas's theory of communicative action, at least for some things. This would allow much of the research from cognitive linguistics to be supplementary to Habermas's larger theoretical framework.

The theory of experientialism is proposed as an alternative to objectivism and subjectivism. In this frame, we are still capable of making empirical claims and even suggesting something's universal status (in the sense of being a universal concept among human speakers). Sweetser's suggestion that word meanings generally change from propositional, to textual, to expressive follows a similar pattern to Habermas's three worlds (objective, intersubjective and subjective). Lakoff and Johnson suggest that we are still capable of understanding, which comes through negotiation of meaning.[212] This negotiation is possible even between individuals with conflicting backgrounds[213] and must include *at least* one other person.

The pragmatic elements underlying the experientialist hypothesis are very similar to those laid out in Habermas's theory of formal pragmatics. As mentioned in my first chapter, this theory attempts to reconstruct the necessary universal elements of language that make mutual

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[212] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 231.
[213] Ibid., 232.

understanding possible.[214] Part of this theory includes the thesis that each speech act makes four assumptions for communicative discourse to be possible. In order to communicate, you must 1) utter something intelligibly, 2) give the hearer something to understand 3) make oneself understandable and 4) come to an understanding with another person.[215]

Lakoff and Johnson seem to make a similar statement. That understanding is possible through the negotiation of meaning implies all four assumptions asserted by Habermas. Not only is it implied, but the emphasis towards communicative competence seems to be shared between them as well.

Of course, there may be some differences in how these similarities are implemented. For Lakoff and Johnson, it is all of their research into language as an embodied method of communication that leads them to this conclusion. For Habermas, this is the beginning of his theory of communicative action. This is because the purpose of their work is different. Habermas is using formal pragmatics to build his social theory, this task is larger in scope, but certainly no more important than the work of Lakoff, Johnson, and other cognitive linguists. Overall, they are generally not in tension with one another here, though this does not mean that they're approaches always support one another. At times, they parallel one another, not necessarily coming in contact, but not interfering with the others approach or research interests.

[214] Jürgen Habermas, *On the Pragmatics of Communication,* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998), 23.
[215] Ibid., 25.

3.1.2 Speech Acts

Speech acts are a major aspect of Habermas's work as well as work in linguistics. Where some confusion may arise is in how the terms are being used, as Habermas has redefined many of the terms first used by Austin.

Most of the work in cognitive linguistics does not discuss speech acts directly. What cognitive linguists are interested in is in how language *actually* functions, rather than a top-down Chomskian like theory. So when looking at speech acts in terms of how they were utilized by Austin and Searle, it might be difficult to see some of the connections. This may be because Austin and Searle's construction of speech acts remains embedded within objective frame. However, when we expand this frame, as Habermas has, there may be even more connections between speech acts and cognitive linguistics.

For Habermas, illocutionary and locutionary acts collapse into each other.[216] We don't assert any objective claim without also putting forth an intersubjective, and subjective claim as well. With every speech act I put forth three validity claims. One objective claim, one intersubjective claim, and one subjective. In doing so, my speech act may be criticized from any of these positions.[217] It could be objectively untrue or normatively unacceptable. Rather than illocutionary acts staying as performatives under Habermas, they are given the responsibility of possessing a claim to their validity.[218]

When illocutionary and locutionary acts are not set up in such a strict dichotomy, we are capable of seeing how the theory of the embodied mind may allow for a greater understanding of

[216] Jürgen Habermas, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical* Essays (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 76.
[217] Ibid., 75-76.
[218] Ibid., 77.

Habermas's reconstruction of speech act theory. Some cognitive linguists suggest that there may be a metonymic background for speech acts. Thornburg and Panther explain indirect speech acts in terms of metonymy, using the part to stand for the whole.[219] Take for example a phrase like *can you pass me the salt?*[220] This speech act can be understood in terms of the metonymy of ABILITY FOR ACTION and is an elaboration of a more general framing of POTENTIAL FOR ACTUALITY. One is capable of using a question in order to carry out an action in a speech act.[221] This is something that is a central purpose of speech acts for Habermas, the use of metonymy in indirect speech acts is not universally agreed upon by cognitive linguists. One problem being "the metonymic explanation would make it difficult to integrate other speech act conditions among them intentionality and politeness, which also deserve consideration."[222]

Even in doubting this application of metonymy, it is assumed that there is a link between ability and action that is cognitively rooted and that this research contributes to "a better understanding of this pragmatic phenomenon."[223] A cognitive connection between action and ability in conjunction with Lakoff and Johnson's orientation towards mutual understanding sounds very close to many of the primary contentions held by Habermas.

If we accept that illocutionary and locutionary actions are not entirely distinct, the assertions of cognitive linguists gain more traction. If locutionary acts also possess an illocutionary component, then our experiences and interpretation of our experiences becomes even more important in determining what we deem to be true or false. That is, the embodied

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[219] Friedrich Ungerer and Hans-Jörg Schmid, *An Introduction to Cognitive Linguistics*, (New York: Pearson Education Limited, 2006), 157.
[220] Ibid., 157.
[221] Ibid., 158.
[222] Ibid.,, 158.
[223] Ibid., 158.

theory of mind finds refuge within Habermas's thematization of speech acts, and dovetails nicely from it.

In a sense, each approach is reconstructive in its orientation. Each approach also attempts to lay out the groundwork upon which this mutual understanding is made possible. At the very beginning of his essay *What is Universal Pragmatics,* Habermas says the goal of formal pragmatics could also be articulated as pinning down the general presuppositions of communication.[224] Due to his emphasis on reaching understanding, Habermas does not phrase the goal of formal pragmatics in this way.[225] This is done through a pragmatic interpretation of Austin's speech act theory. For cognitive linguists, this comes by our language being shaped by our bodily experiences. These two approaches may seem different, but they may actually be fairly similar.

3.2 Postmetaphysical Thinking and the Embodied Mind

Postmetaphysical thinking is thematized as simultaneously a critique of metaphysics and a criticism of those of an anti-metaphysical orientation. The consequences of this allow all validity claims equal space to argue their position.[226] This is something that is reflected in Johnson and Lakoff's rejection of both objectivism and subjectivism.

Objectivism is a universal claim in its own right. Assuming a position of being able to see the world as-it-is, presupposes an un-shattered view of reason. One criticism of objectivism comes in the form of subjectivism. But this position is also problematic. Reverting to a

[224] Jürgen Habermas, *On the Pragmatics of Communication,* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998), 21.
[225] Ibid., 21.
[226] Jürgen Habermas, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays,* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 43.

subjectivist position does not account for the empirical evidence provided within the cognitive linguist's framework.[227]

The goal of both postmetaphysical thinking and the cognitive linguist's theory of experientalism, is to acknowledge differences in our cultural and contextual background to account for the pragmatic elements of speech. In turn, this creates an orientation towards communication and mutual understanding instead of appeals to universals of strategic action. Where the difference comes is in the approach these theories take to get to this point, and the purpose of their investigation into the pragmatics of language.

Postmetaphysical thinking is not anti-metaphysical thinking. Rather, it is a particular framework in which all validity claims are capable of being in discourse with one another, without a universal lens with which to interpret them. Metaphysical claims are treated like any other truth claim and must assert a claim to validity when required. Cognitive linguists do not articulate their position as explicitly postmetaphysical. But it certainly does assume many of the characteristics of such a position.

Cognitive linguistics does not take a position that asserts any metaphysical truth. Instead, they assert that meaning is embodied and experientially grounded. This leads Lakoff and Johnson to their pragmatic position regarding understanding, which we already discussed as being very similar to Habermas's. Because of this, cognitive linguistics is inherently postmetaphysical. It asserts that conclusions be judged based upon empirical data, while allowing space for fallibility and removing the possibility of any absolutism.

[227] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 189.

The decentralized position of reason is therefore adopted by Habermas and cognitive linguistics. For Habermas, reason is then divided between three spheres, objective, subjective (expressive), and intersubjective, that are all capable of putting forth validity claims. In the case of cognitive linguistics, reason is decentralized in its embodiment. Our ability to rationalize comes through our experiences of the world. These experiences become articulated through metaphors. This is especially the case when we encounter abstract concepts. Thus, our capacity for rationalization comes through embodied experience and metaphor.

Their claims are identical. Reason is decentralized. However, this changes in its means. The comparison here is a bit one sided. That is, Habermas's theory can adopt the embodied view of reason with relative ease. Cognitive linguists do not stand in opposition to Habermas, but their current theoretical construct would have to be expanded in order to include Habermas's use of validity claims. If we accept that Habermas's theory can adopt that of the cognitive linguist's and not necessarily vice versa, then few tensions between these approaches regarding decentralized reason.

The research within cognitive linguistics is postmetaphysical in its nature. It does not assume the existence of an objective, and unifying truth. Rather, it assumes that we reason through embodied experiences. This position is not in conflict with Habermas's postmetaphysical thinking, or theory of validity claims. Rather, it expands on it quite nicely and provides some empirical data with which to further ground the notion of postmetaphysical thought.

3.3 Schemas, Formal Pragmatics, and Action

The confluence between gesture in cognitive linguistics and gesture in Habermas's work is difficult to assess. Each approach is utilizing gesture in an alternative way and to different ends. This makes them appear incompatible. However, Habermas's removal of gesture from formal pragmatics is of little consequence to cognitive linguists. The theories of gesture and schemas being researched in cognitive linguistics may allow for a fuller picture of Habermas's dramaturgical action.

3.3.1 Gesture and Formal Pragmatics

An aspect of cognitive linguistics that is not taken up by Habermas in his discourse on language is the use of gesture in our communication. In his essay *What is Universal Pragmatics* Habermas states that he is not using gesture in his theory. Habermas says, "I shall ignore nonverbal actions and bodily expressions."[228] Although it is never fully discussed in Habermas's theory, the exploration of gesture and mimetic schemas in Cienki's work is not incompatible with the theory of formal pragmatics.

For Habermas, even nonverbal communication (such as gestures) take up an interpersonal relation with at least one other subject.[229] Within this relation, a gesture can either observe or violate conventions in the same manner that verbal communication can. Habermas omits gestures because they cannot fulfill representational functions. Gesture in this sense, refers to nonverbal communication outside of structured methods of nonverbal communication.[230] What this means is that gestural communication that fits the parameters of a structured method of

[228] Jürgen Habermas, *On the Pragmatics of Communication,* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998), 21.
[229] Ibid., 47.
[230] Ibid., 59.

communication would still fit within Habermas's formal pragmatics. Habermas sees sign language as falling under the same parameters as any spoken language because it possesses more freedom within the propositional differentiation of speech.[231]

Gestures follow a similar experientialist base as any spoken, or written language. Recall Sweetser's discussion of gesture and time. We point down to communicate either "here" or "now." Gestures also follow the direction we write, which is then mapped onto the direction that time flows.[232] Cienki and Sweetser see gesture similarly, in that it follows a normative function. Where the difference may lie is the consequences of this research on the reconstruction of universal conditions necessary for mutual understanding. That is, the research in how gestures may allow us to get a broader picture of the extent to which reason is embodied. This may lead to research that contributes to profitable developments for the theory of formal pragmatics.

Nonverbal gestures studied by cognitive linguists are not something that creates conflict with Habermas's work, but neither is it something that is useful for his theory at this point. The study of gesture is still in its infancy,[233] and it would be interesting to see whether more connections, or tensions may arise in this domain. However, as it stands they do not affect each other in a detrimental fashion.

3.3.2 Mimetic Schemas and Dramaturgical Action

Mimetic schemas do not play a significant role in Habermas's overarching critical theory. However, they may be capable of creating a broader context for dramaturgical action. This sort of action is not one that has been articulated in a theoretical framework. This sort of action has

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[231] Ibid., 59-60.
[232] Barbara Dancygier and Eve Sweetser, *Figurative Language,* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2014),178.
[233] Alan Cienki. "Image Schemas and Mimetic Schemas in Cognitive Linguistics and Gesture Studies." *Review of Cognitive Linguistics*, (2013: 417-432), 430.

to do with “participants in interaction constituting a public for one another, before whom they present themselves. The actor evokes in his public a certain image, an impression of himself, by more or less purposefully disclosing his subjectivity.”[234] In other words, participants in a particular group form a visible public for one another, and perform for each other within this public. This performance has the capacity to take on only those aspects of one’s subjectivity that they chose to display. This thematization of dramaturgical action presupposes two worlds, the internal, and the external. “Expressive utterances present subjectivity in demarcation from the external world; the actor can in principle adopt only an objectivating attitude toward the latter. And in contrast to the case of normatively regulated action, this holds not only for physical but for social objects as well.”[235]

For Habermas, this sort of action can be used in various ways. The way he discusses dramaturgical action the most is as something parasitic, resting on the structure of goal oriented action.[236] This concept of dramaturgical action is only one aspect of what Sweetser and Cienki have in mind when it comes to gesture. For them, our gestures are a part of our embodied cognition. This approach diverges from Habermas’s in that it is not inherently a performance. Mimetic schemas focus on a form of action that is embodied.[237]

The sorts of gesture and action that cognitive linguists have in mind is not inherently the same as Habermas’s dramaturgical action. However, the structures of action studied within cognitive linguistics allows for Habermas to illustrate dramaturgical action in the way that he

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[234] Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action Vol. 1: Reason and the Rationalization of Society* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1981) 86.
[235] Ibid.,93.
[236] Ibid., 90.
[237] Alan Cienki. "Image Schemas and Mimetic Schemas in Cognitive Linguistics and Gesture Studies." *Review of Cognitive Linguistics*, (2013: 417-432), 424.

has. In order for actions to put forth any sort of performative quality, they must be understood within their life-world. The sorts of mimetic schemas that allow for bodily action oriented cognition are those that would allow for such performative purposes. Cognitive linguists would probably argue that using gesture in tandem with strategic action is only one place where embodied gestures are used. These sorts of gestures are used all the time, just like language, and are therefore normative. It may however, be easier to implement strategic action with a good grasp of how gesture works alongside speech acts for the purpose of communication.

Research regarding gesture is in its infancy within the field of cognitive linguistics. People such as Cienki suggest that it is another aspect of communication. As mentioned previously, Habermas does not include gesture within his theory of communicative action. However, this does not mean that gestures cannot add emphasis to a particular speech act. That is, if I say “I want coffee now!” I can complement this speech act with using my index finger to point to the ground beneath my feet, emphasizing that I want coffee in this present moment.

Some of the work on gesture is not relevant to Habermas’s work. This is especially the case when it comes to his theory of formal pragmatics. There is very little crossover here, except of the potential of gesture to add emphasis to speech acts. Where there may be some interesting research to be done, is between Habermas’s dramaturgical action, and mimetic schemas. These sorts of schemas seem to be necessary for dramaturgical action to take place. However, they may also require us to look at dramaturgical action as not merely parasitic to strategic action, but also an embodied part of how we communicate. This would require us to expand the use of dramaturgical action as it is thematized by Habermas.

3.4 Assessment of General Confluence

What we have seen suggests that the research interests of Habermas and cognitive linguists are typically not in tension with one another. In fact, they are similar in their direction, but at times they are simply two contemporaneous research interests with very little effect on one another. This also means that they may not always complement one another. There are aspects that come quite close to discussing similar subject matter, but utilize the vocabulary of different fields. There are other sections that simply are irrelevant to one another.

Although Habermas and cognitive linguists are not always in agreement, there may be something of value in comparing these theories. This may be something worth exploring further that will open new avenues for social theory. It should now be clear that these theories are generally confluent, but vary in regards to method. Now that there is a comprehensive grasp of both theories, and where they converge and diverge I will narrow my focus to strictly religious language.

3.5 Embodied Religion and Ritual Praxis

The goal of this section is to assess the theories of Habermas and cognitive linguistics with respect to religious language. Here I will flesh out the tensions these theories have regarding religious language. I will argue that Habermas's contention that religion is rooted in ritual praxis is not compatible with the cognitive linguist's theory of the embodied mind.

Habermas views religion with two definitions, functionally and substantively. Religious adherents must be capable of validating their position just like any other cultural or life-world perspective. Habermas also suggests that religious language gives rise to particular moral

insights. Religion as ritual praxis is in need of translation in order for those insights to be scrutinized as validity claims. Without this translation religious claims are not understandable.

In chapter two, I discussed how religion utilized the same metaphorical concepts as any other worldview. Both the morality as family, and moral accounting metaphors are implemented within religion, just as they are implemented in any other linguistic frame. In fact, this works quite well when we see certain discrepancies with a static concept of religion. For example, some Christian groups assume God to be strict and just, while others see God as compassionate. This sort of contrast in interpretation may be explained easily under the cognitive linguists approach. Each view adheres to either the Strict Parent, or Nurturing Parent model. Religion under the view of cognitive linguistics is normative and explainable. Language implemented in a religious framework falls under the same embodied explanation as other uses of metaphor such as GOOD IS UP. In Sweetser's vision example, we see religious visions as being tied to an objective framework. She attributes this to a connection between polysemy and etymology and connects the conceptual aspects of religious visions with the biological act of sight.

Translation is not required for cognitive linguists. Because religion is normative and functions under the theory of the embodied mind we are capable of explaining religion through the same metaphorical structures as any other implementation of language. Under the cognitive linguist's umbrella, religion follows the same embodied metaphorical patterns that all other language does. Religious ritual and belief are simply an extension of the embodied metaphors used in ordinary discourse.[238] We can see this with the examples put forth in chapter two.

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[238] Barbara Dancygier and Eve Sweetser, *Figurative Language,* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2014), 209.

Family metaphors and moral accounting metaphors are capable of accommodating religious language without any issue. Religion then, is simply a normative phenomena.

Habermas is trying to preserve our moral intuitions from the direction taken by contemporary philosophy. In his current writings, he makes a dichotomy between Greco-Roman culture and that of Judeo-Christian culture.[239] For him, reason is from Greece, and moral insights are from Christianity. There is an issue with this dichotomy. Even without the ability to rely on religion for moral insights that are incapable of being articulated by philosophy. This is because religion is seen as ritual praxis, and is based on experience. In order to understand a particular religious act, one has to be a part of that particular community.

Habermas's view that religion is ritual praxis removes religion from the domain of normative language. He requires religious claims to be translated into claims that are capable of being interpreted as truth claims in a postmetaphysical frame.[240] This creates some tension between these theoretical lenses. If religious language is based in experience and praxis, it is distinguished from other aspects of language, and no longer something that occurs in the same way other linguistic frames do. However, religious language can be normatively acceptable within its own community.[241] The linguistification of the sacred makes it possible for religious language to be translated. In order to be understood within public discourse, religion must put forth its validity claims utilizing a detranscendentalized reason. Cognitive linguists can say something similar. If religion still remains in the same frame as that thematized by Sweetser, then religious dialogue assumes a sort of universality, or wholeness, which is not assumed within a pragmatic framework. But this does not entail that religious language must be translated into

[239] Jürgen Habermas, *Religion and Rationality,* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002), 135.
[240] Jürgen Habermas, *Religion and Rationality* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002),
[241] Ibid.,

normative discourse. Haiman suggests that ritual language is not special, but is just as capable of being understood as any other use of language.[242] With the addition of Lakoff and Johnson's experientialism, we can orient conversations towards understanding. Their discussion regarding understanding allows for a great deal of cultural and linguistic differentiation. We are capable of wading through the various assumptions and worldviews in order to understand one another. With this comes a certain amount of translation in order to come to an understanding.

For Sweetser, this notion of religious visions occurred in the objective realm, whereas today it occurs in a subjective realm.[243] This argument allows for a decentralized reason in our context while allowing religions to maintain their praxis with reason remaining whole. This suggests that these two approaches are not entirely contradictory to one another.

The association of physical sight and religious vision was at one point seen to be true objectively. Religious visions are no longer normative phenomenon. Metaphors revolving around sight and knowledge no longer require the assimilation of religious vision with biological sight. No longer seen as objective under the pragmatic framework of cognitive linguistics, knowledge as sight metaphors are also susceptible to empirical evidence. When it comes to such religious claims as prophetic visions, they are only seen as objectively true under the framework of that particular ritual praxis. This aspect is not inconsistent with Habermas. The difference between Habermas and cognitive linguistics is that religious language can be explained as embodied for cognitive linguists. Habermas requires religious language to be translated.

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[242] John Haiman. "Ritualization and the Development of Language." In *Perspectives on Grammaticalization* (Edited by William Pagluica, 3-28. Philadelphia, John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1994), 23.
[243] Eve Sweetser, *From Etymology to Pragmatics: Metaphorical and Cultural aspects of Semantic Structure* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 40.

If understanding an untranslated religious claim requires the experience that comes from being in a particular religious community, we are incapable of understanding it in its entirety even if it is translated. This is where Habermas's thematization of religion as ritual praxis diverges from cognitive linguistics. For cognitive linguists, there is an embodied experiential basis for understanding concepts. With the ability to account for the various presuppositions behind a religious claim then we should be able to understand their speech acts within the cognitive linguists frame. This would not happen for Habermas. Religious experience is not capable of translation, and are not subject to empirical verification within their life-world. In order to be understood, they must be translated into validity claims. But these translations do not translate the experiences along with the arguments. Therefore, religious claims are never able to be understood outside of the context of their ritual praxis.

3.6 Conclusion

Habermas and cognitive linguists are generally not at odds with each other. Although there may be some aspects of their research that are not directly relevant to one another, these sections do not contradict each other either. When it comes to religious language however, we can see that there is a demarcation between these theoretical frames. Where Habermas sees religious language as something in need of translation in order to be understood outside of its life-world, cognitive linguists see religious language as a normative consequence of the theory of the embodied mind. The entailments of this for cognitive linguists is that religious language fits the same theoretical model as any other form of language. For Habermas, language public discourse differs from language of religious affiliates. This is because Habermas views religion as cultic praxis. This view of religion is heavily rooted in experience and community. In order to understand a religions dialogue, you must be part of their group. Lakoff and Johnson's

approach varies in that we are capable of coming to an understanding across these groups, in an ideal situation, by taking into account all of the presuppositions and understanding the embodied core of each use of language.

Religious language is theorized differently under each approach because of a varied underlying set of assumptions. Cognitive linguists suggest that there is enough confluence that permeates cultural boundaries for us to understand other cultures, even if it may be difficult to do so. For Habermas, religious barriers are not permeable enough to conclude that religion is purely normative, or functional. Instead, translation is required by religious affiliates, giving religion a substantive quality as well.

Under Habermas's view religion can still take part in public discourse but requires some sort of translation first. Cognitive linguists do not directly discuss dialogue between language groups. Based on Lakoff and Johnson's experientialism, it would seem as though our experiences can be universal enough to provide some similar grounds with which to understand one another. This allows for us to explain and assess the validity of religious claims without the requirement of translation. There is nothing in their theory that would exclude religion from this ability to understand. These theoretical frameworks are generally compatible. Cognitive linguists can fit into Habermas's larger social theory with few issues arising. What Habermas would have to give up in order for better confluence, is the requirement of religious language to be translated. There is sufficient work within Habermas's frame, and cognitive linguistics to still support some form of translation, but not to the extent that religious language is seen as special.

Placing cognitive linguistics within Habermas's functional model gives some empirical justification for Habermas's theory, but allows religious language, from Habermas's substantive approach, to remain something that requires translation. Explanations of religious language, through cognitive linguistics or the linguistification of the sacred, do not dismiss religion as being something wrapped in cultic praxis. If anything, this avenue must remain open because it cannot be conclusively shut. As Habermas points out, "this question has to remain open from the view of the social scientist who proceeds reconstructively and who is careful not simply to project developing trends forward in a straight line."[244] It is not that this "special" content *cannot* be adequately translated, but that as of yet we *have not* translated the substantive aspects of religion in a way that does justice to their position.

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[244] Jürgen Habermas, *Religion and Rationality* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002), Pg 79

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