

SELLARS AND PRETENSE ON “TRUTH & ‘CORRESPONDENCE’” (WITH A DETOUR THROUGH MEANING ATTRIBUTION)

SELLARS Y LA PRETENSIÓN EN “VERDAD Y ‘CORRESPONDENCIA’”
(CON UN DESVÍO A TRAVÉS DE LA ATRIBUCIÓN DEL SIGNIFICADO)

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RESUMEN ABSTRACT

La explicación de la verdad que Wilfrid Sellars ofrece en su artículo “Verdad y ‘correspondencia’”, nos presenta una aparente tensión *interna* entre dos aspectos supuestamente incompatibles con sus puntos de vista sobre la verdad. Para resolver plenamente esta tensión, es necesario tener en cuenta una explicación de la atribución de significado. Creemos que la explicación que Sellars ofrece, sobre todo en “El significado como clasificación funcional”, incluye los elementos básicos necesarios para resolver la tensión interna en su explicación de la verdad, sin embargo, sus puntos de vista sufren de una aparente tensión *externa*, con respecto a un supuesto conflicto entre su explicación y nuestras prácticas lingüísticas e inferenciales con la expresión ‘significa’.

En este artículo, mostramos cómo la tensión interna en la comprensión de Sellars de la verdad, así como la tensión externa en su explicación de la atribución de significado se puede resolver sin perder de vista el espíritu sellarsiano, apelando a las particulares explicaciones *fictionalistas* de habla sobre la verdad y habla proposicional (incluida la atribución de significado) que hemos desarrollado en otro lugar.

The account of truth that Wilfrid Sellars offers in his paper, “Truth and ‘Correspondence’”, presents us with an apparent *internal* tension between two seemingly incompatible aspects of his views on truth. To fully resolve this tension, it is necessary to factor in an account of meaning attribution. We think that the account Sellars offers, most centrally in “Meaning as Functional Classification”, includes the basic elements required for resolving the internal tension in his account of truth, but here his views suffer from an apparent *external* tension, regarding an apparent conflict between his account and our actual linguistic and inferential practices with the expression ‘means’.

In this paper, we show how the internal tension in Sellars’s understanding of truth, as well as the external tension in his account of meaning attribution, can be resolved while adhering to a Sellarsian spirit, by appealing to the particular *fictionalist* accounts of truth-talk and proposition-talk (including meaning-attribution) that we have developed elsewhere.

PALABRAS CLAVE KEY WORDS

deflacionismo, fictionalismo, pretensión, atribución del significado, habla proposicional, habla sobre la verdad.

deflationism, fictionalism, meaning attribution, pretense, proposition-talk, truth-talk.

Introduction

The account of truth that Wilfrid Sellars offers in his paper, “Truth and ‘Correspondence’”, presents us with a *prima facie* tension (Sellars, *Truth and*).¹ In particular, there is an apparent *internal* tension between two seemingly incompatible aspects of his views on truth. To fully resolve this tension, it is necessary to factor in an account of meaning attribution. We think that the account Sellars offers, most centrally in “Meaning as Functional Classification” (Sellars, *Meaning as*)², includes the basic elements required for resolving the internal tension in his account of truth, but here his views suffer from an apparent *external* tension, regarding an apparent conflict between his account and our actual linguistic and inferential practices with the expression ‘means’.

Our aim here is to show how the internal tension in Sellars’s understanding of truth, as well as the external tension in his account of meaning attribution, can be resolved while adhering to a Sellarsian spirit, by appealing to the particular *fictionalist* accounts of truth-talk and proposition-talk (including meaning-attribution) that we have developed elsewhere.³ In order to show this, we will first discuss the central aspects of Sellars’s account of truth, along with how the tension we find in it arises. We will then explain how Sellars faces a further problem, in virtue of his views on truth, coming from Hilary Putnam’s model-theoretic argument (Putnam, *Meaning and*) (Putnam, *Models and*). To deal with the challenges Putnam presents, we will introduce the basics of our pretense account of truth-talk, supplement it with our pretense account of proposition-talk (specifically, as it operates in meaning attributions), and explain how this combination resolves the tensions we find in Sellars’s views while avoiding the further problem we think he faces.

One general point we want to make here is that Sellars’s views and pretense views fit together well. Thus, after explaining how we can resolve the aforementioned tensions, we will turn to some important insights that we have gained from reading Sellars. These insights

¹ All citations are to the reprint in Sellars *Science*. We recognize that Sellars later offers a somewhat different account of truth (hinted at in the note on page 224 of Sellars (ibid.)), but Lionel Shapiro has convinced us that this shift is highly problematic.

² See also Sellars (*Naturalism and*), especially Chapter 4.

³ We are referring to the pretense-based accounts presented in Armour-Garb and Woodbridge (*Why deflationists*) and (*The story*). Woodbridge (*Truth as*) and (*Propositions as*) offer earlier versions of pretense accounts of truth-talk and proposition-talk, respectively.

help us resolve a *prima facie* challenge that critics sometimes raise against *fictionalist* accounts like ours – accounts that deal with various problematic fragments of discourse by explaining them in terms of *pretense*. Their challenge is that pretense-based accounts fail in the face of what we call the *Engagement Complaint*: the objection that speakers typically do not think of themselves as pretending when they employ these ways of talking. Sellars's careful analysis of different kinds of rule-governed behavior helps us bolster our response to this challenge.

I

Sellars, truth, and the deflationism/inflationism distinction

In "Truth and 'Correspondence'", Sellars presents an account of truth that involves two seemingly conflicting views on how to understand truth. In that paper, one of the things that Sellars explains is how one can grant at least some of the importance of Alfred Tarski's semantic theory of truth without closing off further insights regarding additional features that he takes to be essential to understanding truth. He does this by proposing two modes of "correspondence", both of which a proper understanding of truth must recognize, at least for a certain class of truths.

The first mode of correspondence that Sellars acknowledges is the one supposedly captured by the collection of the instances of the truth schema,

(T) 'S' is true iff S,

the entailment of which Tarski took to be a condition of adequacy on any formal theory of truth (Tarski). Unlike Tarski, however, Sellars takes propositional truth to be prior to sentential truth and holds that the latter is derivative of the former. Hence, for Sellars, the relevant, or primary, instances of the equivalence schema for truth are more like those presented in Horwichian Minimalism than those from a Fieldian or Quinean disquotationalism (Horwich) (Field) (Quine). But, actually, even this is not quite right, for, while we might present the necessary instances of the truth schema for propositions by using the standard (material) biconditional sign, viz., as

(PT) <p> is true \leftrightarrow p,

where 'p' serves as a sentential variable that can be replaced by any declarative (English) sentence, and where the angle brackets, '<' and '>', serve as a device for nominalizing any sentence that goes in for 'p', as Sellars reads '<=>', it is to be understood as capturing logical equivalence or, as Sellars puts it, "reciprocal entailment". Accordingly, a standard instance of the truth schema for propositional truth, such as

(0) <snow is white> is true \leftrightarrow snow is white,

is to be "put forward" as

(0') <<snow is white> is true> entails, and is entailed by, <snow is white>.

This, he says, governs inferences like the following:

- (1) <snow is white> is true.
(2) So, Snow is white. (Sellars, *Truth and 206*)⁴

Sellars takes these inferences, the ones codified in the equivalences, which are taken to express the first sense of correspondence, to provide the semantical rules for, and thus the sense and, hence, the meaning of, the word 'true'. According to Sellars, if this is right, then "instead of standing for a relation or a relational property of statements (or, for that matter, thoughts) 'true' is a sign *that something is to be done*—for inferring is a doing". (Ibid)

In addition to this semantical-rules aspect of truth and the kind of correspondence between truth-attributions and claims about the world that it captures, Sellars is also concerned with explaining a *second* sense of correspondence, one that goes beyond that captured by the truth-schema equivalences. He takes this second sense of correspondence to involve a sort of *picturing* relation, holding between certain linguistic objects—names, in effect, as they appear in elementary "matter-of-factual" empirical claims—and the nonlinguistic objects that they name or represent (Ibid. 213-14). This picturing relation is supposed to be an extension of the kind of projection that a map of some geographical area involves—that is, some projection from the pictured objects, in the arrangement that they have, to the elements of the picture, and the arrangement that they have. The rules of projection may be fantastically

⁴ We are here (and in (0')) replacing Sellars's use of 'that'-clauses with the use of angle-bracket notation.

complex, but Sellars maintains that they are definable in terms of matter-of-factual (in contrast with conventional) relationships, such as an isomorphism between two systems of objects. It is this second sense of correspondence that Sellars suggests may be “essential to understanding truth”, at least for a particular class of claims.

One central point that it is important to recognize here is that this second sense of correspondence involves a shift in focus from propositional truth (as in the first sense of correspondence) to sentential truth, since the relevant picturing is supposedly something that linguistic objects do. We are now “reflecting on what it means to say of a form of words that it is true” (Ibid 223). Sellars exemplifies this kind of case as follows.

‘Chicago est grande’ (in French) =
is true. $\text{Df}(\exists \text{ that-}p)$ ‘Chicago est grande’ (in French) expresses the sense that- p and that- p is true. (Ibid 205, 233)

Given that Sellars takes expressing a sense to be the same thing as expressing a proposition, he understands sentential truth as an extension of propositional truth. What the extension involves is attributing the expressing of a proposition or sense to some linguistic item, i.e., a meaning attribution. So, a full explanation of how Sellars’s second sense of correspondence fits into his understanding of truth will require an appeal to an account of meaning attribution. We will return to this below, after explaining the *prima facie* internal tension we find in Sellars’s views.

Although the two Sellarsian modes of “correspondence” just sketched, which he takes to be, in one sense or another, essential to our understanding of truth, both seem coherent enough; we find a tension in his view because of a fairly standard bifurcation among contemporary accounts of truth. As is familiar in contemporary work on truth, there is a split between *deflationary* and *inflationary* accounts of truth.⁵ Deflationists about truth-talk (henceforth, *T-deflationists*) see the expression ‘is true’ as a device of semantic descent, whose meaning is exhaustively provided by instances of schemata like (T) or (PT) (Sellars 223).⁶ In general, T-deflationists have a lot to say about the *concept* of truth, but they typically chagrin talk about any *property* of truth. It is not

⁵ For more on the distinction between deflationism and inflationism about truth, see Armour-Garb.

⁶ See also Armour-Garb and Woodbridge (*From mathematical*).

part of their view *qua* T-deflationism that there is no property of truth. Rather than explicitly denying that there is a property of truth, standard T-deflationists often take a more cautious stance and, so, do not accept that there is a substantive property of truth. By contrast, *T-inflationists*, while they must ultimately say something about the concept of truth, also accept that there is a property of truth, and they go to some lengths in trying to explain its nature.

The internal tension that we find – the *apparent* tension, since we think that, ultimately, it can be dissolved (albeit, as we will explain below, not in an entirely worry-free manner) – arises from the fact that, as Sellars contends, one mode of correspondence exhaustively captures the *concept* of truth, while the other mode of correspondence ends up being essential to “the understanding of truth”. Put differently, the tension appears to arise because Sellars seems to be expressing commitments to both a central aspect, or feature, of T-deflationism *and* a central aspect, or feature, of T-inflationism. But T-deflationist and T-inflationist accounts are supposed to be incompatible. Hence, we get what appears to be a tension.

Given this *prima facie* tension, we might ask about Sellars’s motivation for endorsing this apparent aspect of T-inflationism in his understanding of truth. His inferential reading of the standard truth schema comports with his general “use-theoretic” approach in philosophy of language, but his inclusion of an account of truth as a substantive (albeit ultimately matter-of-factual) picturing relation is harder to fit with his general approach.⁷

We think that one clue to Sellars’s motivations on this front might appear in his claim that “... whatever else language does, its central and essential function, the *sine qua non* of all others, is to enable us to *picture* the world in which we live” (Sellars, *Truth and* 213). This point comes a bit after a discussion of how to modify Wittgenstein’s *Tractarian* account of picturing (Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*), in order to avoid a reading of it that amounted to “a thorough-going linguistic idealism,” a view that Sellars considered “a miserable absurdity” (Ibid. 213). Recognizing picturing the world as the central function of language, it is then a short step to

⁷ The typical T-inflationist motivations of thinking that truth must play some fundamental explanatory role would not do the trick here. Appeals to truth in explanations of successful action or the success of the scientific method have been undercut by T-deflationist replies (Cf. Williams and Leeds), and the remaining appeal that some T-inflationists think must be made, in an account of linguistic meaning and mental content (Cf. Devitt), are entirely out of bounds for Sellars.

understanding the truth of a form of words (at least in an elementary matter-of-factual claim) as involving *correct* picturing of the world.

However, we think that in appealing to a *Tractatus*-inspired isomorphism between the elements of a linguistic picture-object and the objects in the world being pictured, in order to accommodate a “thick”, picturing, correspondence intuition regarding truth (in contrast to the “thin” correspondence intuition that some T-deflationists think is captured in the instances of (T) or (PT) (Williams 233) (Horwich 104-05), Sellars overshoots the mark. His own understanding of what counts as picturing requires no more than that picture-objects get produced via certain interaction and entanglement with objects and events in the world.⁸ This is why, in addition to the fully conceptual, natural-linguistic objects produced as part of the linguistic behavior of speakers, even such “non-conceptual” objects as phonographic recordings count as pictures (e.g., of concerts) (O’Shea 147). So, to avoid linguistic idealism and understand language as a means of picturing the world, all that Sellars needs is a means of describing natural-linguistic objects as connected to and entangled with objects and events in the world. This can involve a “fantastically complex system of rules” (Sellars, *Truth and* 215), but it does not require any explicit appeal to any special notion of picturing explained in terms of an isomorphism.⁹ We will say more about this below when we turn to the role of meaning attribution in the second sense of correspondence. Before doing so, however, we return to the apparent internal tension in Sellars’s views on truth.

Taking Sellars’s two-part account as given, we think that one way to resolve the apparent tension that arises in it is to recognize that, while Sellars’s views about truth involve both a deflationary component and an inflationary component, the components seem directed at two different sorts of *bearers* of truth, propositions and sentences, respectively. In turn, this suggests that we might see Sellars as endorsing a sort of T-deflationism about propositional truth and a sort of T-inflationism about sentential truth. Rather than seeing Sellars as *both* a T-deflationist *and* a T-inflationist, we might see his view as in some ways deflationary (as regards propositional truth) and in some ways inflationary (as

⁸ See Sellars (*Truth and* 219-22), where he describes his hypothetical super-inscriber.

⁹ What we find interesting is that, in this same paper (at least the 1963 version); Sellars already presents a means for doing this with his “dot-quote” notation on (Ibid. 204-05, 223). The explanations involving dot-quotes were substituted into the proofs of Sellars (*Science*).

regards sentential truth). This resultant *hybrid view* would dissolve the internal tension that we find in Sellars's view of truth.¹⁰

Although this hybrid view seems to be a coherent one for a truth-theorist to adopt, one aspect of Sellars's version of it seems to suffer from a very serious worry. We have in mind a potential problem for his preferred account of sentential truth, given that it is grounded in an appeal to the notion of an isomorphism, and given that he has an overarching commitment to nominalism. Here is the problem.

Sellars maintains that the truth of elementary matter-of-factual statements essentially involves correct picturing, where this relies on the notion of a projection from the objects pictured to the names employed in the picture. However, according to Putnam's model-theoretic argument, there could be an infinite number of mappings, i.e., projections, from objects to names, any number of which could count as the relevant picturing relation (Putnam, *Meaning and*) (Putnam, *Models and*). The reason that the model-theoretic argument is especially worrisome for Sellars, given his commitment to nominalism, is because nominalism seems to undermine the most familiar replies to Putnam's challenge. These replies typically involve an appeal to privileged relations or some appeal to privileged classes of particulars,¹¹ which some have described as "anti-nominalist" (see van Fraassen). If a commitment to nominalism does undercut one's ability to block the conclusions of Putnam's model-theoretic argument, then this is a problem for Sellars's account of sentential truth.¹²

¹⁰ In a review of Horwich (*Truth*), Field (*Critical notice*) questions whether a reliance on an equivalence schema like (PT) should be called a "minimalist" account of truth on grounds that even T-inflationists can accept a version of (PT). Be that as it may, given the importance that Sellars attributes to (PT), we find it useful to see Sellars as adopting the sort of hybrid views that we are describing.

¹¹ See, for example, the responses given in Glymour and Lewis.

¹² Lest anyone think that Sellars has a way out of this dilemma in virtue of his recognition and incorporation of a normative dimension in his account of truth as *correct* picturing according to a "fantastically complex system of rules", first note that the whole point of the model-theoretic argument is that there are too many candidate isomorphisms, with no way to single one out as the one that makes for correct picturing. Moreover, any proposed normative selection one hopes might be performed by the system of rules involved in language picturing the world will also fail to single out a unique candidate isomorphism. This is because any norm that is supposed to do this work must be either explicit in the rules or implicit in the behavior of speakers. But in the former case, the rule, and thus the relevant norm expressed, will fall victim to Putnam's "just more theory" objection (Putnam, *Meaning and* 126-27) and (*Models and*, 18) (Lewis 224-25). And in the latter case, Wittgenstein's rule-following considerations again leave us with too many candidate norms implicit in the behavior, with no fact of the matter about which one is correct ((Wittgenstein, *Philosophical*) and Kripke).

This worry might motivate trying to accommodate Sellars's "thick" correspondence intuition, regarding the truth of elementary matter-of-factual claims, in some way that avoids the challenges of Putnam's model-theoretic argument while still adhering to Sellars's nominalist scruples. We think that bringing in our pretense-based accounts of truth-talk and proposition-talk can accomplish this. We will explain how, beginning with our account of truth-talk.

II

A pretense account of truth-talk

The analysis of truth-talk that we have developed employs a Walton-inspired strategy involving *semantic pretense*.¹³ The central idea of our account is that our use of truth-locutions, such as 'is true', 'is false', 'is not true', etc. is underwritten by a rule-governed pretense that establishes a systematic dependency between some of what is *to be pretended* and certain real-world conditions outside of the pretense.

This type of pretense is similar to that found in children's games of make-believe. Make-believe involves two kinds of *prescribed* pretenses: those that are stipulated background pretenses that are expressly pretended, and additional pretenses that are systematically *generated from reality* via a game's principles of generation (Cf. Crimmins 5). Consider, for example, two children, Zev and Dex, playing a make-believe game of *Star Trek*. Certain pretenses will be stipulated as the background pretenses for the game, for example,

Star Trek game pretenses

The props for the game are Dex, Zev, cell phones, flashlights, the living room, and the bathroom. It is to be pretended that

- i) Dex is Captain Kirk,
- ii) Zev is Mr. Spock,
- iii) cell phones are communicators,
- iv) flashlights are phaser pistols,
- v) the living rooms is the bridge of the Starship Enterprise,
- vi) the bathroom is the transporter station...

¹³ See Walton. For other Walton-inspired, pretense-based accounts of various fragments of discourse, see Evans; Yablo (*How in*) (*Go figure*), and (*The myth*); Kroon (*Characterizing*) (*Fictionalism and*), and (*Descriptivism*); Crimmins; and Egan.

In addition to these rules regarding various props that are used in the make-believe, the rules of the game also generate additional prescribed pretenses, based on the stipulated pretenses along with how things really are in the world outside of the game. That is, the stipulated background pretenses also underwrite various implicit *principles of generation* – rules of the game that determine what further pretenses are prescribed, depending on the circumstances of the props in the world outside of the game. Thus, given (i)-(vi), the pretenses displayed in

(3) Captain Kirk stole Mr. Spock's phaser pistol and hid it in the transporter station.

are prescribed in the game if, and only if, the real-world conditions specified directly in the following claim obtain.

(4) Dex took a flashlight that belongs to Zev away from him and hid it in the bathroom.

Putting forward (3) as prescribed expresses a commitment to the obtaining of the conditions specified in (4), thereby asserting indirectly what one could assert directly using (4). Thus, although (3) involves pretense, it can be used to make a serious assertion about the world – albeit indirectly. Claims involving make-believe can thus be used to make genuinely true, serious statements indirectly. They are true exactly when the pretenses they display are prescribed. Pretense-employing claims can therefore be used for serious purposes (e.g., providing information about the real world, giving explanations, e.g., of why Zev is scouring the house, etc.). So, pretense-based accounts are not error-theories; there is a difference between *pretense-involving fictionalism* (or PIF) accounts and *error-theoretic fictionalism* (or ETF).¹⁴

Understanding truth-talk in terms of semantic pretense is to take it as underwritten by a game of make-believe governed, at least in part, by principles of generation like the following.

Truth-Talk game pretenses

The props for the game are the linguistic expressions 'is true', 'is false', 'is not true', and their cognates (e.g., 'is so', 'is right', etc.), as well as the expressions 'truth' and 'falsity'. It is to be pretended that

¹⁴ For further discussion of this distinction, see our (*Linguistic puzzles*), (*Why deflationists*), (*The story*), and (*Pretense and*).

- i) the adjectival expressions 'is true', 'is false', etc. function predicatively, to describe objects as having or lacking certain properties;
- ii) the nominal expression 'truth' picks out the property attributed with the expression 'is true' (and 'falsity' picks out the property attributed with the expression 'is false');
- iii) the most basic objects that directly have or lack the properties that 'is true', etc. attribute are abstract, mind and language-independent entities called "propositions"; other kinds of objects (e.g., linguistic items) can have the properties that 'is true', etc. attribute only derivatively, in virtue of expressing a proposition that has the relevant property.

The game of make-believe based on these stipulated grounding pretenses also includes *explicit* principles of generation, which are rules that serve to determine what else is to be pretended, given how things are outside of the game – i.e., what further pretenses are generated from reality. The basic principles of generation are as follows.

(PGT) The pretenses displayed in an utterance of '(The proposition) that p is true¹' are prescribed if and only if p.

(PGF) The pretenses displayed in an utterance of '(The proposition) that p is false¹' are prescribed if and only if \neg p.

(PGS) If S_1 and S_2 are sentences that are alike except (in some transparent context) one has a subsentence 'p' where the other has '<p> is true', then one can directly infer S_1 from S_2 and S_2 from S_1 (where 'p' serves as a variable that can be replaced by a sentence and '<p>' stands for a nominalization of such a sentence).

The roles and functions of the rules for the pretense should be understood as follows.

The explanation of the rules for the game of make-believe that underwrites truth-talk begins with a specification of certain linguistic expressions as the props for this game. Rules (i)-(iii) then all state stipulated, *expressly* made-believe, background pretenses *about* these props. In particular, Rule (i) specifies and explains what is to be pretended about the *adjectival* props. One consequence of this rule is that all uses of 'true', 'false', 'not true', etc. involve pretense *intrinsically*, which is to say: There are no pretense-free uses of these truth-locutions

because pretense is invoked in their basic functioning. As a consequence, the only *serious* content (about the real world, outside of the make-believe) that an instance of truth-talk has (or: possesses) must come from the operation of the make-believe's *principles of generation* – specifically, rules (PGT) and (PGF).

Principles (PGT) and (PGF) cover what are arguably the most basic cases of truth-talk, what we call “transparent propositional truth-talk” so an account of these cases provides a core for our more general account. These principles of generation make the correctness of a putative attribution of truth or falsity, to some nominalized, sentential content-vehicle, a function (possibly negating) of whether the conditions specified by a use of that content-vehicle obtain. This makes the utterance of an instance of truth-talk an indirect means for specifying those very same conditions, thus determining the serious content of the instances of truth-talk. Since these indirectly specified conditions can actually obtain, this makes it possible for instances of truth-talk to make (what we might, now employing the very pretense being explained, describe as) “genuinely true” claims about the world outside of the pretense.

Rule (PGS) satisfies another important condition of adequacy for any theory of truth-talk, as it provides a version of a rule of *intersubstitution*. Such a rule further captures the sense in which the content of a putative ascription of truth to some content-vehicle just is the content of the content-vehicle itself. The general intersubstitution licensed by this rule is integral to a pretense account yielding the right content for the more interesting cases of truth-talk, viz., and ‘true’-involving generalizations. Since those cases are what make truth-talk so useful, it seems to be a fairly central aspect of any adequate account of this fragment of discourse.

To illustrate how truth-talk functions according to this account, consider a straightforward instance of truth-talk, such as

(5) It is true that crabapples are edible.

For reasons we explain elsewhere (*Why Deflationists*), we take (5) to be more perspicuously rendered by

(5′) That crabapples are edible is true,

where 'that crabapples are edible' is (in the context of the pretense) a referring expression that picks out the proposition that crabapples are edible.¹⁵ Syntactically speaking, the 'that'-clause is a nominalization of the content-vehicle

(6) Crabapples are edible.

When asserted, a 'true'-involving sentence like (5') presents the pretenses it displays as prescribed, where being prescribed is determined by:

a) the particular principle of generation that governs those pretenses (here, the relevant instance of Rule (PGT)),

and

b) whether the conditions, whose obtaining the relevant principle of generation makes prescriptive for the pretenses, actually obtain.

Recall that Rule (PGT) has it that the prescriptive conditions for the pretenses displayed in (5') are those specified by the use of the content-vehicle that is nominalized as the subject expression of (5') – in this case, (6). In short, by presenting the pretenses it displays as prescribed, (5') specifies, indirectly, precisely those conditions that (6) specifies directly.

Our talk of the conditions specified by a claim pertains to a central component of what we mean by the *content* of an utterance. However, because, as explained above, our PIF account of truth-talk views the expression 'truth' as simply a prop for the game of make-believe that is the core of the account, this makes it just a stipulated background pretense of the game that this expression picks out any property. Since this means that, really, there is no property of truth, we do not hold that the conditions specified by a claim can be understood fundamentally as truth-conditions. We call them *M-conditions*. While M-conditions are objective, worldly situations that either obtain or fail to obtain, on our view, truth-conditions have only a thin, derivative status, as conditions for the appropriate use of the pretense-involving truth-predicate. The truth-conditions for a sentence are a *by-product* of its meaning, of which M-conditions are a significant component. This thought is in line with the meaning-to-truth conditional,

¹⁵ Again, we will say more about talk putatively about propositions below. For a fuller account, see our (*The story*).

(MTC) If S means that p, then S is true iff p,

no instance of which we reject.¹⁶

Now, while some sentences specify M-conditions directly, as is the case with (6), other sentences specify M-conditions only indirectly. Indeed, as should be apparent, one of the consequences of our PIF account of truth-talk is that any specification of M-conditions (that obtain or fail to obtain outside of the pretense) that is accomplished by a 'true'-involving sentence will be accomplished only indirectly, via the operation of the pretense that governs the functioning of the truth-predicate.

The resulting, quasi-anaphoric, identity of content between an instance of transparent propositional truth-talk of the form 'It is true that p' and the content-vehicle nominalized in it (the sentence that goes in for 'p') means that the game of make-believe behind truth-talk generates all the instances of the equivalence schema

(ES) It is true that p iff p.¹⁷

This is an important result because, as T-deflationists have argued (and Sellars acknowledges), these equivalences are (at least some of) the central principles governing truth-talk. Our PIF account has them follow directly from the functioning that truth-talk is given by the game of make-believe that underwrites it.

Because our PIF view generates every instance of (ES), it thereby captures the first sense of correspondence that Sellars attributes to truth. Capturing the second sense of correspondence will require fleshing out Rule (iii) of the pretense behind truth-talk, by bringing in the relevant parts of our PIF account of proposition-talk – those pertaining to meaning attribution. We maintain that it is a merit of our account – over T-deflationist accounts that do not explicitly recognize an element of fiction operating in truth-talk¹⁸ – that ours also helps explain certain T-inflationist intuitions we might have. In particular, we can also accommodate the kind of "thick" correspondence intuition that Sellars expresses in the second sense of correspondence he attributes to

¹⁶ Note that the instances of (MTC) also comport with Rule (iii) of the pretense.

¹⁷ For present purposes, this is taken to be equivalent to (PT) $\langle p \rangle$ is true \leftrightarrow p.

¹⁸ But see our (*Why deflationists*) and (*From mathematical*) for arguments that all T-deflationists should endorse alethic fictionalism.

truth – the one involving correct picturing in virtue of an isomorphism between the elements of natural-linguistic objects and objects and events in the world. This is something that other, thorough-going deflationists cannot do. To show how our view accomplishes this, while maintaining a Sellarsian spirit with respect to nominalism and meaning attribution, we will first explain the basic elements of Sellars's account of meaning attribution and the external tension we find in his view.

III

Sellars, "picturing the world", and non-relational meaning

To account for the second "correct picturing" sense of correspondence that Sellars attributes to truth, we need to understand the picturing aspect of natural-linguistic objects and the functioning of meaning attributions made to them. We will focus on meaning attribution at the sentential level, which is performed by employing a 'that'-clause in a claim of the form,

(MA) S means that p,

where 'S' is filled in with an expression denoting a sentence, and 'p' is filled in with an English sentence-in-use.

We think that Sellars's views about 'that'-clauses and their role in meaning attributions provide a foundation for an account of how language can be understood as picturing the world without the need for any special representational relations, or even any explicit appeal to projections or isomorphisms. As we mentioned above, Sellars is a nominalist and thus no fan of abstract entities. However, his method of avoiding abstract meaning entities (like propositions) is to deny that 'means' is a relational expression, and this is what generates the external tension we find with his account of meaning attribution. On his view, in its "quasi-formal" representation, 'means' ends up as a specialized form of the copula – one that serves to classify lexically specified linguistic expression types in terms of an illustrating functional sortal (Sellars, *Meaning as* 431).¹⁹ The "quasi-formal" notation that Sellars develops to express this kind of functional classification is his well-known "dot-quote" notation.

¹⁹ See also (Sellars, *Naturalism and* 73-4).

So, on Sellars's account, a claim of the form

(MA) S means that p

is to be understood in terms of a claim of the form

(SMA) Ss are ●p●s,

where the expression that goes in for 'S' is what Sellars calls a *distributive singular term*, here specifying a type of linguistic item, and placing the dot-quotes around whatever expression goes in for 'p' forms another distributive singular term, here specifying a functional role, as the one played in our language by the expression thus dot-quoted (Ibid 428).²⁰ (More specifically, it specifies a broadly inferential role, involving Language Entry Transitions, Intra-linguistic Moves, and Language Departure Transitions). (Ibid 423-24)²¹

There is much we like about Sellars's account: his understanding of meaning in terms of use (to put it very broadly), the essentially social aspect of language, and his analysis of meaning attributions as, in effect, specifying the use-features of an expression, by illustrating them – that is, by, in a sense, putting them on display with dot-quotes. What it is important to recognize about the operation of dot-quotes is that even though this device operates by holding up instances of the meaning attributor's home language, it still serves as a way to indicate connections between linguistic items and non-linguistic items (objects and events that factor into the linguistic functional-role indicated by the use of dot-quotes) and does not simply collapse into translation. So, rather than just stating that some linguistic expression has the same meaning as some home-language expression (as in a translation), a meaning attribution gives or "illustrates" the meaning of the expression (Ibid. 431), and thus specifies something outside, even of the speaker's home language.

It is because Sellars's dot-quotes analysis of meaning attributions explains this type of claim as connecting natural-linguistic objects to something outside of language that we think dot-quotes provide Sellars with enough to avoid linguistic idealism. More specifically, it is because the linguistic functional-roles put on display with dot-quotes include Language Entry Transitions (in which objects in the world affect speakers

²⁰ See also (Sellars, *Naturalism and* 73-4, 77-8).

²¹ See also (Sellars, *Naturalism and* 69).

and lead to the production of natural-linguistic objects) and Language Departure Transitions (in which natural-linguistic objects lead speakers to affect objects in the world through actions) that natural-linguistic objects with the roles put on display can, via a “fantastically complex system of rules”, have the kind of interaction and entanglement with non-linguistic objects and events that is sufficient to count as language picturing the world, on Sellars’s matter-of-factual understanding of picturing. This is why we think, as we mentioned above, that Sellars’s explicit talk of isomorphisms and projections as the basis of picturing is overshooting the mark when it comes to avoiding linguistic idealism.

However, while eschewing talk of isomorphisms and projections – and perhaps any attempts explicitly to *describe* a picturing relations between natural-linguistic items and objects in the world, rather than just *displaying* it with dot-quotes – would allow Sellars to avoid the challenges of Putnam’s model-theoretic argument, while maintaining nominalist principles, we see a problem with Sellars’s account of meaning attributions. This is the aforementioned *external* tension we find in his view, pertaining to a conflict it has with our inferential practices involving the expression ‘means’. This conflict is particularly problematic for Sellars for the following reasons.

In “Language as Thought and as Communication,” Sellars presents an understanding of fully conceptual linguistic behavior as largely a matter of its thoroughly rule-governed nature, with the meanings of expressions arising out of the rules that govern their use – in particular, in inferences (Sellars, *Language as* 510 512-13, 517). In keeping with Sellars’s views, then, we should consider the kinds of inferences that form MA meaning attributions sanction and are sanctioned by – in order to consider what we might want to say about the meaning of ‘means’. One thing that we have emphasized in our recent work is that, Sellarsians or not, we should all recognize that our linguistic and inferential practices involving ‘that’-clauses (including their use in MA claims) treat these expressions as singular terms, putatively denoting mind- and language-independent abstract entities (Armour-Garb and Woodbridge, *The story*).²²

To see this, consider the following inference examples.

²² See also, Schiffer (*Language-created*) and (*Pleonastic*).

- (I) "Holzäpfel sind eßbar" means that crabapples are edible.
So, "Holzäpfel sind eßbar" means something.
(There is something that "Holzäpfel sind eßbar" means).
- (II) "Holzäpfel sind eßbar" means the same thing as "Crabapples are edible".
"Crabapples are edible" means that crabapples are edible.
So, "Holzäpfel sind eßbar" means that crabapples are edible.
- (III) "Holzäpfel sind eßbar" means that crabapples are edible.
Corey believes that crabapples are edible.
So, "Holzäpfel sind eßbar" means something that Corey believes.

The inferential practices displayed in these arguments are easily regimented into first-order logic, if we take the claims involved to traffic in a domain of non-linguistic entities, of the sort known as *propositions*. Even in meaning attributions, the practices of quantifying into the positions occupied by 'that'-clauses and trading on the repetition of a 'that'-clause as an identity clearly suggest a referential treatment of these expressions. And this, in turn, suggests a relational treatment of the expression 'means' in form MA meaning attributions.

However, we have also explained that this kind of meaning-entity realism faces serious metaphysical and epistemological problems (Armour-Garb and Woodbridge, *The Story*), which suggest that if we can do without a commitment to propositions, we should. Accordingly, we have argued that while our use of 'that'-clauses (what we call *proposition-talk*) appears to traffic in abstract entities of a certain sort, actually, no such entities exist. What we offer, as a resolution of these problems, is a PIF account of proposition-talk. Such an account vindicates our inferential and linguistic practices involving 'that'-clauses and carries with it a *linguistic commitment* to talking *as if* there were such entities, because of the expressive advantages provided by such talk, while at the same time avoiding any worrisome *ontological* commitment. The ontological commitment is bracketed by taking this way of talking to be

underwritten by pretense (Armour-Garb and Woodbridge, *The Story*). Before we turn to the basic of our account, let us return to Sellars's views and explain the external tension we find with them.

Previously, we noted that Sellars's views about 'that'-clauses and their role in meaning attributions can capture language picturing the world without the need for problematic abstract entities, such as propositions. While this is all for the better, what we find worrisome about Sellars's account is how difficult and how unnatural it is for him to wed his views with the inferential and linguistic practices that we engage in with meaning attributions, practices of the sorts exhibited in arguments (I)-(III), presented above.

To see the problem, consider argument (I). We can render the inference made there schematically as

- (A) S means that p.
 So, S means something.
 (i.e., There is something that S means).

Taking this inference schema at face value, and treating the 'that'-clause as a referring expression and 'means' as a relational predicate, a formal rendering of this inference schema might be given as

- (B) $\frac{M(s, \langle p \rangle)}{\exists x M(s, x)}$

where 's' names, in the formal language, whatever sentence 'S' names, and the angle brackets function as described above. Here the inference is rendered into straightforward first-order logic as a clearly valid argument.

Now consider how argument (I) would be recast on Sellars's account, given his commitment against reading 'means' as a relational predicate. Since Sellars is trying to give an account of how speakers can attribute senses to sentences without incurring any ontological commitment to abstract meaning entities, he cannot accept (B) as a correct formal rendering of (A). At the same time, he would not wish to deny the validity of (A); hence, he must offer different forms for both the premise and the conclusion employed in that argument.

We will begin with the premise in (A). Since Sellars takes the application of dot-quotes to represent the form of a sentence like ‘S means that p’, he will likely take something like the following to capture the form of the premise,

$$(SMA_F) \forall y(y \in S \rightarrow y \in \bullet p \bullet).$$

Here, ‘S’ gets filled in by a particular expression for a class of lexical items, and ‘p’ gets filled in by a particular sentence from the speaker’s language, to form an expression specifying a functional class by displaying the functional role the items in the class share.

Prima facie, there is nothing the matter with (SMA_F) . Worries arise, however, when we consider how Sellars will have to represent the conclusion of (A). The idea behind the conclusion is to capture the thought that there is some functional classification that classifies all the Ss. Our conjecture is that, short of wheeling in second-order quantification, which we assume Sellars would not do (since it would commit him to properties), the only way to represent the conclusion, while preserving the validity of the argument and allowing that (SMA_F) represents the form of the premise, is to represent the conclusion as

$$(C) \exists x \forall y(y \in S \rightarrow \Sigma q(x = \bullet q \bullet \wedge y \in x)),$$

where ‘ Σ ’ is the existential-substitutional quantifier, with a substitution class consisting of all the sentences of (all possible extensions of?) our language.

Here is the problem we see with this. Although we do not have a knock down argument against it, we find it implausible to take (C) to represent the *form* of the sentence, ‘There is something that S means’. We recognize that if one accepts the validity of argument (I) and that (SMA_F) represents the form of the premise, then (C), or something equally complicated, is needed to represent the form of the conclusion. As a result, we think that the implausibility of the claim that (C) represents the form of the conclusion sheds doubt on the claim the (SMA_F) actually represents the form of the premise. But, this, in turn, raises a question about whether Sellars’s employment of dot-quotes actually represents the form of any sentence with the surface form, ‘S means that p’. Accordingly, if argument (I) is valid and the charge of implausibility regarding (C) is correct, then there is a reason for rejecting, or resisting, Sellars’s non-relational account of form MA meaning attributions.

Now, perhaps Sellars would deny that he is in the business of representing the form of the sentences in such arguments. But if that is not what he is doing, then we are somewhat puzzled about this aspect of his project. At any rate, we do not think that Sellars would deny that he is representing the form of such sentences, and, so, we will say no more about this possible rejoinder. Instead, we claim that if there were *another* way of reading, or representing, the sentences in (A), a way that does not require representing the conclusion with something as protracted as (C), yet which still avoids incurring ontological commitments to meaning entities, etc., then it seems that that might be preferable to Sellars's non-relational analysis. This is precisely what we claim our PIF account of proposition-talk can do. We therefore now turn to a brief sketch of the account to show how.

IV

Propositions, meaning attribution, and pretense

For present purposes, we will focus on the elements of our PIF account of proposition-talk most relevant to the topics at hand, namely, the use of 'that'-clauses in MA form meaning attributions.²³ So, consider a meaning attribution of this sort, e.g.,

(7) 'Rauchen ist verboten' means that smoking is forbidden.

We explain this claim as operating in virtue of belonging to a pretense that involves stipulated background pretenses like the following.

Propositions game pretenses

The props for the pretense behind proposition-talk are 'that'-clauses and other expressions that can be replaced by them. The following are stipulated, background pretenses for the game.

'That'-clauses (and expressions they can be substituted for) are referring expressions.

- i) They denote mind- and language-independent abstract entities, called "propositions".
- ii) These entities are "fine-grained neo-Russellian" entities, i.e., they are structured entities built out of "worldly" elements.
- iii) Any 'that'-clauses whose embedded sentences employ

²³ For more details about the account as a whole, see Armour-Garb and Woodbridge (*The Story*) and (*Pretense and*).

- different expressions, or have different structures, (pretend-) denote distinct propositions.
- iv) The expression ‘means’ attributes a relation (called “meaning”) that certain things (e.g., certain linguistic expressions) can bear to propositions – a relation constituted by a particular isomorphism (“picturing projection”) holding between the elements of the meaningful item and the elements of the proposition.²⁴

In addition to these background pretenses, as the propositions game pertains to MA form claims like (7), it also involves the following principle of generation that establishes further pretenses as also prescribed, depending on whether certain real-world conditions obtain.

(PGMA) The pretenses displayed in a utterance of \lceil (The sentence) S means that p \rceil are prescribed iff the sentence S has a broadly inferential role similar to that of ‘p’-as-the-speaker-actually-uses-it (in the utterance).

Explaining a claim like (7) in terms of these rules for the pretenses that we hold the claim involves, takes the pretenses displayed in (7) as prescribed only under certain real-world conditions – those specified in

(8) ‘Rauchen is verboten’ has a broadly inferential role similar to that of ‘smoking is forbidden’-as-the-speaker-actually-uses-it (in the MA-form utterance).

So, given (PGMA), putting forward the pretenses displayed in (7) as prescribed commits one to the obtaining of the conditions specified in (8); a speaker can therefore use (7) to say indirectly what (8) says directly. Thus, what meaning attributions of form MA accomplish (indirectly) are the specification of a broadly inferential role and the functional classification of some specified linguistic item in terms of that role. This has a Sellarsian ring to it.

But this is not yet the whole story. As with Sellars’s dot-quotes, a major expressive advantage that proposition-talk provides, over an opaque descriptive specification of the broadly inferential role in question as in (8), is something akin to the collapse of the use/mention distinction. While sentences embedded in a ‘that’-clause are nominalized, they are

²⁴ The pretense about a picturing-projection isomorphism can be restricted to “elementary, matter-of-factual” claims, as Sellars seems to prefer doing.

still *used*. So the meaning of such a sentence is still in play; its broadly inferential role is engaged or active. What the pretense of proposition-talk does is put that role on display via a kind of deferred ostension. Then, through the operation of the pretense of there being a proposition serving as the relatum of the relations 'means', this allows us to pick out that role and attribute it to some linguistic expression. This captures the "illustrating" aspect of the operation of Sellars's dot-quotes. So the pretense account of form MA meaning attributions has much of the same upshot as the Sellarsian non-relational/specialized copula account.

Moreover, any intuition one has that language pictures the world *via* an isomorphism can be written right into the pretense about the expression 'means'. Since the pretense also takes propositions to be neo-Russellian entities, an isomorphism to the elements of a proposition meant is an isomorphism with elements of the world. While this is just a pretense on our account, it still avoids linguistic idealism in the same way that the use of dot-quotes does, but unlike the dot-quotes account, our view treats the logic of meaning attributions just what it appears to be on the surface. This accommodates and vindicates our inferential and linguistic practices with 'that'-clauses and the expression 'means'. One might conclude, therefore, that a pretense account of meaning attributions should be attractive to someone with Sellarsian aspirations.

V

Sellars's second sense of correspondence

Now that we have an account of meaning attribution on the table, we can explain how we can accommodate Sellars's intuitions about language picturing the world (avoiding linguistic idealism) and the truth of basic matter-of-factual empirical claims involving correct picturing, understood in terms of an isomorphism, all while avoiding the challenges of Putnam's model-theoretic argument without appealing to any "anti-nominalist" factors.

Sellars's second sense of correspondence — the one involving picturing — seems to be the sort that T-deflationists explicitly reject (or: want nothing to do with) (Horwich, *Truth Second* 116-17). However, the combination of our PIF account of proposition-talk and our PIF account of truth-talk can even vindicate (in a sense) this second, stronger version of the correspondence intuition. This is because the "thick" version of the correspondence intuition — including Sellars's talk of picturing in virtue of

an isomorphism – can effectively be written into the stipulated grounding pretenses of the account (of meaning attribution in particular). Thus, it is just part of the pretense that when some elementary, matter-of-factual statement expresses some (neo-Russellian) proposition, it does so in virtue of (i) a projection from the names employed in the statement to the objects involved in the proposition, and (ii) a particular isomorphism between the linguistic picture and the proposition. This captures a robust intuition about language picturing the world and truth being correct picturing. At the same time, our PIF account of proposition-talk allows us to capture the “thinner” notion of picturing that Sellars’s dot-quotes can provide, but in a way that avoids the external tension confronting Sellars’s views. In this way, our PIF accounts can accommodate the second sense of correspondence Sellars attributes to truth, in addition to accommodating his first sense of correspondence.

Finally, it should be clear that our PIF accounts satisfy Sellars’s nominalist scruples, since the property of truth, the meaning relation, and propositions are all only pretend – none of them really exist on our view. At the same time, however, we can deflect the challenges posed by Putnam’s model-theoretic argument – the challenge of there being “too many isomorphisms”. While the pretense that underwrites meaning attribution does portray there being a particular isomorphism involved in linguistic picturing (so that the correct picturing that makes for the truth of elementary, matter-of-factual statements involves that particular isomorphism rather than any other), this does not saddle us with a problem. On our view, all of this is a stipulated pretense. We can, if need be, accept the model-theoretic argument’s conclusion that really there are too many isomorphisms and no way to single one out as the basis of any linguistic picturing relation. The claim that there is one isomorphism or projection that is special is just a pretense. Since, on our PIF views, there actually is no property of truth and no meaning relation, there can be no requirement of finding a way of picking out one of the isomorphisms as capturing the truth of elementary, matter-of-factual claims to the exclusion of all the others. We can respond to Putnam’s challenges with a shrug.

VI

The engagement complaint and a Sellarsian response

We will now consider how Sellars can help us with an objection that is often launched at certain fictionalist accounts – what we call the

Engagement Complaint (henceforth *EC*). Although the objection can apply to any non-revolutionary fictional account, we will focus on the objection as it pertains to our PIF account. Here is the objection: It is absurd and implausible in the extreme to suppose that, in general, speakers who make meaning attributions or use proposition-talk ('that'-clauses) are engaged in pretending and are *aware* of any pretense. But PIF accounts of this way of talking seem to require that speakers are aware of and allude to the pretense that such accounts describe. Thus, such accounts are implausible.²⁵

While we have argued elsewhere that *EC* undermines a number of PIF accounts,²⁶ it does not apply to our own favored pretense account. This is so, at least in part, because our pretense analysis is not intended as an account of speakers' attitudes or activities. We do not claim, for example, that when speakers make meaning attributions or otherwise employ 'that'-clauses, they are thinking of themselves as pretending. Nor do we assume that they are alluding to or are even aware of any pretense at all, when they are engaged in proposition-talk. Indeed, such speakers need not be aware of any pretense at all in order to use that talk. On our view, pretense is part of the explanation as to how the talk functions semantically; it does not enter as part of an account of what speakers intend to do.

Why think, then, that *EC* applies to our particular semantic pretense account of proposition-talk (or, for that matter, to any discourse that we provide a semantic pretense account)? We think that *EC* seems applicable because of a misunderstanding about how our pretense account works. More specifically, the *Engagement Complaint* comes in because objectors assume that we accept

(EC1) Competent users of a fragment of discourse the functioning of which involves pretense, are making as if they are engaged in some game of make-believe involving the central locutions of that fragment of discourse.

If we accepted (EC1), the objector would be right. But we don't accept (EC1). Rather, we accept

²⁵ Versions of this objection appear in Richard and Stanley.

²⁶ In particular, it undermines the accounts developed in Kroon (*Descriptivism*) and (*Existence in*). See Woodbridge and Armour-Garb (*Linguistic puzzles*) and Armour-Garb and Woodbridge (*The Story*) and (*Pretense and*).

(EC2) *It is as if* competent users of a fragment of the language are engaged in a game of make-believe with respect to a fragment of discourse that we analyze with a PIF account.

As is clear, given (EC2), there is simply no reason for thinking that we are attributing any kind of pretense awareness, let alone engagement, to competent users of the relevant discourse. Given that we accept (EC2) but not (EC1), it is clear, therefore, that the Engagement Complaint is *misdirected*, if aimed at our particular semantic pretense account.

So where does pretense come in on our PIF account? Although speakers need not engage in the pretense operating in some way of talking, in order to use that talk fully competently, certain *theorists*, who are offering an account of that fragment of discourse, will mention pretense, in order to explain which claims about the world its instances make (and how they do this). But no one needs to engage in, or even be aware of, the games of make-believe that figure in the explanation of how pretense-involving ways of talking function in order to be a fully competent speaker with the relevant fragments of discourse. Thus, we accept something a bit more specific than (EC2), *viz.*,

(EC2*) *From the perspective of a language theorist*, it is as if competent users of a fragment of the language are engaged in a game of make-believe with respect to a fragment of discourse that we analyze with a PIF account.

Of course, a theorist, who is theorizing about the relevant discourse (the “talk”), may talk about pretense linking up utterances with their serious content, but at no point do speakers have to be engaged in any such pretense. Just as speakers need not be aware of deference to experts securing reference for natural kind terms, they do not even have to be aware of such a pretense, nor do they even have to be disposed to acknowledge that they are engaged in a sort of pretense if asked.²⁷ It is also compatible with our PIF accounts that ordinary speakers do not even take an attitude towards their use of truth-talk or proposition-

²⁷ Nor need speakers intentionally allude to or even be aware of any pretense at work in any talk for which we want to give a PIF account. Still, at the level of *theorizing* about how the talk functions, we should understand these fragments of discourse to be “as if” ways of talking that involve a systematic dependency on how things actually are. And we should explain the kind of “as ifness” involved in terms of pretense, specifically, games of make-believe.

talk, or towards whether anything in proposition-talk commits them to any sort of *as ifness* (or to whether they feel – or even *can* feel – that the propriety of their stance depends on anything approaching a belief that S). As such, our pretense account avoids EC by keeping all reference to pretense within the *theorist's explanation* of the claim's semantics and of how it ends up with the content it has.

Now, while we believe that our reply to EC is sufficient, as we will now show, Sellars's nuanced analysis of linguistic rules can strengthen our reply to the Engagement Complaint. In laying out his distinction between Rules of Criticism ("ought-to-be's" or OTBs) and Rules of Action ("ought-to-do's" or OTDs), Sellars explains how the Rules of Criticism, which govern linguistic behavior, need *not* be acknowledged by the subjects to whom the rules apply (Sellars, *Language as* 509). In fact, even though subjects might not have the conceptual repertoire or recognitional capacities needed to understand the rules, they can still manage to act in accordance with them and to engage in the right sort of rule-governed behavior. A subject who is in this position will not count as full-fledged language-user, but she can still count as a "user-in-training" and she will still be a full member of the linguistic community. Moreover, through the influence of various language-trainers, her linguistic behavior can *become* pattern-governed and conform to the Rules of Criticism (Ibid. 511-13). In this way, Sellars explains how people can act in accordance with certain rules, and have them govern their behavior, even when they have no awareness of those rules.

This insight is helpful, when we think about EC. Sellars notes that language-trainees need not have any conception of, let alone be intentionally following, the semantic rules, i.e., Rules of Criticism, to which their pattern-governed behavior conforms. While we recognize that a *full-fledged language-user* must be aware of, and intentionally follows, the Rules of Criticism that govern a fragment of discourse, on our pretense account, in following those rules, such a language user could, with a complete lack of awareness, also be acting in accord with another set of rules – ones that govern a possible game of make-believe, say – which serve to *explain* why the Rules of Criticism that govern the discourse she uses are the particular rules they are. By engaging in pattern-governed behavior that accords with the rules of a possible game of make-believe, a language-user can implement the resulting semantic mechanisms that explain the Rules of Criticism, again, without awareness of how those "ought-to-be's" result from those semantic

mechanisms. Her lack of awareness of any such explanations would have no impact on her capability to employ the language as a full member of her linguistic community. It is only language theorists who seek an explanation of why the Rules of Criticism that govern the language are what they are, so that is the only level of engagement with the language that would require awareness of any pretense at work in its linguistic functioning. Graphically, we might represent this relation as follows.

Language Trainee-----Language User-----Language Theorist
(Accords with OTBs) (Follows OTBs (+ OTDs)) (Explains OTBs)

Concluding remarks

As we have seen, we can helpfully augment a Sellars's understanding of truth, by bringing in our own PIF accounts of truth-talk and meaning attribution. And, looking at the combination from the other direction, we have seen that a Sellarsian analysis of the nature of linguistic rules can help a pretense account deflect a complaint often launched at pretense analyses of not explicitly figurative fragments of discourse. We conclude that Sellarsian views and pretense accounts combine well.

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