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## Intra-Worldly Semantics

### 3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I'll consider semantic theories that take the form of what I'll call "intra-worldly semantics." In the paradigmatic case, such a semantic theory will be one in which we think of the meaning of a sentence as a structured proposition which ascribes properties or relations to objects, representing objects as instantiating properties or standing in relations. As a variant of worldly semantics, an intra-worldly semantics requires us to try to comprehend our knowledge of meaning sentences and predicates as assymmetrically dependent on our knowledge worldly entities and their relations. Specifically, an intra-worldly semantics thinks of this knowledge as knowledge of objects, properties, relations, and primitive modal relations between properties and relations. I will argue that we cannot comprehend our knowledge of meaning in this way. The core problem is that the intra-worldly knowledge to which an intra-worldly semantics appeals is only intellegible as *dependent on* our knowledge of the semantical rules governing the correct use of predicates, but this knowledge of semantical rules, on an intra-worldly semantics, is *understood in terms of* our knowledge of primitive modal relations between properties and relations.

### 3.2 The New Non-Primitivist Actualism

Let us introduce intra-worldly semantics by returning to the issue of defining possible worlds. In the previous chapter, I considered two “primitivist” views of possible worlds, the genuine realism of David Lewis and the “modest realism” of Robert Stalnaker. The key difference between these two views is that, whereas the Lewis takes possible worlds to be genuine other worlds of exactly the same sort as the actual one, the Stalnaker takes possible worlds to be properties—ways for the world as a whole to be—that exist in the actual world. In my eyes, the greater similarity, however, is that neither try to define what possible worlds are. At least for the purposes of the semantic theory, they take possible worlds to be basic. This contrasts with views that try to give a constitutive account of possible worlds, saying what they are in terms of more basic entities such as states of affairs, propositions, or properties. These are non-primitive, or, views according to which propositions are constituted by more ontologically more basic entities. Often, non-primitivists align themselves with Stalnaker as “actualists,” but the difference between the primitivist and the non-primitivist is, actualists, on the other hand, such as Robert Adams (1974) and Alvin Planting (1976) of the old days, and Jeff King and Scott Soames of the new days, do.

I’ll focus here on the new non-primitivist actualism, which has emerged most prominently in the work of Jeff King (2007) and Scott Soames (2010). On this view, possible worlds are “big uninstantiated properties that are complex and have as parts other properties and relations,” (King 2007, 447). That is, they are complex properties that the actual world could have instantiated (and would have instantiated had things been otherwise), that have, as constituents, other simpler properties and relations. To get this conception of possible worlds into view, first consider the thought that there can be the properties that the world as a whole might instantiate—for instance, the property of being such that *a* is black.

If *a* is black, the world as a whole is such that *a* is black. That is, it instantiates the property of being such that *a* is black.<sup>1</sup> Now, consider with the thought that properties can be joined together to form conjunctive properties. For instance, the property of being white and the property of being round can be conjoined to form the conjunctive property of being white and round. Since there are properties that the world as a whole might instantiate and properties can be conjoined to form complex properties, there is, for instance, the property of being such that *a* is black, *b* is white, and *c* is gray. This is a property that the world could have instantiated and would have instantiated if it were actually such that *a* is black, *b* is white, and *c* is gray. This property is a way the world could have been, a possible world, or, as we should say if our terminology is not to be misleading, a “possible world-state.”

King and Soames, taking possible world-states to be complex properties that the world could have instantiated, understood in this way, both say that, in addition to possible world-states, there are impossible world-states, complex properties of the same sort that the world could not have instantiated. It’s not hard to see why this is a natural conclusion to draw on a view of this sort. As we’ve already said, properties can be conjoined to form conjunctive properties. We’ve also said that there is a property of being such that *a* is black, and there is a property of being such that *a* is white. So why shouldn’t we think that there is the conjunctive property of being such that *a* is black and such that *a* is white? As King says, “if you hold that properties exist, but deny that properties of a certain sort exist, you should provide a principled reason why properties of that sort don’t exist,” (448), and it’s hard to see what our principled reason could be here. If there is this property, then clearly there is a property of being such that *a* is black, *a* is white, *b* is white, and *c* is gray. If we think that possible worlds

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<sup>1</sup>For Soames (2010), the relevant property is the property of making the proposition that *a* is black true. I’m taking this to be the same property as the property of being such that *a* is black.

are properties of this sort, would could that property be other than an impossible world? King follows this thought through and claims that impossible worlds exist. It's just that, unlike (non-actual) possible world-states, which are only *contingently* uninstantiated, impossible world-states are *necessarily* uninstantiated. Whereas possible world-states are ways that the world could have been, impossible world-states are ways that the world could not have been.

It is important for primitivists about possible worlds such as Lewis and Stalnaker to maintain that there are no worlds that are impossible, for Lewis and Stalnaker want to understand what it is for some state of affairs to be impossible in terms of the fact that there is no world in which it obtains. If there are impossible worlds, no analysis of this sort can be maintained. However, King and Soames do not wish to provide a reductive analysis of modal notions in terms of possible worlds. According to Soames, one of Lewis's main errors consists in his "thinking that modal notions can be analyzed away, rather than taken as primitive," (2010, 110). If we take modal relations that obtain between properties as primitive, then we can demarcate the set of possible worlds from the set of impossible ones in terms of whether or not it's possible for the world to be instantiated. Cash-ing this out, if we think possible worlds are complex properties that have simpler properties as their constituents, we can demarcate the possible world-states from the impossible ones by specifying whether simple properties that cannot possibly be co-instantiated by some object would have to be co-instantiated by some object in order for a world-state to be instantiated by the world as a whole. By taking the compatibility or incompatibility of simple properties to be explanatorily prior to the possibility or impossibility of world-states in this way, we can demarcate the possible from the impossible world-states. So, since the property of being black is incompatible with the property of being white in the sense that the two properties cannot possibly be co-instantiated by a single object, the world cannot instantiate the property of being such that  $a$  is black and being such that  $a$  is white;

instantiating this property would require a single object (namely,  $a$ ) to instantiate both the property of being black and the property of being white, and that is not possible. So, any world-state that includes the property of being such that  $a$  is white and being such that  $a$  is black is thus not a possible world-state.

### 3.3 A Simple Intra-Worldly Semantics

Thinking of possible worlds in this way lends itself to a very different sort of semantic theory. If one explains which worlds are possible by appealing to relations of compatibility and incompatibility between properties, one can't then turn around and analyze these relations in an extra-worldly framework. Rather, properties and their modal relations are taken as primitive, for the purposes of the semantic theory. We thus get a different kind of semantic theory—an intra-worldly semantics. Both King and Soames propose versions of an intra-worldly semantics. The details of their theories differ, but those differences don't matter much for our purposes here. For King, names are assigned objects as semantic values, 1-place predicates are assigned properties, and  $n$ -place predicates are assigned  $n$ -place relations. Sentences are assigned propositions, which are composed out of these semantic values and represent objects as instantiating properties or standing in relations.<sup>2</sup> Soames assigns names, 1-place predicates, and  $n$ -place predicates, *acts of cognizing* objects, properties, and relations as semantic values, and takes propositions to be acts of predicating cognized properties and relations of cognized objects, but everything basically works out the same. For simplicity, I will consider a view along the lines of that King proposes in which names are assigned objects and predicates are assigned properties and relations.

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<sup>2</sup>King's account of just what the relation is that binds together an object and a property in a proposition such that the proposition represents that object as instantiating that property is very complicated, and, in my view, utterly confused. For a criticism, see Simonelli (M.S.). For our purposes here, the details of the theory don't matter.

How does a semantic theory that appeals to intra-worldly facts of this sort work? At the most basic level, such a semantic theory assigns objects to names, properties to 1-place predicates, and  $n$ -place relations to  $n$ -place predicates. For our simple toy language, for example, the assignment of basic semantic values might be the following:

[[ <b>a</b> ]] = $a$	[[ <b>is darker than</b> ]] = the relation of being darker than.
[[ <b>b</b> ]] = $b$	[[ <b>is lighter than</b> ]] = the relation of being lighter than.
[[ <b>c</b> ]] = $c$	[[ <b>is the same color as</b> ]] = the relation of being the same color as
[[ <b>is black</b> ]] = the property of being black.	[[ <b>not</b> ]] = the property of being false.
[[ <b>is gray</b> ]] = the property of being gray.	[[ <b>and</b> ]] = the relation of both being true
[[ <b>is white</b> ]] = the property of being white.	[[ <b>or</b> ]] = the relation of at least one being true

The semantic value of a sentence is a proposition. A sentence consisting in a name concatenated with a 1-place predicate expresses a proposition that represents the object that is the semantic value of that name as instantiating the property that is the semantic value of that predicate. A proposition that represents an object as instantiating a property is true if that object instantiates that property, false if that object does not instantiate that property. For instance, the sentence “ $a$  is gray” expresses the proposition that  $a$  is gray, which represents  $a$ , the semantic value of “ $a$ ,” as instantiating the property of being grey, the semantic value of “is gray,” and so is true just in case  $a$  is gray. The proposition “It is not the case that  $a$  is gray” expresses the proposition that it is not the case that  $a$  is gray, which represents the proposition that  $a$  is gray, the semantic value of “ $a$  is gray,” as instantiating the property of being false, the semantic value of “It is not the case that,” and so true just in case it is not the case that  $a$  is gray. And so on. We thus have a simple compositional semantic theory for our toy language which appeals only to entities in the world—objects, properties, and relations—and no worlds as a whole.

Assigning names objects as semantic values and 1-place predicates properties as semantic values enables us, according to King, to “give a simple, direct explanation” (785) of facts such as those consisting of the “robust judgments about entailment relations between sentences” (784) that speakers make. Consider, for instance (F2), the fact that the sentence “*a* is black” and the sentence “*b* is white” jointly entail the sentence “*a* is darker than *b*.” An intra-worldly semantics of the sort proposed by King takes this fact to be explained in part by the natures of the following three entities in the world: the property of being black, the property of being white, and the relation of being darker than. These three entities stand in a certain relation: if something instantiates the property of being black, and something else instantiates the property of being white, then the first thing stands in the relation of being darker than to the second thing. The fact that these three entities stand in this relation is not a semantic fact but a worldly fact; it is a fact consisting in three entities in the world (two properties and a relation) standing in a certain relation. Furthermore, the fact has a certain sort of modal robustness. It doesn’t just happen to be the case that, if one thing is black and another thing is white, then the first thing is darker than the second thing. Rather, if one thing is black and another thing is gray, then the first thing *must* be darker than the second thing.

The modal robustness of this fact consisting in this relation obtaining between the property of being black, the property of being white, and the relation of being darker than, is not to be analyzed in terms of the fact that, in every possible world, every thing that is black is darker than every thing that is white. Rather, the order of explanation goes the other way around. There is no possible world in which one thing is black, another thing is white, and the first thing is not darker than the second thing in virtue of the fact that these properties and this relation, in virtue of being what they are, stand in this relation. That is, the modal robustness of the fact

is grounded in the essences of the properties and relations it involves.<sup>3</sup> It follows from what it is for something to be black, what it is for something to be gray, and what it is for one thing to be darker than another that, if something is black, and something else is gray, the first thing is darker than the second. From the fact that the property of being black, the property of being white, and the relation of being darker than stand in the relation specified above, and the fact that the expressions “is black,” “is white,” and “is darker than,” have these properties and relations as semantic values, it follows that the sentences “*a* is black” and “*b* is white” jointly entail the sentence “*a* is darker than *b*.” It seems, then, that our simple intra-worldly semantics gives us a “simple, direct explanation” of the behavior we set out to explain, just as that consisting of “judgments about entailment relations between [atomic] sentences.” Once again, however, things are not how they seem.

The intra-worldly semanticist appeals to properties at the base level of their semantic theory. Accordingly, it is these entities, and our grasp of them, that needs to be investigated if we are to investigate the foundation of an intra-worldly semantics. What are these entities and how do we grasp them?

### 3.4 The Issue of Defining Properties

Though many semanticists appeal to properties at some level in their semantic theory, most don’t take them to be semantic primitives. If you ask a working semanticist what a property is, they’re likely to answer this question in an extra-worldly framework, saying, for instance, that a property is a function mapping each possible world to a set of objects. This is, of course, a definition of a property as mathematically constructed from more primitive entities—objects and possible worlds, which are taken as basic from the point of view of the semantic theory.

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<sup>3</sup>This is explicitly endorsed by Hale, 146-147.

It is not a definition of properties that takes properties themselves as basic. In contrast to the extra-worldly semanticist, the intra-worldly semanticist does not want to think of properties as constructed from objects and possible worlds. This may well be because they rightly see that the particular objects that populate those possible worlds cannot be understood as the distinctive objects that they are independently of the properties they instantiate, and possible worlds cannot be understood as genuinely *possible* rather than *impossible* apart from thinking about the properties that would have to be co-instantiated by objects if some world were actual. So properties can be no less conceptually basic than objects and possible worlds. But what *are* properties? They are, of course, the things that serve as the semantic values of predicates in the semantic theory. So, they are what speakers grasp in grasping the meaning of a predicate. But, once again, what *do* speakers grasp in grasping the meaning of a predicate? The intra-worldly semanticist, insofar as they are proposing an account of speakers' knowledge of meaning, ought to have some answer to this question, so they ought to be able to say something about the properties that are theorized to be the semantic values of predicates.

Theorists like King and Soames, who appeal to properties at the base-level of their semantic theories, say very little about what properties in general are or what the particular properties that would figure in a semantic theory are.<sup>4</sup> The first question, I don't think, is too difficult. I think most philosophers can basically agree on what, in general, properties are: they are ascribable and instantiateable.<sup>5</sup> That is to say, they are things that can be both ascribed *to* object and instantiated *by* objects. This, of course, is just what they need to be if they are to play the role in an intra-worldly semantic theory that they are supposed to play. If a proposition ascribes a certain property to a certain object, then that proposition is true just in

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<sup>4</sup>I cannot find any place in King's work, which is absolutely riddled with references to properties, in which he answers any question about the

<sup>5</sup>For some representative views, see van Inwagen.

case that object instantiates that property, false if that object doesn't instantiate that property.<sup>6</sup> This is all straightforward enough.<sup>7</sup> However, when we consider the question of what the particular properties that play a role in our semantic theory are, things become much less clear. Let us consider how someone who is proposing an intra-worldly semantics for our toy language might try to specify the meanings of one of the predicates belonging to it—the predicate “black,” say. According to the intra-worldly semantic theory he proposes, the predicate “black” expresses the property of being black. This property figures in at the base level of the semantic theory. How should one say what this property is?

Of course, it would be absolutely hopeless to try to define the property of being black as follows:

[[**black**]] = the property of being black =  
 the property that an object instantiates just in case that object  
 is black.

This, of course, says nothing. What is for something to be black *just is* for it to instantiate the property of being black. So this amounts to saying that the property of being black is the property such that an object instantiates it just in case that object instantiates it. This, of course, is true of the property of being black, and it is likewise true for any property, but that's because it's a completely empty description, one that says absolutely nothing about any particular property at all. Accordingly, such descriptions can't function to specify the properties that figure in the base level of our intra-worldly semantic theory. They are, quite literally, without content. Since what we are supposed to be specifying is, of course, the semantic *content* of the predicate “black,” such a definition will not work.

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<sup>6</sup>Note that, for Soames, a proposition is an act type that ascribes a property to an object only in a derivative sense that an agent that tokens that act in thought or speech ascribes that property to an object.

<sup>7</sup>That is, if we bracket philosophical puzzles about the nature of the instantiation relation and the like, which I'll assume, contrary to Sellars (1980) are indeed bracketable.

A different way to try to specify what the property of being black is would be to try to do so along the following lines:

[[**black**]] = the property of being black =  
 the property that all and only the black things instantiate.

Of course, unless we appeal to possible worlds, this isn't going to work. After all, it might just so happen that all and only the black things are spherical, say, rather than cubical. In such a case, this definition and the definition of "spherical" would specify exactly the same property, since the exact same things would instantiate them. Clearly, however, the property of being black and the property of being spherical are not the same property. So this definition is blind to the difference between properties that just happen to be instantiated by the same things. Of course, one could add to the end of this definition "in virtue of being black," but then, of course, we're back to the problem of the first definition. So, any definition along these lines is not going to work.

Given the failures of the above two definitions, one might think that the answer to the question of what the property of being black is not a conceptual question at all, but, rather, an empirical question, something to be answered by empirical investigation into the nature of black things. Suppose, upon conducting such an investigation, we come to the following conclusion:

[[**black**]] = the property of being black =  
 the property of absorbing light.

This does seem to give us a substantive specification of what the property of being black is. The obvious issue here, however, is that it doesn't give us a substantive specification of what the speakers of our toy language grasp in grasping the meaning of the predicate "black." The hypothetical speakers of our toy language, we may suppose, grasp the property of being black in grasping the meaning of the

predicate “black” which belongs to their language without having any grip on the property of absorbing light. They have no words for the property of absorbing light and so we have no reason to that they know what it is for something to absorb light at all. So, this specification of the property of being black is not a specification of the content that speakers of our toy language grasp in grasping the meaning of the predicate “black.”<sup>8</sup> Any such definition, which is blind to the conceptual contents that are grasped by the speakers of the language for which we are giving an intra-worldly semantics, won’t work.

In response to the failure of these last three definitions, it might seem that the problem is the very idea that the property of being black can be captured in words. Perhaps, because of the particular sort of property that the property of being black is, a simple qualitative property, words will not do. If that’s so, then perhaps the right way to specify the property of being black is to do so as follows:

[[**black**]] = the property of being black =  
the shade instantiated by the following object:



Here, one shows the reader the property of being black, rather than trying say what it is. Upon being shown something that visibly instantiates of the property of being black, the reader is supposed to know the specific property that figures in the semantic theory by simply being shown that property. Now, if one goes this route for the property of being black, then surely one would go the same route for the property of being gray:

[[**gray**]] = the property of being gray =  
the shade instantiated by the following object:

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<sup>8</sup>Even if *we* want to say that the property of being black just is the property of absorbing light, now we’re deploying a conceptual content in specifying the property that. Our concern is the property of being black *qua conceptual content*.



As Wittgenstein pointed out, such “ostensive definitions” are not going to work. To see this, consider how one might attempt to ostensively define the relation of being darker than. This is supposed to be the semantic value of “is darker than” that figures in the semantic theory. Accordingly, we should be able to specify what it is as well. Attempting the same strategy here, however, yields obvious problems. Consider the attempt to try to define this relation as follows:

[[**darker than**]] = the relation of being darker than =

the relation instantiated by the following two objects, with the one on the left occupying the first place of this relation and the one on the right occupying the second place in this relation:



The problem here, of course, is that there are many relations instantiated by these two objects. For all that is said here, the demonstrated relation could be the relation of being to the left of, the relation of being the same shape as, or any one of a great number of relations. The demonstration itself does nothing to ensure that the reader takes it to be relation of being darker than that is demonstrated rather than any one of a number of other relations that these two objects stand in. Now, presumably, you *did* take it to be the relation of being darker than that was demonstrated here rather than one of these other relations. But that’s only because you read the text above the demonstration and, knowing what “darker than” means, you knew it was the relation of being darker than that was supposed to be demonstrated! How should your grasp of this relation be articulated? Let me say.

### 3.5 The Way to Define Properties

There is, I think, a way that properties can be defined, though I take it that these definitions will always be relative to the rules of a linguistic practice which a particular structure. To see what I mean here, consider the properties grasped by the hypothetical speakers of our toy language. If we can imagine the speakers of our toy language as cognizers at all, we must suppose that there is some sense in which they grasp the property of being black, the property of being gray, the relation of being darker than, and on. Furthermore, I take it that, if we can imagine the speakers of our toy language as cognizers at all, then, for any property or relation that they grasp, there must be some specification of that property in the very terms which they themselves grasp it. Here is a proposal, based on this idea:

[[**black**]] = the property of being black =

The property such that, if something instantiates it, then, necessarily, it is darker than anything gray or white, nothing is darker than it, everything is either the same shade as it or lighter than it, and so on.

Here, we've supplemented the vocabulary of the speakers of our toy language with some additional logical vocabulary: words like "if," "then," "necessarily," "anything," "nothing," and "everything."<sup>9</sup> With this additional logical vocabulary, the speakers of our toy language are able to specify not only the objects that instantiate the property of being black (though, importantly, they can also do that for at least some of them) but also the modal relations that this property stands in to other properties and relations expressible in their language. The proposal is that the property of being black just is what is expressed by the above sentence of the logically enriched toy language, namely, a bit of metaphysical structure.

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<sup>9</sup>Along with, among other things, the capacity for anaphoric reference.

By “metaphysical structure” I mean nothing but that structure which can aptly be expressed with a metaphysical “necessity” operator, the sort of structure that, once we introduce the toolkit of possible worlds, we’ll be able to articulate by universally quantifying over them. According to Sellars, this metaphysical structure nothing but a codification of the exceptionless semantic norms governing the use the predicate “is black.”<sup>10</sup>

In the next chapter, I’ll give an official account of these “semantic norms,” and, in the chapter after that, I’ll give an official account of how logical vocabulary can function to make the semantic norms governing the use of predicates explicit. Here, however, I want to consider what the conception of the property of being black that is yielded by this final definition is, and why it is unavailable to our intra-worldly semanticist. For starters, on this definition, the property of being black is identified partly in terms of the modal relations that it bears to members of a family of related properties and relations. For instance, it is partly constitutive of what it is for something to be black on this definition that, for any objects  $x$  and  $y$ , if  $x$  is black and  $y$  is gray, then, necessarily,  $x$  is darker than  $y$ . This is a modal relation that the property of being black stands in to the property of being gray and the relation of being darker than, and, on this definition, it is partly constitutive of what the property of being black is. Accordingly, if we opt for this definition, we can’t appeal to what that property is—its “essence”—in order to explain the modal relations it bears to other properties and relations. But that, of course, is just what the intra-worldly semanticist proposes we do. Opting for this final definition constitutes a radical turn—the move from an *atomist* semantics for predicates, in which one explains the relations of entailment and incompatibility that obtain between the entities that are assigned to predicates as semantic values by appeal to independently intellegible features of these entities, to a *holist* semantics for predicates, in which the entities that are assigned to predicates as semantic values

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<sup>10</sup>The adjective “semantic” here is mainly meant to contrast with “syntactic.”

are only intellegible in virtue of the relations of entailment and incompatibility that they bear to one another.

To accept a holist semantics for predicates is a radical divergence from the sort of semantic theory we considered in a last chapter, in which the semantic relations obtain between predicates in virtue of these predicates' independently intellegible semantic vaues. Recall, on an extra-worldly semantic theory, the semantic values of "black" and "gray" are functions that map each possible world to a certain set of entities, the first function mapping each possible world to the set of black things in that world and the second function mapping each possible world to the set of gray things in that world. Simply given what these two functions are, it follows that, for each world, the set of entities to which the semantic value "gray" maps that world and the set of entities to which the semantic value of "black" maps that world are disjoint. Accordingly, given the definition of incompatibility provided by the extra-worldly semanticist, the extra-worldly semanticist can maintain that "black" and "gray" are incompatible in virtue of the specific semantic values of these two expressions. Now, of course, we raised a problem for semantic values of these sorts being adversed as models of properties, but we can nevertheless note that semantic values of these sorts do accord with a basic methodological principle: semantic relations that obtain between expressions of a langauge obtain in virtue of the semantic values of those expressions. Now, the intra-worldly semanticist recognizes the problem with semantic values of these sorts, seeing that our grasp of properties must be more fundamental than the grasp of these functions. However, if, in attempting to define properties, the intra-worldly semanticist opts for this final definition, he cannot maintain this basic principle.

If one opts for this final definition, the meanings of predicates are understood, at least partly, in terms of their relations of implication and incompatibility that they bear to the meanings of other predicates. If one goes this route, it is a short step to the view that the properties that are taken to be the meanings of

predicates are in part constituted by the semantic relations that those predicates bear towards other predicates. After all, it is clear from the failure of the third definition that the modal relations that we are permitted to appeal to in providing the fourth definition are relative to the vocabulary of the speakers of the language for which we are providing a semantic theory. It is this specific class of modal relations that is partly constitutive of the properties that figure into the semantic theory. But what could this class of modal relations be other than the semantic relations that obtain between the predicates of the language? That, according to this Sellarsian proposal just what properties are: codifications, in alethic modal terms, of semantic relations between predicates, where these semantic relations between predicates are just the relations of entailment and incompatibility that they stand to one another. This, I believe, is the correct theory of properties. The intra-worldly semanticist, however, cannot accept this theory, for, on his theory, properties are supposed to *explain* the relations of entailment and incompatibility that obtain between predicates of the language. So, we have here a familiar problem: if properties *explain* the relations of entailment and incompatibility that obtain between predicates, the relations of implication and incompatibility that obtain between predicates cannot *constitute* the properties. The intra-worldly semanticist must give a different account of the way their properties figure in their semantic theory. But *what could that account be?*

At this point, it is worth recalling the basic dilemma faced by someone who has fallen prey to the Myth of the Given: they are stuck with a conception of our knowledge of some aspect of the structure of reality according to which it is either *unintelligible* or *incoherent*. It seems to me that the intra-worldly semanticist is stuck in just such a dilemma here. On the one hand, they don't accept the account of properties I've just given, then, since the account of properties I've just given is the only account that really can be given, because it is the correct one, then they have no account of properties. Accordingly, they're stuck with a semantic

theory that is, at its base level, *unintelligible*. On the other hand, if they accept the account of properties that I've given, then they appeal to the rules governing the use of predicates in order to account for the entities that are supposed to explain this use. Accordingly, they're stuck with a semantic theory that is, at its core, *incoherent*. These are the only two options for the intra-worldly semanticist. Since, both options are unacceptable, so too is intra-worldly semantics.

### 3.6 Conclusion: Towards a New Sort of Semantic Theory

These categories of worldly semantics do not exhaust the possible variants of worldly semantics one might endorse. We might also consider *inner-worldly* semantics, which appeal to properties, conceived of not as objective entities in the outer world, but as subjective entities in the inner world, *phenomenal qualities* of subjective experiences. This would bring us closer to the incarnations of the Myth of the Given most closely associated with Sellars's discussion in *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind*, though surely not all such incarnations of the Myth will be susceptible to the arguments Sellars explicitly provides there. Rather than further delve into the depths of Givenness, however, let us conclude our negative discussion of worldly semantic theories here, and turn to the positive alternative proposed here: discursive role semantics.