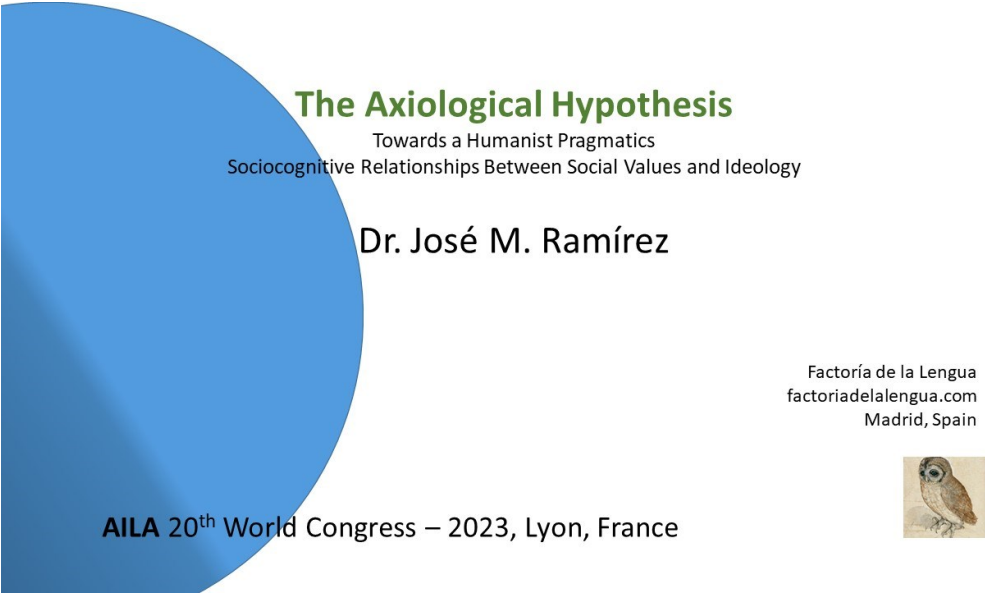


<p>DIAPOSITIVA (vídeo)</p>	<p><b>The Axiological Hypothesis:</b> Towards a Humanist Pragmatics. Sociocognitive Relationships Between Social Values and Ideologies Dr José M. Ramírez, PhD</p> <p><b>AILA 20th World Congress</b>, Lyon, France, 17-21 July 2023 (Association Internationale de Linguistique Appliquée)</p> <p>Pre-recorded video (English Version): <a href="http://Revistaminima.com">Revistaminima.com</a></p> <p>Research Funded by Asociación Cultural La Vieja Factoría (Madrid, Spain)</p> <p>Website: <a href="http://Factoría de la Lengua">Factoría de la Lengua</a></p> 
<p>1</p>	<p>Good afternoon.</p> <p>I am Dr. José Manuel Ramírez, from Madrid, Spain.</p> <p>Thanks to the organisers and scientific committee of the 20th World Congress of the International Association of Applied Linguistics.</p> <p>I will present "The axiological hypothesis", which attempts to expose the two principles of value that normalise any dialogue. This hypothesis may lead to the development of a humanist pragmatics and to a new theory of ideologies.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>First, I will place this research historically.</p> <p>Next, I will draw the theoretical framework, the corpus analysed, the Method Based on Constituents, and the most relevant results for the purpose of this paper.</p> <p>Finally, I will describe the axiological hypothesis.</p>

## Summary

- 1. Values and Ideology: Historical Background
- 2. Appraisal Theory and Social Semiotics (Functional Systemic Linguistics, FSL) and Contextual Models (Critical Discourse Analysis, CDA)
- 3. Analysis: The Corpus and the Method Based on Constituents
- 4. Analysis: Main Results and Conclusions on Social Values and Ideology
- 5. The Axiological Hypothesis
- 6. Dialogue and Valuation — towards a Humanist Pragmatics, and an Axiological Theory of Ideologies.

3

The reflection on values dates back to classical antiquity, at least to the debate between Protagoras and Plato. As we know, Plato held that values are fixed, universal, objective ideas, and attributed to Protagoras the opposite position, the subjectivity of values. In reality, we do not know what the thesis defended by Protagoras was, because his texts were destroyed. However, it has survived his famous humanist dictum: "Of all things, the human being is the measure", a dictum that ponders our ability to measure reality, to value it, although it does not clarify whether this capacity is individual or collective, or both types at the same time.

The dichotomy posed by Plato has been repeated in different forms in the history of philosophy.

In the 19th century, Auguste Comte's positivism proposed an idealised model of science, a vision that excluded the mental, technoscience, dialogue and valuation.

The term *ideology* was coined by Destutt de Tracy in the period of the French Revolution to allude to a science of ideas, but Marx and Engels redefined the concept and introduced it into the social sciences. In its first, rudimentary version, the theory of ideologies holds that thought and language are determined by social and economic structures. Currently, linguistic and semiotic studies observe often a correlation between social and economic structures, on the one hand, and language, on the other. However, the notion of ideology fails to explain valuation, an all-pervading phenomenon in language.

So we ask ourselves: can ideological processes be explained in terms of valuation?

Some philosophers have been influential on this research, but I want to highlight the contribution of John Dewey, who in his 1938 essay *Theory of Valuation* pointed the way for a future theory, based on two pillars: a social anthropology that studies the context of valuation, and a psychology that studies the mind, where the valuation occurs. Our social and cognitive approach coincides with John Dewey's perspective.

# 1. Values and ideology

## Historical Background

### Ancient Philosophy

- Protagoras and Plato: "Of all things, the human being is the measure" (Protagoras).

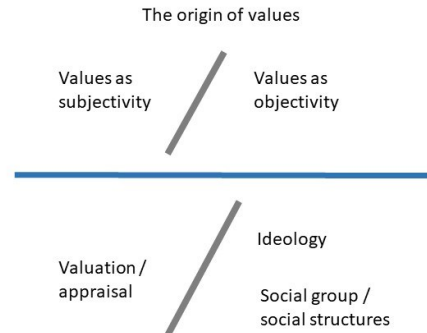
### Contemporary Philosophy

- Destutt de Tracy and the invention of the term *ideology*
- Auguste Comte: the positivism
- The ideology in social sciences: Marx and Engels
- Husserl, Urban, Weber, Ortega y Gasset...
- *Theory of Valuation*, by John Dewey
- Jürgen Habermas: *The Theory of Communicative Action*
- Axiology of Science: H. Putnam, N. Rescher, J. Echeverría

### Linguistics

- Psychology of Language (W. Wundt)
- Ch. Bally and F. de Saussure: The Geneva School
- Dialogism and ideology in linguistics (V. Voloshinov and M. Bakhtin)
- Towards a new theory of ideologies (V. Dijk)
- Appraisal Theory (Martin & White)

## The Traditional Dichotomy



4

The theoretical framework of the research is the systemic-functional linguistics and two of its developments, the appraisal theory and the social semiotics.

I have integrated into the research the notion of contextual model, developed by Van Dijk. I share with Van Dijk the idea that the speaker or writer interprets the context of communication in a non-deterministic way. I also understand the contextual model as a theoretical construct that also allows the linguist to introduce any other element that may have influenced the communication.

## 2.1. Theoretical Framework

Functional Systemic Linguistics (Michael Halliday, 1985)

- Appraisal Theory (Martin and White, 2005)

3 interpersonal semantic domains

- ATTITUDE: Judgement of people (Ethics), Appreciation of objects (Aesthetics) and Affect (emotional reaction and expression of feelings)
- ENGAGEMENT (heteroglossic resources)
- GRADUATION (Force and Focus)

- Social semiotics (Kress and Leeuwen, 1996)

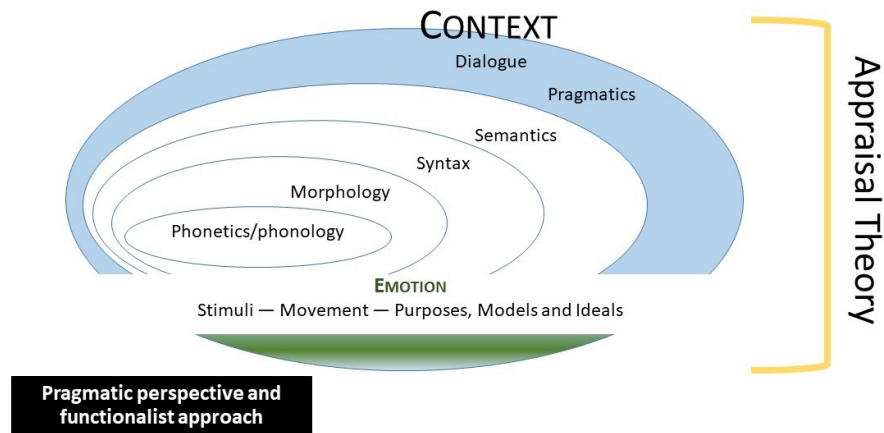
- Critical Discourse Analysis (Van Dijk 2012)

- Contextual model as a theoretical construct

5

This research maintains a functional approach and a pragmatic perspective. It is therefore located at the highest level of linguistic analysis, the contextual-pragmatic, but at the same time at the lowest or deepest, because it also investigates emotion. I now understand "emotion" in its etymological sense as movement, mood alteration, a movement in response to stimuli, and which is oriented about preferences, models, and ideals. Following this landscape of emotions, we may consider valuation as the very motor of language.

## 2.2. Valuation as the Motor of Language



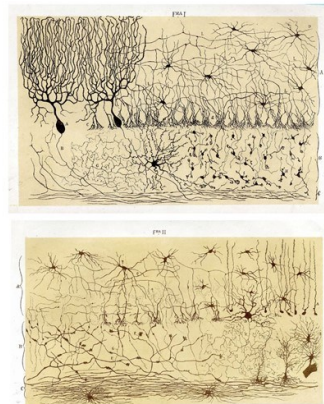
6

The corpus analysed consists of six texts, all of them written by Santiago Ramón y Cajal and related to science, including the scientific multimodal article of 1888 in which Ramón y Cajal rejected reticular theory and defended the autonomy of the neuron for the first time. This notion is currently the basis of neurosciences.

### 3.1. The Corpus

"Structure of the Central Nervous Systems of Birds"

1. A multimodal journal article: "Estructura de los centros nerviosos de las aves" (1888)
2. An essay on science: *Reglas y consejos sobre investigación científica. Los tónicos de la voluntad* (chapter 1 [1898, 1912] 2019).
3. A technoscience manual on photography: *Fotografía de los colores, "Síntesis substractiva por estampación tipográfica de tres monocromos"* (chapter XVIII [1912] 2007).
4. Autobiography: 17 paragraphs from chapter IV of "Mi labor científica", second part of *Recuerdos de mi vida* ([1917, 1923] 2017).
5. Aphorisms: 20 first aphorisms on pedagogy of "Pensamientos de tendencia pedagógica y educativa", chapter VIII of *Charlas de café* ([1921] 1967).
6. A short story of science fiction or pseudoscience: "El fabricante de honradez" (*Cuentos de vacaciones* [1905, 1999]).



7

I have started to develop a quantitative-qualitative corpus methodology based on the values of transparency, reliability and replicability.

This method is based on constituents in four stages of its development. Although methodologically starting by syntax, the method makes it possible to integrate all levels of analysis, from the phonetic-phonological one to the semantic-pragmatic, since all linguistic elements can be indicators of emotion, of the movement of the mind and language, and therefore markers of valuation.

In the second stage, contextual models consist of a well-defined repertoire of constituents. This allows us to study the role that each constituent plays in the production of a text. Then, it is avoided to mistakenly consider the observed correlations between the social factor and textual production as a deterministic cause-effect relationship.

But I think that the most characteristic of the Method Based on Constituents is its functional and not aprioristic approach to social values and ideology.

In the third stage, social values are constituted by their valuations. They are treated as instructional schemes of the valuations that actually take place.

In the fourth stage, the ideology is not proposed in an aprioristic way, but it is delimited by the main constituents of the contextual model: social values, social representations, purpose and setting.

### 3.2. The Method Based on Constituents

- A Corpus Methodology

- Corpus Matter Cycle

- Transparency / reliability / replicability
    - From a methodological reduction to a contextual understanding of language

- The Method Based on Constituents

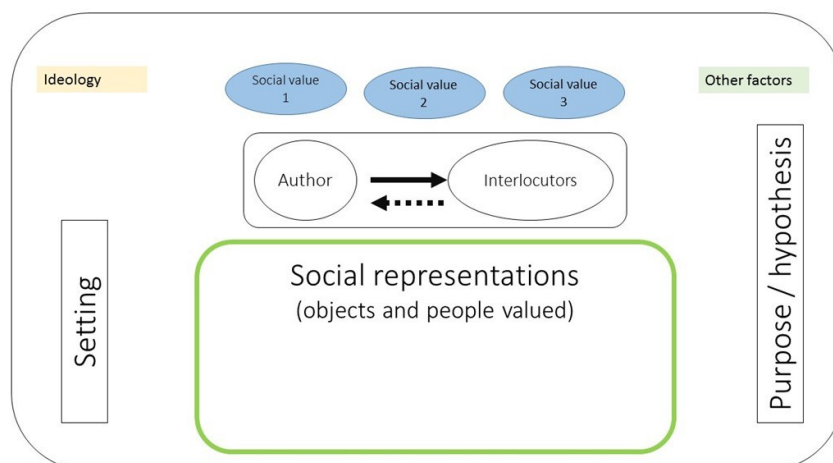
1. Linguistic constituents of the clause: every level of linguistic analysis, potentially
2. Constituents of contextual models
3. Social values, a reconstruction from valuation resources
4. Constituents of the potential ideology of discourse:  
Values, Social representation, Intention/Purpose and Setting

A non-aprioristic, functionalist approach to social values and ideology

8

We see here the visual synthesis draft of the contextual model. On the right, the purpose of communication. On the left, the setting. Below, the social representations of the event model, and above, the social representation constituted by interlocutors. Higher, we place social values, the possible ideology, and other possible contextual factors.

### 3.3. Contextual Model: Visual Synthesis



9

The most relevant results:

The first one is that in all texts the author is aware of dialogism, in all texts there are heteroglossic resources, also in the scientific and technoscientific texts.

The second one is that in all texts there is attitudinal valuation, also in scientific and technoscientific texts.

I wish to emphasize that we have also found the expression of brief and intense emotional reaction in the scientific article. Ramón y Cajal begins by presenting the problem of nerve cells and the staining method used in the laboratory, but when he begins to describe the observed facts, he writes:

"(...) the lamellae (...) appear on the section surface constituting a true tree of life" (Ramón y Cajal, 1888)

The author remembers the initial surprise, his emotional reaction to the spectacle of nerve cells that is offered before his eyes.

These results contradict what was predicted by Comte's positivism.

But the analysis and comparison of the six texts push us toward a very complex landscape of social values.

In principle, we have tried to differentiate the types of social values according to several criteria.

Using the indexing criterion, we see that values can be implicit in valuations or be lexicalised. In other cases, the values are not indexed in the text. That is, there are values hidden from our methodology, although they are visible in the comparison between texts. For example, we know, from other visual texts and writings of Ramón y Cajal, his preference for realistic art and imitation.

According to its semiotic function, we have differentiated three types of social values: evaluative or productive (that produce attitudinal valuation, both ethical and aesthetic), autoregulatory (that regulates the writer's textual production), and motivating (related to the purposes of the text).

#### 4.1. Main Results on Social Values: Types of Social Values

Dialogue, in the broad sense (heteroglossic resources in every text)

Attitudinal valuation in all texts

"(...) the lamellae appear on the section surface constituting a true tree of life" (1888)

Types of social values (classification criteria)

- Indexing:
  - Indexed (implicit / lexicalised-nominalised)
  - Not indexed
- Discursive/semiotic function:
  - Productive
  - Autoregulatory
  - Motivating

Social value Honesty (Text 1)					
Indexing criteria			Discursive function		
Indexed		Not indexed	Productive	Self-regulating	Motivating
Implicit	Lexicalised				
—	—	X	—	X	—

Social value Honesty (Text 6)					
Indexing criteria			Discursive function		
Indexed		Not indexed	Productive	Autoregulatory	Motivating
Implicit	Lexicalized				
X	X	—	X	—	X

10

But other results are inconsistent with the theoretical framework.

Regarding Appraisal Theory:

The speaker or writer not only values objects aesthetically, but also aesthetically values people.

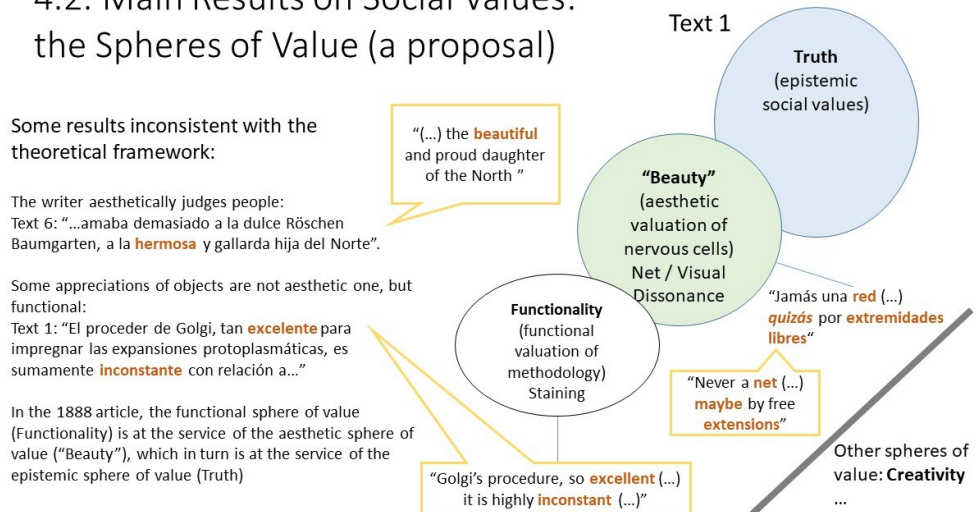
More importantly, some valuations of objects are not aesthetic, but functional. For example, in Text 1, Ramón y Cajal writes: “Golgi’s procedure, so **excellent** (...) it is highly **inconstant** (...)”

It should also be noted that these social values interact with each other. We see that, in the 1888 article, the sphere of functional value (Functionality) is at the service of the sphere of aesthetic value (“Beauty”), which in turn is at the service of the sphere of epistemic value (Truth).

To solve these challenges, we need a conceptual element that can be applied to people and objects, contain different concepts and criteria and be organised in relation to other similar elements. We have proposed the notion of sphere of value, which is intuitively used in the realm of philosophy.

We think, however, that there are more spheres of value in our corpus, hidden in some texts and visible in others. Spheres as “Creativity”, among others. Last June, we have proposed at Vigo, Spain, at the 32nd European systemic-functional linguistics Conference, the existence of a fifth sphere of value, related to the transformation of reality and phenomena like production and generation, creativity and innovation.

#### 4.2. Main Results on Social Values: the Spheres of Value (a proposal)



11

Some results also lead us to question the current theory of ideologies:

Some social values are not shared by the social group. They are purely sensory and cognitive, like the Truth of color (text 3) or the Visual Dissonance (text 1).

The corpus shows that the author’s social identity is flexible and plural. These identities overlap in the same text and are compatible with individual identity. In each text there is also a new identity or social category: the group of interlocutors, made up of the people who dialogue.

Some texts may be defined by their prevailing sphere of value, not by their social group or associated social and economic structures. A text is epistemic, for example, if the epistemic sphere prevails in it, under the principle of value that we call Truth, not because it is a text produced by a scientist and addressed to other scientists.

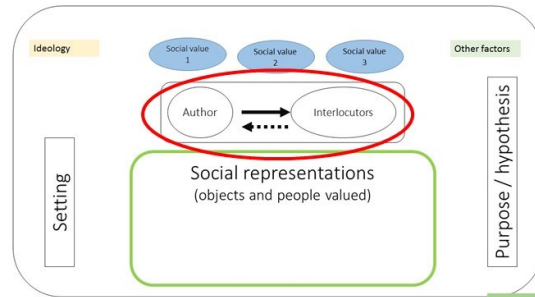
We also stress that some social values are interideological, since they are placed above different socio-political groups.

In relation to the current theory of ideologies, we also highlight other issues:

	<p>Values motivate political ideologies: Happiness, Equality, Freedom...</p> <p>The current theory of ideologies, by Van dijk, distinguishes between "good" and "bad" ideologies, in relation with abuse of power. Nevertheless, all ideologies consider themselves to be "good" and legitimate.</p> <p>Jürgen Habermas is one of the greatest thinkers of our time. He has proposed a universal pragmatics. The <i>Theory of Communicative Action</i> is based on the search for an idealized speech situation, oriented to understanding and agreement, and it adopts as criteria propositional truth, normative rightness, and truthfulness. It consists of the three classic spheres of value. It doesn't consider understanding without agreement in a plurality system, other possible spheres of value, as well as other semiotic languages. It also lacks some human factors that make communication possible, like emotion and imagination. In this regard, the axiological hypothesis that we present here may be seen just as an attempt to add to the <i>Theory of Communicative Action</i> a sphere of value that gathers those human factors that are necessary to communication.</p> <h3 style="text-align: center;">4.3. Main Results on the relationship between social values and Ideology</h3> <p><b>Social values and group ideology</b></p> <p>Some social values are not shared by the social group (Visual Dissonance, Text 1)</p> <p>Author's social identity is flexible and plural (scientist, photographer, tertullian, father and husband, Spaniard, etcetera)</p> <p>An epistemic text may be defined by its prevailing sphere of value (Text 1)</p> <p>Some social values are inter-ideological (Debate between tertullians, Text 5...)</p> <p><b>Some problems of current theory of ideologies</b></p> <p>Values as motivation of political ideologies: Happiness, Freedom, Equality...</p> <p>"Good" and "Bad" ideologies: abuse of power and legitimation</p> <p>Jürgen Habermas' model, an idealization of communication oriented to understanding, and based on an uncomplete value system</p> <div style="background-color: #c8e6c9; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>The other way round</b></p> <p>May values explain ideological processes?</p> <p>New theoretical frames: cognitive linguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, pragmatics, axiology of science, philosophy</p> </div>
12	<p>We see again the draft of the visual synthesis of the contextual model. I circle the social representation constituted by interlocutors.</p> <p>Let us remember that we have indicated that social values fulfil various semiotic functions, and that some social values are not shared by the social group.</p> <p>Thus, faced with the dichotomy between objectivity and subjectivity of values, we have recently proposed to define them not as group social values, but as interactional or interactive social values, concepts produced and reproduced in semiotic social interaction and whose ultimate purpose is the normalisation of semiosis, the comprehension and production of meaning.</p>



#### 4.4. A New Definition of Social Value



«One way to think about **judgement** and **appreciation** is to see them as institutionalised feelings (...) **judgement** reworks feelings in the realm of proposals about behaviour (...) **Appreciation** on the other hand reworks feelings as propositions about the value of things» (Martin & White, 2008: 45)

(...) shared mental objects of social cognition, that would be the base of evaluation processes and, consequently, of opinions, attitudes and ideologies (...) (Van Dijk, 1999: 101)

**Objectivity/ Subjectivity dichotomy (on values)**

Objects (platonist theory of ideas) / Values as subjective concepts

Products of the social factor (classic theory of ideologies)

**Interactive/interactional social values**

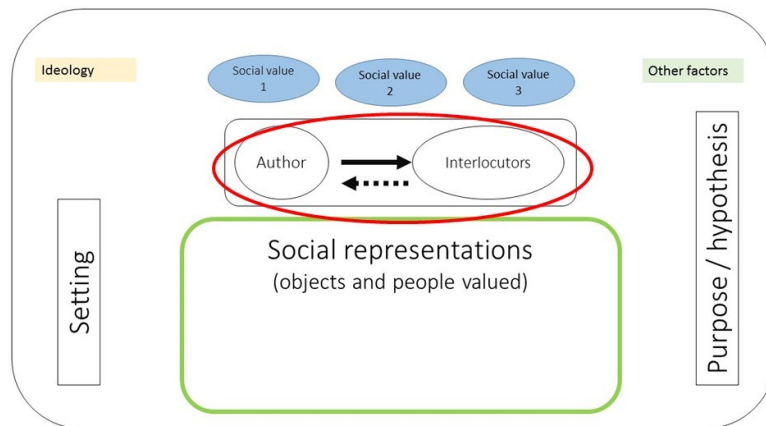
A possible definition: interactive concepts, produced and reproduced in social semiotic interaction and whose ultimate function is to normalize the semiosis, that is, the comprehension and production of meaning.

13

Now, I think that in this semiotic interaction that dominates all texts, there is a sphere of value that is hidden in our corpus. This sphere of value must consist of one or more dialogical principles of value and they must be based on the more general features of interlocutors and interpersonal semantics, that is, dialogue and valuation.

These principles of value constitute the axiological hypothesis.

#### 4.5. The Dialogical Sphere of Value



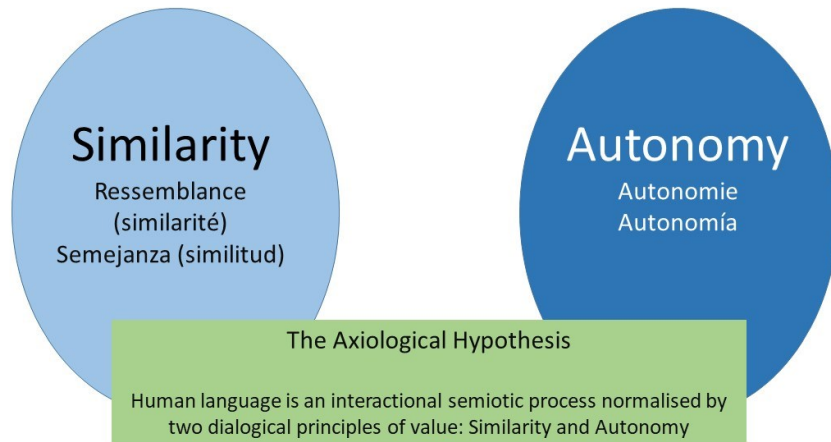
The Dialogical Sphere of Value

14

As a first approach, I define the Axiological Hypothesis as follows:

Human language is an interactional semiotic process normalised by two dialogic principles of value: Similarity and Autonomy. In other words, interlocutors are similar and autonomous.

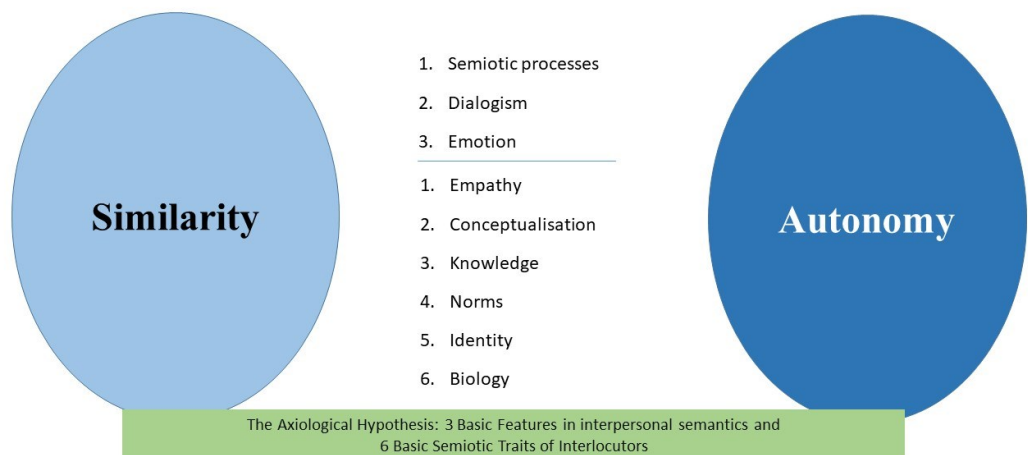
## 5.0. The Axiological Hypothesis: definition



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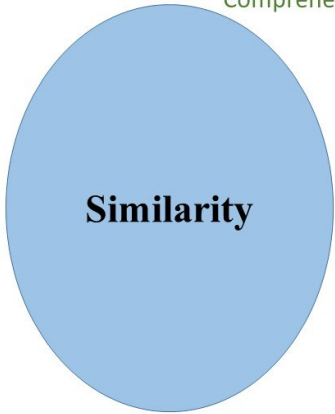
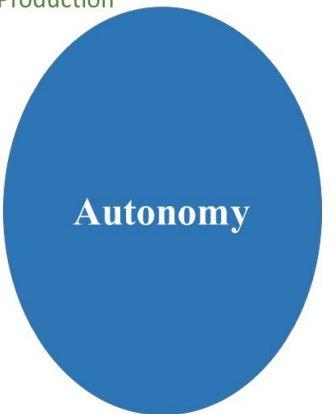
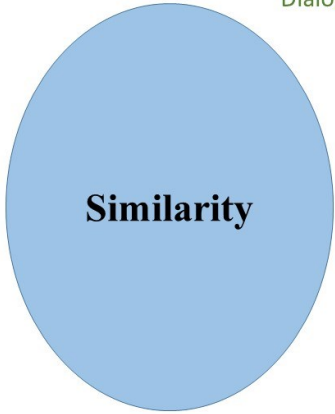
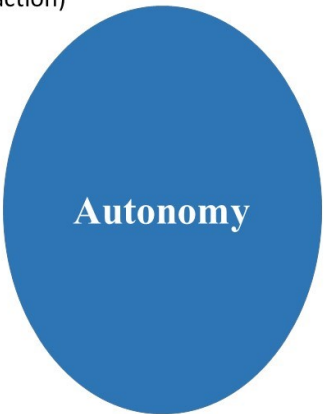
I provisionally distinguish 3 basic semiotic traits in interpersonal semantics and 6 basic semiotic traits in interlocutors.

## 5.0. The Axiological Hypothesis: basic traits

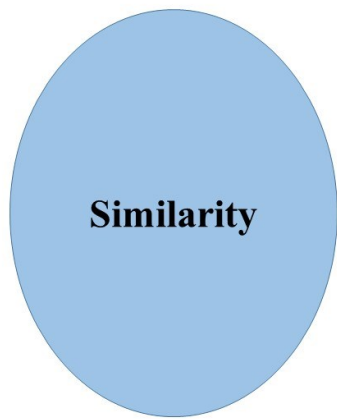


16

We think that in language there are two basic semiotic processes: comprehension and production.

	<p style="text-align: center;">5.1. The Axiological Hypothesis: semiotic processes</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Comprehension</p>  <p><b>Similarity</b></p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Semiotic processes</li> <li>2. Dialogism</li> <li>3. Emotion</li> </ol> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 5px auto;"/> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Empathy</li> <li>2. Conceptualisation</li> <li>3. Knowledge</li> <li>4. Identity</li> <li>5. Biology</li> <li>6. Norms</li> </ol> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Production</p>  <p><b>Autonomy</b></p> </div> </div>
<p>17</p>	<p>We think that every text is a dialogue, in a broad sense.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5.2. The Axiological Hypothesis: Dialogism</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Dialogue (Debate, Social semiotic interaction)</p>  <p><b>Similarity</b></p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Semiotic processes</li> <li>2. Dialogism</li> <li>3. Emotion</li> </ol> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 5px auto;"/> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Empathy</li> <li>2. Conceptualisation</li> <li>3. Knowledge</li> <li>4. Identity</li> <li>5. Biology</li> <li>6. Norms</li> </ol> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p><b>Autonomy</b></p> </div> </div>
<p>18</p>	<p>We think that language is an expressive movement, that is, that language is dynamic, emotional.</p> <p>This movement or emotion occurs in several directions:</p> <p>As a linear process in time, between the speaker and different stimuli of the context, from actual to potential, and graded in several axis, such as the positive-negative and activation-deactivation axis.</p> <p>Emotion also occurs between interlocutors. This mental movement between interlocutors is Empathy, which is, therefore, the first basic semiotic trait in interlocutors.</p>

### 5.3. The Axiological Hypothesis: Emotion

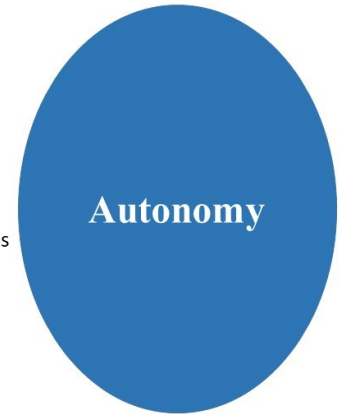


#### Movement

1. Semiotic processes
2. Dialogism
3. Emotion

#### Emotion as movement

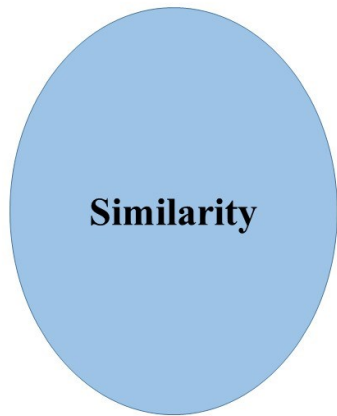
- Language as linear semiotic process
- In several directions (objects and people valued: event model)
- From actual to potential
- Graded between several poles
- Between interlocutors: Empathy



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Empathy can be affective, cognitive, and compassionate. Interlocutors experience it with autonomy and it is possible because both interlocutors are similar.

### 5.3. The Axiological Hypothesis: Empathy



#### Empathy

1. Semiotic processes
2. Dialogism
3. Emotion

1. Empathy

Affective, Cognitive, and Compassionate



20

#### Conceptualisation

Similarity embraces difference. Similar doesn't mean identical.

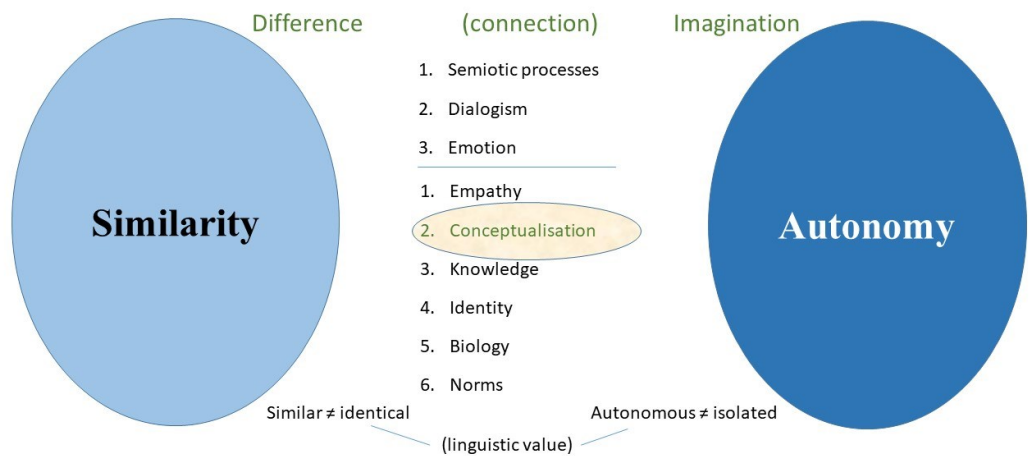
Interlocutors are similar and different and they are semiotically connected.

Autonomy embraces imagination. Autonomous doesn't mean alone, isolated.

Imagination of concepts is involved in comprehension. Production involves imagination of concepts.

The same linguistic value may be imagined by interlocutors in similar and different ways.

### 5.4. The Axiological Hypothesis: Conceptualisation

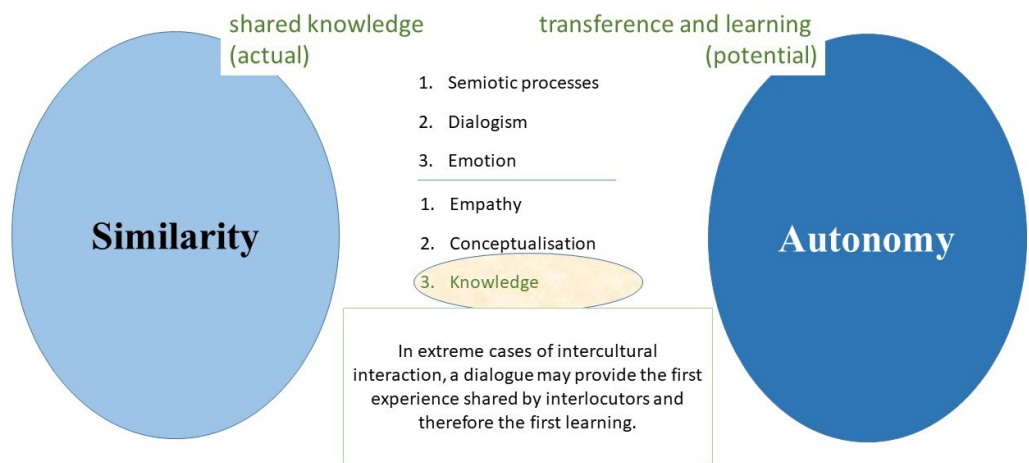


21

Knowledge

Semiosis requires knowledge shared by the interlocutors.  
In dialogue there is a transfer of knowledge, and learning.

### 5.5. The Axiological Hypothesis: Knowledge

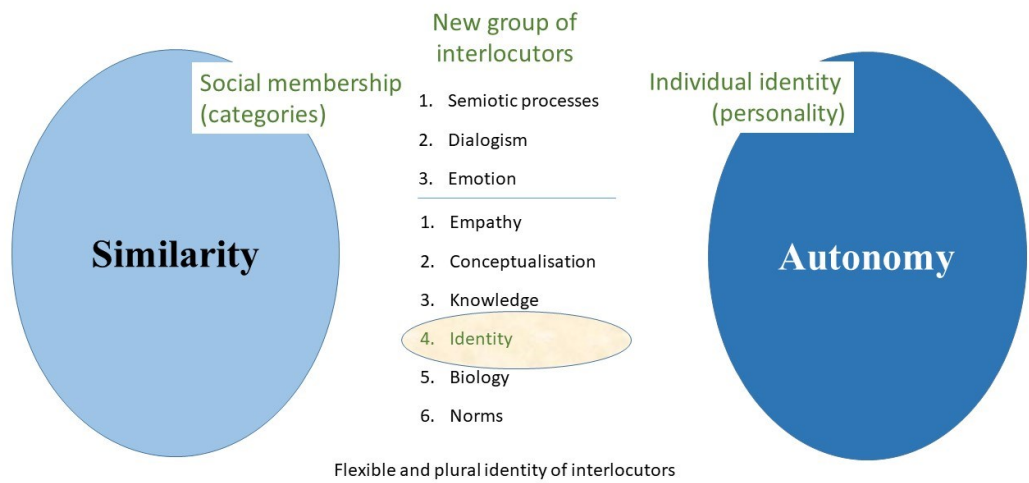


22

Identity

The social identity as membership of a group or a social category overlaps with personality or individual identity, and both overlap with the identity of the new human group formed by interlocutors.

### 5.7. The Axiological Hypothesis: Identity

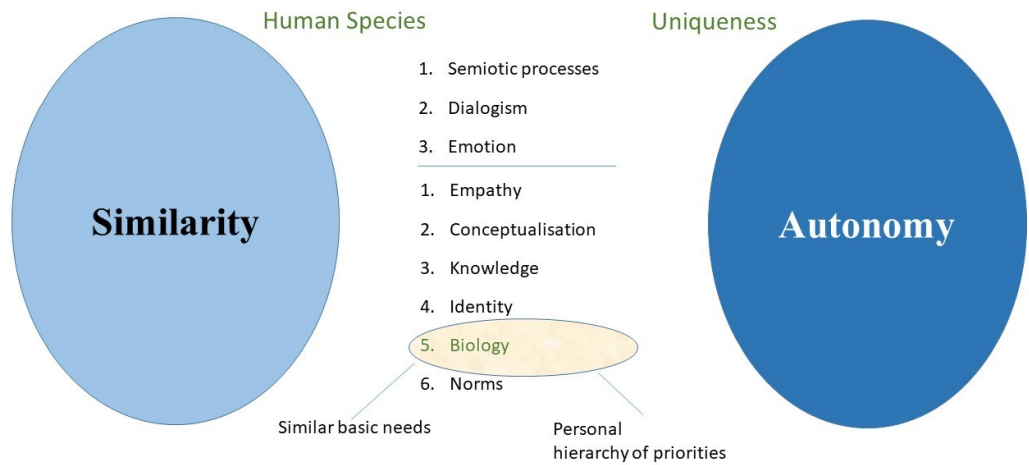


23

### Biology

Every human being is member of the same species, similar. Each human being is unique, autonomous.

### 5.8. The Axiological Hypothesis: Biology



24

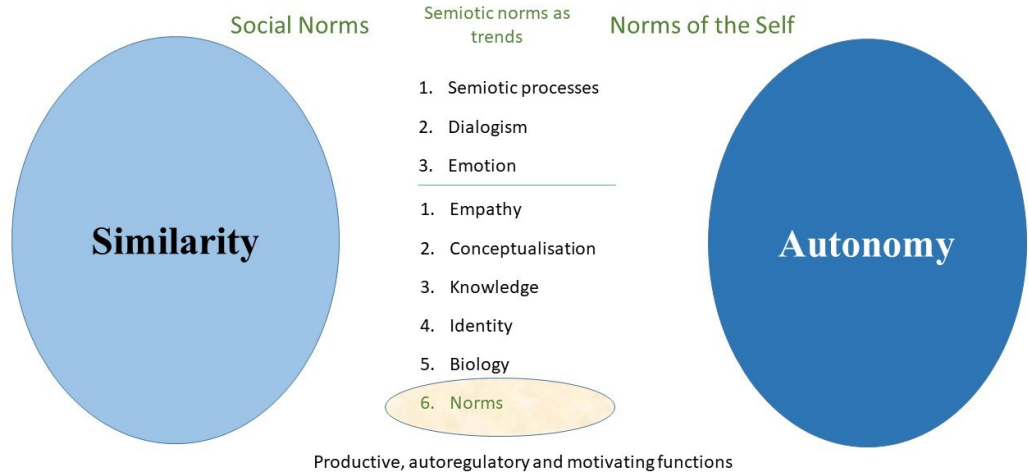
### Norms

Semiotic norms may be understood as trends.

In language, social norms coexist with the norms of the self.

Similarity and Autonomy can fulfil productive, autoregulatory or motivating functions.

## 5.6. The Axiological Hypothesis: Norms



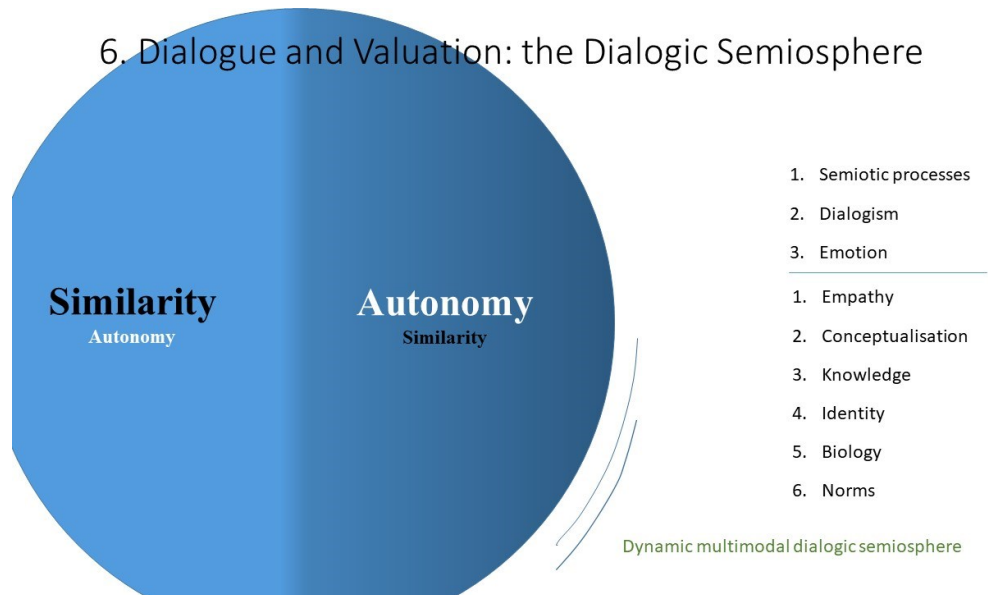
25

Similarity and Autonomy are mutually involved, so they form the same sphere of value, and they cannot be separated.

This semiosphere is dynamic and multimodal.

We linguists also live within the dialogic semiosphere.

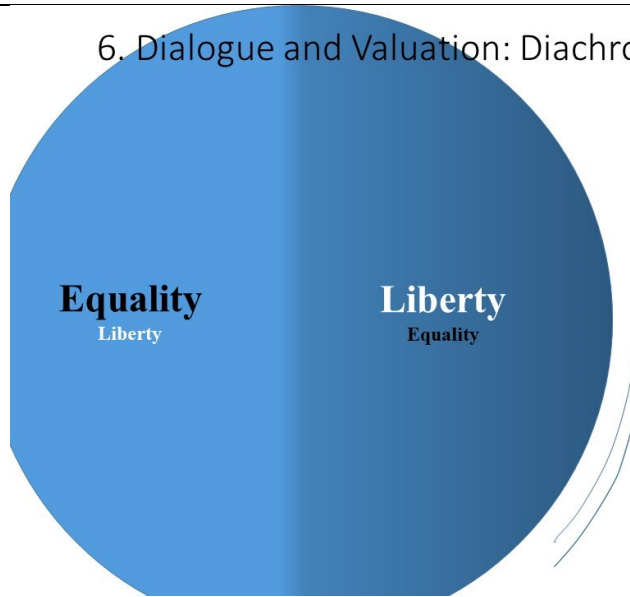
## 6. Dialogue and Valuation: the Dialogic Semiosphere



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I present also a diachronic subhypothesis. For historical reasons, Similarity and Autonomy have lexicalised as Equality and Liberty or Freedom in the language of law and politics.

6. Dialogue and Valuation: Diachronic Subhypothesis



**Diachronic subhypothesis:**  
 By social and historical reasons, Similarity and Autonomy have evolved as Equality and Liberty/Freedom in the language of law and politics.

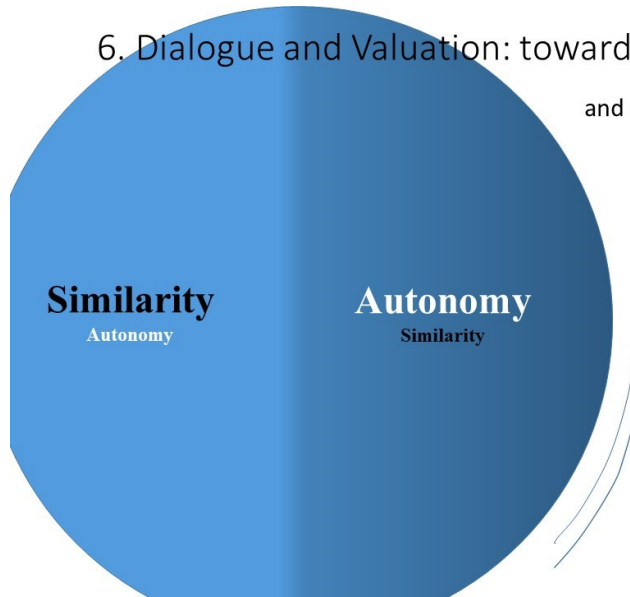
27

Finally, I propose a first formulation for a future humanist pragmatics theory. Individuals and human groups may enhance or restrict dialogue and valuation.

Humanist processes are those of enhancement of dialogue and valuation. The dialogic semiosphere can fulfil productive, autoregulatory and motivating functions.

Ideological processes may be evaluated in terms of group restriction of dialogue and the two dialogical values: Similarity and Autonomy.

6. Dialogue and Valuation: towards a Humanist Pragmatics  
 and an Axiological Theory of Ideologies



**The Humanist Pragmatics and The Axiological Theory of Ideologies (first approach):**

Individuals and human groups may enhance or restrict dialogue and valuation.

Humanist processes are those of enhancement of dialogue and valuation. The dialogic semiosphere can fulfil productive, autoregulatory or motivating functions.

Ideological processes may be studied in terms of *group restriction* of dialogue and valuation.

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Thank you very much for your attention.  
 Muchas gracias.  
 Merci beaucoup.



## Merci beaucoup

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