

The Language of Science
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Scientists, much like their non-scientific brethren, record and communicate their theories and results through the medium of language. A pertinent question that arises in this context is whether the choice of language and hence the choice of ontology can be guided by more than merely pragmatic considerations. Carnap (1950) categorically denies that it can. His central worry is that there is no external or independent standpoint, i.e. no extra-linguistic framework, from which one may adjudicate such a question. An affirmative answer to the question meets several other hurdles. For example, the fact must be confronted that up till now the language of science has been rather fragmentary as each scientific discipline's language is to some extent autonomous from the others and there are at least some conceptual and ontological variations even within given scientific disciplines. Beyond these factual concerns there are also more principled ones. Two prominent concerns that emerge in philosophy of language discussions are the gavagai case and the grue paradox. In this talk I build on previously published work (see Votsis 2012) in an attempt to address all of these concerns and hence to motivate an affirmative answer to the above question.

References:

Carnap, R. (1950) 'Empiricism, Semantics and Ontology', *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* 4: 20–40.
Votsis, I. (2012) 'Putting Realism in Perspectivism', *Philosophica* 84: 85–122.

Biographical Information:

Ioannis Votsis received a BA in Philosophy at the University of California (Berkeley) and a PhD at the London School of Economics. After his graduation he took up a teaching fellowship at the University of Bristol and subsequently a research post at the Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf. He is currently conducting research on unification and reduction in scientific theories via the theory of frames. His research is funded by the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft).