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The Promise of the Non-Identical: Adorno's Reevaluation of the Language of Philosophy

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Situating my discussion within the so called “linguistic turn” in the Frankfurt School tradition, I demonstrate that Adorno, even prior to Habermas, already engaged with the nature of language in some of his early essays, *Theses on the Language of the Philosopher* and *The Actuality of Philosophy*, as well as in the late radio lecture *Why still Philosophy*. What is shown in this reconstruction is that Adorno’s engagement is informed by an attempt at a reevaluation of the language of philosophy, a reevaluation that has significant consequences for a global understanding of how we conceive the world of objects, in general, and how philosophy’s configurative use of concepts could be seen as a way of “disclosing” uncharted possibilities of the non-identical, in particular. While Adorno did not present a systematic and clear philosophy of language, his critique of language can be construed as an “implicit” philosophy of language.