

TANGLIQUAN QUANJI

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# 唐力权全集

第  
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**Ontology of Activity:**  
**Highlights of Field – Being Philosophy**

**Lik Kuen Tong**



# 1 Field – Being Philosophy Toward a Conceptuality for the New Millennium: A Synopsis (1999)

## The International Institute for Field – Being A Brief Mission Statement

### Field – Being and the Non – Substantialistic Turn

The World is not a collection of independent, substantial entities, nor a definite totality of facts. It is rather an incessant process of activity forming a dynamic continuum of multi – leveled and multi – dimensional web of trans – differentiation, which refuses to be objectified into definite, divisible wholes and isolated, mutually external individuals. Strictly speaking, there are no “beings” or “things” conceived as absolutely self – identical and self – enduring entities. From the Field – Being perspective, shared by the dominant strands of Far Eastern philosophy and the non – substantialist orientations in twentieth century science and contemporary Western thought, the notion of an unchanging substrate or “thing – in – itself” is a philosophical fiction, a conceptual construction or fabrication of the mind which has no real basis other than the vital – rational demand for simplification and expediency, ultimately dictated by the necessity of human survival and control. The truth is, nothing is self – sufficient or merely itself without reference to other things in the universe – or, as we would put it, there is no Being other than Field – Being.

In the Field – Being world – view, every appearance or manifestation is a determination of the self – enviroing field in action (or field action) — that is, a trans – differentially self – articulating, self – organizing, and self – revealing Activity forming an “undivided wholeness in flowing movement” (David Bohm’s words). This, we take it, is the primordial experience designated by the verb – word to be. This undivided flow or movement of Activity is described as “trans – differential” because it is a dynamic fabric or network of relativity (separation, distance) and relatedness (internal connection), of discontinuities and continuities, an expression of the intrinsic nature of the self – enviroing Action. The apparently self – identical and self – enduring entity or thing in our ordinary experience – the “substantial individuals” in traditional philosophy – is in truth a trans – differential center of the self – enviroing Activity, a

local manifestation of the dynamic continuum of field action. From the Field – Being standpoint, reality is essentially fluid and ambiguous; nothing has a rigid identity. The traditional philosophical categories and dichotomies of one and many, whole and part, absolute and relative, infinite and finite, subject and object, mind and matter, objects and events, time and space, freedom and necessity, truth and falsity, and so on, all dissolve in their significance in the boundless trans – differential fabric of field action and field transformation.

In the final analysis, the history of civilized thought, as we see it, is simply a history of the trans – differential opposition and mutual adaptation between the substantialist and the non – substantialist approach to reality, and not, as the Marxists would have it, a battle field between materialism and idealism. Since the substantialization of the world is a requirement — and even a necessity — inherent in human life, substantialism is more than a special case of non – substantialism. In fact, the recognition and appropriation of substantialism is essential to the non – substantialist outlook. In many forms and disguises, the trans – differential opposition between substantialism and non – substantialism — between rigidity and fluidity — in speech, thought, and practice is as old as civilization itself. Indeed, it may not be an exaggeration to say that it defines the very meaning of philosophical wisdom. But while the “trans – differential problem” (as we may so designate it for the sake of convenience) constitutes the inherent problem of philosophy from the very beginning, it only came up vividly in the forefront of intellectual consciousness and discourse, in so far as Western culture is concerned, since the late nineteenth century. For the century which follows is a century that witnesses the rise of Field – Being thinking and the collapse of all rigid identities and dichotomies.

The emergence and pre – eminence of Field – Being or the field concept of Being is undoubtedly the most important feature of twentieth century thought. One encounters its applications both in science and in philosophy. In the scientific context, the New Physics of relativity theory and quantum theory and the Gestalt theory in psychology are, of course, the most notable examples, although the field concept and the Field – Being outlook and presuppositions are no less prevalent in the life and the social sciences, and perhaps even more so in the arts. In philosophy, Field – Being thinking is dominant in the thoughts of Nietzsche, Bergson, James, Dewey, Whitehead, Heidegger, Rorty, Derrida and Foucault – to name only the most obvious. Indeed, the field conception of Being may turn out to be the most advantageous vantage point in the study of contemporary thought.

Intellectual historians have made much of the so – called “linguistic turn” in contemporary philosophy. While its importance cannot be doubted, its true nature and status may still be debated. It is our conviction, however, that if one may speak of a depth structure in twentieth thinking, the linguistic turn may yet remain a surface phenomenon. For lying deeper than the linguistic turn is the “Non – Substantialistic Turn” — a far more pervasive and decisive

movement that has constituted the one thread going through the various major strands of contemporary thinking; from relativity and quantum physics to holographic cosmology, from process philosophy to system theory, from deep ecology to green peace, from structuralism to deconstruction, from critical theory to gender studies, from existentialism to hermeneutics, and so on. What then is the meaning and significance of the Non – Substantialistic Turn? What bearing does it have on the future of philosophy? And on the comparative study of philosophy — in particular, on the philosophical dialogue between East and West? What accounts for the interests and enthusiasm, which many eminent scientists, thinkers and philosophers in the West have shown for the traditional wisdom of the East? Does the battle between substantialism and non – substantialism have the same meaning in East and West? Has the “Non – substantialistic Turn” also occurred in contemporary Eastern thought? And if it has, is it comparable to its counterpart in the West? These and other related questions are integral to the theoretical perspective of Field – Being thinking. They are questions, we believe, worthy of the commitment and dedication of any true thinker or philosopher.

## Part I Distinguishing Themes and Concepts

1. The conception of Tao – learning as a perspective openness to Truth which replaces the traditional conception of philosophy as first science with its pretensions to absolute Truth.

2. The methodological commitment of radical universal perspectivism which, while insisting on the perspectival character of Truth, retains the fundamental belief in a common order as the universal ground of all existence without which no discourse or dialogue of any kind is possible.

3. The abandonment of any preset style or format of philosophizing and philosophical expression and the endorsement of conceptual poetics as the unrestrained and resourceful use of language in the exhibition of Truth and the Field – Being conceptuality. [ Philosophizing is an exercise in Tao – learning which may be practiced any time and anywhere. ]

4. The identification of reality as activity rather than as Entitivity and the denial of the absolute conception of Being. [ Field – Being is especially emphatic in its rejection of the concept of Perfect Entity or Logical Absolute, which, as something completely definite and determinate, is what figures prominently in the notions of Being, Truth, and God in traditional Western metaphysics. ]

5. The notion of the Uroboric Function which implies the equation of articulation with reflexion as the supreme ontological – methodological principle. [ The Uroboros bites its own tails—— this is the most poignant symbol for Field – Being. ] The Act Function; To be is to be a function of activity ( or act – measurable). The Field function; To be is to be a function of field – topology ( subject to the limitations of global or regional field – topological condi-



tions. ) The Uroboric Function; the identification of the Act Function and the Field Function. [ What is act – measurable is subject to field – topological conditions. ]

6. The theory of substance as the aesthetic charge of activity understood in terms of the mutuality and interplay of power and experience. The aesthetic charge is to be further explicated in terms of the conjugation of forces underlying the movement of activity conceived as an experiential appropriation of energy and meaning. [ This concept of the aesthetic charge is intended to replace the concept of the vacuous substrate or attribute – holder in traditional philosophy. ]

7. The concept of existence as participation in an experiential appropriation of activity.

8. The theory of the Field – Being Establishment as a Pentasphere constituted by the com – presencing of the five states of activity and realms of existence;

i. Realm of Nothingness — the mystical, non – articulate state of activity wherein

resides the pure experience of pure action;

ii. Realm of Potentiality — the primordial, totally ambiguous state of activity in vectoric equilibrium wherein resides the articulate experience of pure possibilities;

m. Realm of Karma — the phenomenal, dissipated state of activity wherein resides the articulate experience of karmic matter or accumulated effects of articulate action;

iv. Realm of Real Potentiality — the phenomenal, dynamic state of activity wherein resides the articulate experience of forces or tendencies of activity);

V. Realm of Actuality — the phenomenal, dynamic state of activity wherein resides the articulate experience of field individuals or trans – finite subjects or centers of activity constituted by the dynamic interaction and transformation of vibrant energy and karmic matter.

9. The theory of the karmic warp or the impact of karmic matter on pure potentiality. Real potentiality is the product of the karmic warp. [ A real potential is an emergent force or pure potential which filters through the topological openness of the karmic warp. ]

10. The concept of energy conceived in terms of the following classification;

(a) karmic matter ( dissipated energy embedded in the accumulated effects of articulate action );

(b) primal energy ( vibrant energy with primordial memory but no karmic memory )

(c) effective energy ( vibrant energy with both primordial memory and karmic memory )

(d) pure energy ( vibrant energy with neither primordial nor karmic mem-

ory)

[ This classification is the basis of the theory of energetics which studies the reality of power underlying all actualities in terms of the dynamic interaction and transformation of vibrant ( pure/primal/effective ) energy and karmic matter. ]

11. The return to the primordial intuition and concept of Being as the articulate prescencing of activity ( rather than as a perfect entity ) and the supreme emphasis on the field concept of topological conditionality as key to the understanding of Being. The Being of a thing is the mode of its field – topological prescencing. [ The substance – attribute mode of thought, which has been deeply ingrained in both ordinary discourse and experience and as the defining character trait of the Western metaphysical and intellectual mentality, is replaced in Field – Being by a mode of thinking in terms of the “ aesthetic – topological connection. ” ]

12. The notion of the Let – Be as the ultimate activity and the Act of the Let – Be as the inner – world dynamics of pure action and articulate action. [ This Field – Being interpretation of divinity or the ultimate reality makes allowance for the contributions of mystical or transcendental experience as well as phenomenal experience to our understanding of reality. Moreover, it provides a more adequate common ground for comparative philosophical inquiry and for the emergence of a global philosophical conceptuality. ]

13. The denial of the conceptual intelligibility of any entitative interpretation of change or becoming. [ In Field – Being, change or becoming is understood as a reflexive – diremptive movement or process of the ultimate activity, essentially a matter of field transition and field transformation. The one – many problem in traditional metaphysics is solved in terms of the uroboric or self – envioning action of the Let – Be. ]

14. The recognition that experience and consciousness are essential aspects of the reflexivity of activity ( that is, as self – envioning action ). [ Experience is simply activity in touch or in union with itself. And consciousness is just the reflexive transparency of activity. ]

15. The replacement of the traditional, substantialist or entitatively based subject – object dichotomy and opposition with the concept of experiential appropriation as a continuous dynamic movement. [ For Field – Being the allegedly experienced gap or distance between subject and object is an illusion arising from the “ cleft of consciousness ” in the reflexivity of human activity. ]

16. The amplification of the concept of life to include all forms of activity and the further explication of life – form in terms of the aesthetically charged vectoric or teleological interplay of interpretation and appetition. [ In Field – Being the whole universe is alive because the essence of life is activity which is ultimately a matter of interpretation and appetition. ]

17. The distinction between tacit and overt or expressive interpretation and the corresponding distinction between tacit and expressive knowledge. [ For Field – Being activity is interpretation—— or more exactly, the “ how ” of artic-

ulate action. ]

18. The recognition that appetite is inherent in all articulate action — it is the tendency of articulate action to perpetuate itself. [ This is the Field – Being reinterpretation of the Nietzschean concept of the will to power. ]

19. The replacement of the basically static conception of cosmic order in traditional metaphysics with the notion of the Field – Being Continuum ( universe in the Field – Being sense ) as an accession of actualities, each of which is a dynamic union of vibrant energy and karmic matter. [ The Field – Being universe is not a Perfect Entity, for it is essentially indefinite and incomplete. Hence the Field – Being universe makes room for diversity and change, novelty and adventure, spontaneity and freedom, uncertainty and surprises, conflicts and disorder, confusion and ambiguity, evil and suffering. It is a far more interesting and realistic universe than the substantialist cosmos conceived under the shadow of the Logical Absolute. ]

20. The understanding of things not as self – sufficient, isolated or independent substantial entities but as strands or complexities of articulate action. [ The ultimate building blocks of the universe in Field – Being are not bits of matter but vibrating strings of activity out of whose vibrant energy all things are made. ]

21. The characterization of strands or complexities as field individuals understood as trans – differential centers of activity. [ This notion is meant to insist on the inseparability of discontinuity and continuity, diversity and unity, relativity ( difference, distance, separation, independence ) and relatedness ( interconnection, oneness, interdependence ) in the Field – Being universe. Field – Being Philosophy advocates the middle way of trans – differentiation and thus guards against the pitfalls of extremism towards either end of the trans – differential reality. ]

22. The further characterization of field individuals as trans – finite subjects or self – referential centers of reflexivity which, as pure vibrant energy, arise spontaneously and innocently ( without karmic memory and teleological inclinations ) from the Nothingness of pure action. [ This is the transcendental source of freedom in Field – Being. All things are free, good and equal at the ultimate source. ]

23. The concept of field universals conceived as the topological distribution of aesthetic substance – that is, the total aesthetic charge globally or regionally distributed in the Field – Being Continuum — as replacement not only of the traditional concept of transcendent universals or abstract patterns of substantial entities, but also of the concept of matter. [ Aesthetic substance is a matrix of both vibrant energy and karmic matter which, as the accumulated effects of articulate action, is not to be confused with matter in the traditional, scientific sense. ]

24. The concept of field potentials as topologically conditioned tendencies of articulate action in the Field – Being Continuum as replacement of the tradi-

tional entitative concept of potentiality. [ In Field – Being all potentials belong to the field, not to substantial entities. ]

25. The replacement of the traditional substantialist abstract and static concept of order with the concrete, dynamically and topologically determined concept of field order. [ More exactly, the theory of field order in Field – Being is defined in terms of the interdependence and interpenetration of field universals, field potentials, and field individuals. ]

26. The theory of actuality as the union of vibrant energy and karmic matter. [ More precisely, an actuality is a complexity or a system or order of complexities defined by a conjugation matrix of dynamic interaction, that is, the interaction of vibrant energy and karmic matter. ]

27. The centrality of karmic matter in the cosmological scheme. [ While the Let – Be as pure action subsumes the roles of both God and prime matter in Aristotle, karmic matter replaces the concept of matter in the physical sciences. In Field – Being there is no matter, only energized activity and its effects, that is, karmic matter. ]

28. The concept of Nothingness as the pre – conceptual state of activity in the Divine Meditation—— that is, in the pure experience of pure action in the ultimate activity or Act of the Let – Be. [ The Buddhist concept of Emptiness and the Taoist concept of Non – being are notable alias of Nothingness which defines for Field – Being the mystical nature or dimension of divinity. ]

29. The concept of Pure Potentiality as the pre – karmic conceptual state of activity in the Divine Conception of pure possibilities (possible articulate actions). [ This is a reinterpretation of the primordial nature of God in Whitehead. For Field – Being, however, what is primordially conceived in the Let – Be is a total ambiguity —— pure potentiality is differentiable but not differentiated. ]

30. The concept of Real Potentiality as the compulsive post – karmic state of activity in the Divine Providence of the Let – Be—— that is, the ultimate activity conceived as the ground of the phenomenal world, the realm of whirling forces (tendencies of articulate action). [ Real potentiality is pure potentiality under the impact of the Karmic Warp which shatters the primordial equilibrium and ambiguity in the Divine conception. The realm of forces is also the kingdom of causation and teleology. ]

31. The rejection of any substantialist theory of causality or causation and its reinterpretation in terms of karmic compulsion. [ In Field – Being then causality refers both to the total impact of the karmic warp on pure potentiality and the compulsion of karmic matter on the emergent vibrant energy in the phenomenal state of real potentiality. ]

32. The theory of the multi – faced phenomenon as a conjugation matrix of physical meanings ( effects of activity directly felt ) and conceptual meaning ( information, message ). [ The phenomenon is whatever manifests itself in the reflexivity of activity and in the dynamic interaction between vibrant energy and

karmic matter. The theory of physical meanings replaces the traditional concept of *sensa* or sensuous impressions or manifolds. ]

33. The concept of Field – Being Establishment as the totality of parameters which are field invariant but topologically variable. [ These field – topological parameters are a priori in the Field – Being sense in so far as they constitute the transcendental condition of fielded being and experience. This concept of the field – topological a priori replaces the Kantian transcendental conception of the a priori. ]

34. The field – topological conception of interface as the principle of integrity and relevance in Field – Being. [ The field – topological interface is the non – center center of fielded beings. ]

35. The concept of the moment of fate as the topological ingression of pure vibrant energy in a particular place or region in the Field – Being Continuum in the nascent phase of the self – becoming of field individuals or trans – finite subjects.

36. The understanding of the logic of order ( the openness of possibility and the necessity of limitation ) in terms of the topological conditionality of karmic matter. [ More exactly, the logic of order is defined in terms of the mutual implication or enfoldment of field universals, field potentials, and field individuals. ]

37. The theory of the samsaric cycle ( the cycle of the transcendental or inner – world samsara ) which consists in an upward path of birth ( emergence from Nothingness ) and a downward path of death ( return to Nothingness ). [ Associated with the samsaric cycle is a theory of energetic pertaining to the transformation of energy during the various phases of the samsaric cycle. ]

38. The rejection of the substantialist conception of absolute space in favor of the Inner – World Space as expressing the karmic aspect of the Field – Being Continuum — that is, the Let – Be conceived as the universal ( field – topological ) receptacle of karmic matter. [ In Field – Being, the concepts of space in ordinary experience and in physics are phenomenal manifestations of actualities. Physical space arises from the spatialization of the inner – world dynamics. ]

39. The rejection of the substantialist conception of absolute time in favor of the Inner – World Time as expressing the creative aspect of the Field – Being Continuum — that is, the Let – Be conceived as the universal ( field – topological ) interface of karmic labor, or the overcoming and creative transformation of karmic matter. [ In Field – Being, creativity is the difference between primordial freedom and topological necessity. Life is a matter of field – topological management. ]

40. The distinction of Time as universal interface and temporality as relay succession of actualities. [ Temporality arises from the temporalization of the Inner Dynamics. — It is a measure of the rhymic movement of the self – enviroing action of the Let – Be. There are as many paths of temporality as there are routes of the relay succession. ]

41. The concept of present time as the standpoint of Time and the center of temporality. [ For the distinction between past time and future time is predicated on the determination of present time. The trans – differentiation of present, past and future times is called the ecstatic loop of temporality. ]

42. The theory of Inner – World Space – Time as the transcendental horizon of all fielded existence. [ In Field – Being to be is to be a field – topological occurrence in the Inner – World Space – Time. ]

43. The theory of the Mandalic Quaternion — a vectoric matrix of the Four Impetuses — as a conceptual device to exhibit the will – character ( the way articulate action tends to perpetuate itself ) and the personality or soul – quality ( the interplay of will and mind or appetite and understanding ) of articulate activity which shape the teleological dispositions and motivational basis all life – forms and actualities. The Mandalic Quaternion, also called the UDRL system of articulate action, may be briefly represented as follows:

U: the Impetus of Individuation — or the tendency of field individuals to move away from the One ( Realm of Nothingness ) in the Upward Path of the samsaric circle.

D: the Impetus of Integration — or the tendency of field individuals to move toward the One in the Downward Path of the samsaric circle.

R: the Impetus towards the Right — or the tendency of field individuals towards conformal action in karmic labor.

L: the Impetus towards the Left — or the tendency towards non – conformal action in karmic labor.

[ In Field – Being the mandala is the symbolic representation of all life forms in its vectoric essence. The will – character and personality traits as determined by the Mandalic Quaternion or the UDRL system belong essentially to all articulate action. It defines the very meaning of a life form. ]

44. The understanding of the unconscious as the complement of consciousness in the reflexivity of articulate experience. [ This amplified theory of the unconscious extends far beyond the concept of the unconscious in the psychoanalytic tradition. ]

45. The theory of energetics which studies the dynamic relation between a pattern of articulate activity and the quantity and configuration of energy necessary to sustain that pattern. It studies in particular the movement and transformation of energy directed by the vectoric principle and structure established in the Quaternion. [ In light of the energetics, neither the Nietzsche thesis that the will to nothingness is in truth a special case of the will to power, nor the Freudian recognition of the primacy of the death instinct over the life instinct ( thanatos over eros ) is acceptable in Field – Being. Both Nietzsche and Freud fail to understand or appreciate the full extent of the dialectic interdependence and mutual enfoldment of thanatos and eros and the law of diremptive justice ( the regulation of excess and deficiency in the flow or movement of energy ) underlying their transformation. ]

46. The theory of body – mind posturics as a study of the posturals or compositional elements of the body – mind conceived as a field – topological system or consternation of field individuals or actualities. [ The posturics theory is intended to overcome the mind – body dualism in traditional and modern philosophy. It investigates, in particular, the central role of the upright posture of the human body in the appropriation of Truth to the human Dasein —that is, human existence conceived as a region of openness where Truth ( the self – revelation of activity) occurs. ]

47. The theory of the proposition as an instrument of rational strategy — a device of the power of intelligence in the organization of experience designed to promote human understanding and control. [ There is nothing sacred about the proposition. ]

48. The theory of the transcendentals — Being, Unity, Truth, Goodness, Beauty— in Field – Being.

Being: the articulate presencing of activity

Unity: the mutuality of pure action and articulate action Truth: the perspectival self – revelation of activity Goodness: the optimization of values in Field – Being

Beauty: the creative harmony of articulate action in pure action Peace: the repose of articulate action in pure action

[ The Field – Being transcendentals are distinguished from the transcendentals in traditional metaphysics in that the former are conceived in terms of activity rather than in terms of Entitivity. ]

## Part II A Lexiconic Outline

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## **1. Philosophical Discourse: The Activity of Making Sense**

### **1—1. Philosophy**

An intellectual activity or affair carried out to the limits of intellection. Intellectual activity is a kind of articulate activity, which ultimately is what there is.

### **1—2. Intellection (or Intellectual articulation)**

A complexity of articulate activity consciously engaged in for the purpose of making sense.

### **1—3. Making – Sense**

A conceptual articulation mediated by the interfaciality of language.

### **1—4. Conceptual Articulation**

A constructive projection or retrieval of meaning by means of concepts.

### **1—5. Meaning: Physical and Conceptual**

Physical Meaning Effects or impact of articulate activity directly experienced or felt (articulated sounds, colors, smells, etc.) Conceptual Meaning More or less ordered information or message organized by means of concepts.

### **1—6. Concepts**

An organized or ordered configuration of (conceptual) meaning.

### **1—7. Configurations of Meaning**

Complexes of physical and/or conceptual meanings which emerge or are retrievable in an occasion of experience.

### **1—8. Understanding**

The power or ability of a subject or percipient energy to retrieve, project, interpret or appropriate configurations of meaning in a given occasion of experience.

### **1—9. Meaning: Captive and Non – Captive**

Captive Meaning Meaning that is conceptually captured or fixated in a particular language. Non – Captive Meaning Meaning that is not conceptually captured or fixated in a particular language. What is a captive – meaning in one language may be a non – captive meaning in another language.

### **1—10. Non – Sense**

A non – captive meaning that is not conceptually captured or capturable by



any language. Non - sense is the limit of philosophical discourse.

### 1—11. Sign ( or Signifiers)

A product of activity which functions as the bearer or carrier of meaning—that is, an interfacial medium in which configurations of meaning are captured or fixated.

### 1—12. Signs: Verbal and Non - Verbal

Verbal Signs: Spoken or written words in a natural or artificial language.

Non - Verbal Signs: Pictures, symbols, gestures, or other non - verbal signifiers.

### 1—13. Language

A system of signs or signifiers which contains a matrix of more or less stable configurations of meaning.

### 1—14. Natural Language

The language given to and appropriated by human beings in their existence in the life - world.

### 1—15. Signifying Function/Activity

Any complexity of activity involving the use of language or signifiers, verbal or non - verbal. Such complexity of activity is a signifying activity to the extent of its signifying function.

### 1—16. Signifying Agents

Subjects or perceiver energies participating in a signifying activity or function.

### 1—17. Conceptuality

An order of signification or signifying perspective retrievable from the matrix of meaning in a language or signifying function.

### 1—18. Philosophical Discourse

An intellectual discourse that seeks to make sense of reality to the limits of one's perspectivity.

### 1—19. Perspectivity

The extent or sphere of meaning that is retrievable for a signifying activity.

### 1—20. Philosophy as Conceptuality

The conceptuality or signifying perspective embedded in a philosophical discourse.

### 1—21. Field - Being Philosophy (FBP)

A philosophical discourse that seeks to articulate and retrieve the conceptuality of Field - Being.

### 1—22. Field - Being

The term given to the articulate framework that constitutes the over - all conceptuality of FBP. Field - Being is a conceptuality that identifies reality with activity.

### 1—23. Lexicon

An orderly arrangement of (spoken or written) words selected from the vocabulary of one or more languages.