

2a. The first and second imposition of words: names signifying things and names signifying names

[23 HOBBS: Leviathan, PART I, 57b; PART IV, 270a-b](#)

23 HOBBS: *Leviathan*, PART I, 57b; PART IV, 270a-b

Leviathan, PART I, 57b

Thirdly, we bring into account the properties of our own bodies, whereby we make such distinction: as when anything is *seen* by us, we reckon not the thing itself, but the *sight*, the *colour*, the *idea* of it in the fancy; and when anything is *heard*, we reckon it not, but the *hearing* or *sound* only, which is our fancy or conception of it by the ear: and such are names of fancies. Fourthly, we bring into account, consider, and give names, to names themselves, and to speeches: for *general*, *universal*, *special*, *equivocal*, are names of names. And *affirmation*, *interrogation*, *commandment*, *narration*, *sylllogism*, *sermon*, *oration*, and many other such are names of speeches. And this is all the variety of names *positive*; which are put to mark somewhat which is in nature, or may be feigned by the mind of man, as bodies that are or may be conceived to be; or of bodies, the properties that are, or may be feigned to be; or words and speech.

Leviathan, PART IV, 270a-b

To know now upon what grounds they say there be essences abstract, or substantial forms, we are to consider what those words do properly signify. The use of words is to register to ourselves, and make manifest to others, the thoughts and conceptions of our minds. Of which words, some are the names of the things conceived; as the names of all sorts of bodies that work upon the senses and leave an impression in the imagination: others are the names of the imaginations themselves; that is to say, of those ideas or mental images we have of all things we see or remember: and others again are names of names, or of different sorts of speech; as *universal*, *plural*, *singular*, are the names of names; and *definition*, *affirmation*, *negation*, *true*, *false*, *sylllogism*, *interrogation*, *promise*, *covenant*, are the names of certain forms of speech. Others serve to show the consequence or repugnance of one name to another; as when one saith, "a man is a body," he intendeth that the name of *body* is necessarily consequent to the name of *man*, as being but several name of the same thing, *man*; which consequence is signified by coupling them together with the word *is*. And as we use the verb *is*; so the Latins use their verb *est*, and the Greeks their *ἐστι* through all its declinations. Whether all other nations of the world have in their several languages a word that answereth to it, or not, I cannot tell; but I am sure they have not need of it: for the placing of two names in order may serve to signify their consequence, if it were the custom (for custom is it that gives words their force), as well as the words *is*, or *be*, or *are*, and the like.