

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910455288203321
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Titolo	The linguistic turn in hermeneutic philosophy [[electronic resource] /] / Cristina Lafont ; translated by Jose Medina
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cambridge, Mass., : MIT Press, c1999
ISBN	0-262-27786-7 0-585-19009-7
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (389 p.)
Collana	Studies in contemporary German social thought
Disciplina	121/.68
Soggetti	Language and languages - Philosophy - History - 19th century Hermeneutics - History - 19th century Philosophy, German - 19th century Language and languages - Philosophy - History - 20th century Hermeneutics - History - 20th century Philosophy, German - 20th century Electronic books.
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. [361]-373) and index.
Nota di contenuto	""The Linguistic Turn in Hermeneutic Philosophy""; ""Contents""; ""Preface to the English Edition""; ""I The Linguistic Turn in the German Tradition of the Philosophy of Language""; ""Hamann s Critique of Kant: The Role of Language as Constitutive of Our Relation with the World""; ""The Constitutive Dimension of Language According to Humboldt""; ""The View of Language of Philosophical Hermeneutics""; ""II The Conception of Language in Habermas s Theory of Communicative Action""; ""Language as Medium of Understanding: The Communicative Use of Language"" ""Language as Medium of Learning: The Cognitive Use of Language""""III Habermas s Theory of Communicative Rationality from an Internal Realist Point of View""; ""Rational Acceptability and Truth""; ""Rational Acceptability and Moral Rightness""; ""Bibliography""; ""Name Index""
Sommario/riassunto	Annotation The linguistic turn in German philosophy was initiated in the eighteenth century in the work of Johann Georg Hamann, Johann Gottfried von Herder, and Wilhelm von Humboldt. It was further

developed in this century by Martin Heidegger, and Hans-Georg Gadamer extended its influence to contemporary philosophers such as Karl-Otto Apel and J?Habermas. This tradition focuses on the world-disclosing dimension of language, emphasizing its communicative over its cognitive function. Although this study is concerned primarily with the German tradition of linguistic philosophy, it is very much informed by the parallel linguistic turn in Anglo-American philosophy, especially the development of theories of direct reference. Cristina Lafont draws upon Hilary Putnam's work in particular to criticize the linguistic idealism and relativism of the German tradition, which she traces back to the assumption that meaning determines reference. Part I is a reconstruction of the linguistic turn in German philosophy from Hamann to Gadamer. Part II offers the deepest account to date of Habermas's approach to language. Part III shows how the shortcomings of German linguistic philosophy can be avoided by developing a consistent and more defensible version of Habermas' theory of communicative rationality.
