MEANING

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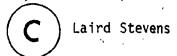
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ABSTRACT

MEANING

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This is a discussion of linguistic meaning: what it is for a word to have meaning, the meaning that it has, and the difference between word-meaning and sentence-meaning. Recent Anglo-American theories are discussed and criticised, and an original theory is developed.

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# INTRODUCTION

Philosophy, to those who don't do it, is often considered one of the more abstruse forms of human activity. It is difficult to understand, and when finally it does begin to make sense, there's nothing you can do with it. And anyway, philosophers are the type of people who fall into wells and have to be rescued by hand maidens.

But if one has this reaction to philosophy in general, one's reaction to the study of meaning is likely to be much stronger - it will be thought that meaning stands to philosophy as the blue Amazonian frog stands to biology, and will elicit the Bounderby response:

> Now, what I want is, Facts. Teach these boy and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life.[1]

Why is a study of meaning important?

Luckily, it is not here necessary to justify the doing of philosophy in general: I expect that what limited readership this thesis has will consist wholly of people who do do philosophy, and they, no doubt, will have justified this pursuit in their own way. Still - why devote time, effort, and lots of paper to the study of meaning?

My reason for doing so is that I consider such a study as basic to philosophy in general. I would go even further: I think that it is a study that must be undertaken before one can even begin to do philosophy. There is little use in discussing such things as truth, God, beauty, goodness, and so forth, unless one knows what is meant by the terms one is using. And I don't think there is much point in talking about what is meant unless one also talks about what it is for a word

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to mean something.  So my justification for studying meaning is that it is a necessary preliminary to studying philosophy in general.

In the following, I will be primarily concerned with linguistic meaning; that is, I will be discussing what it is for a word, phrase, and sentence to have meaning.  However, it is my hope to develop a theory of meaning which will explain not only linguistic meaning, but also what we are saying when we ascribe meaning to "people, actions, events, or situations."[2]

I would like from the outset to distinguish between three sets of ways in which the word "meaning" (or "mean") can be used.

A. 1. "Bachelor" means "unmarried man".
(The word "bachelor" is <u>synonomous</u> with the phrase "unmarried man".)[3]

2. "Demain" means "tomorrow".
(The French word "demain" can be <u>translated as</u> "tomorrow".)

3. "Bus" means something, "irzkwa" doesn't (in English).
("Bus" is <u>significant</u>, "irzkwa" isn't (in English).)

4. "S.P.Q.R." means "senatus populusque Romanus".
("S.P.Q.R." <u>stands for</u> "senatus populusque Romanus".)

5. "Licorice stick" means "clarinet".
("Licorice stick" is <u>slang</u> for "clarinet".)

6. "Moneyloc" means "chocolate money".
("Moneyloc" is three-year old Joey's <u>attempted pronunciation</u> of "chocolate money".)

7. "He won hands down" means "He had no trouble winning".
("He won hands down" is an <u>idiomatic expression</u> of "He had no trouble winning.")

8. "Man is a wolf" means "Man behaves like, or shares certain characteristics with, a wolf."
("Wolf" is a <u>metaphor</u> for "man".)[4]

This list is by no means exhaustive, but I think it adequately indicates the scope that a theory must have if it hopes to be able to deal with the many and diverse ways in which words, phrases, and sentences may be said to have meaning.

In the next group of sentences, something non-linguistic is described as having meaning. It is this use of the word "meaning" that I hope to shed light upon by means of a theory of linguistic meaning.

    B. 1. Don't people's feelings mean anything to you?

       2. Those spots mean measles.[5]/

       3. Does life have meaning?

It may seem odd to include the second sentence amongst the above - indeed, all the sentences (including the second) might be thought odd. I think, though, that my analysis of linguistic meaning will show that they can all be dealt with in a straight forward manner.

I wish to draw a sharp distinction between the way the word "mean" is used in the first two groups of sentences and the way it is used below.

    C. 1. He means to go tomorrow.
       (He <u>intends</u> to go tomorrow.)

      2. Do you mean the sink in the kitchen?
       (Are you <u>talking about</u> (<u>referring to</u>) the sink in the kitchen?)

In the sentences of A and B, we are talking about something either having meaning, or being meaningful, or meaning something. In the sentences of C, we are talking about something that people do in words.

Two points need explaining. First, the distinction I am trying to draw between the two different ways of using the word "mean" may be

roughly illustrated by saying that on the one hand we have something (a word, phrase, object, etc.) *signifying* something else, while on the other we have, in some sense, the *intentions* of the speaker.

Certainly, these two uses of the word "mean" are not often explicitly confused. No-one would contend, for instance, that while a red light at an intersection means "Stop!", that it actually intends that we stop. Nevertheless, as will be seen later, this sort of confusion is implicit in much of the philosophy about the relation between words and things. It is common to classify word or phrases as names, descriptive phrases, referring expressions, and the like - and this is an innocuous and convenient way of classifying certain things people habitually do in words, provided that we don't make the mistake of thinking that words somehow manage to name, describe, or refer all by themselves. Whereas words may mean something, it is only people who can be said to have intentions.

Another way of putting this would be to say that sentences, insofar as they have something to do with the intentions of the speaker, cannot be said to have the same type of meaning as words do. This point will be argued extensively in Chapter 4.

The second thing that needs explaining is the phrase "doing something in words". This is admittedly an awkward way of putting things. I used the phrase for two reasons. First, to emphasize the fact the in the sentences of C, the type of meaning that we are talking about is not that type which can be ascribed to words, but is really appropriate only to people. And secondly, I wished to distinguish between

what I was saying and what might be said on the same topic in a theory
of speech acts. I do not wish to say that in the sentences of C people
are doing something *with* words, in Austin's phrase. When I said
that the type of meaning I was talking about had to do with what people
did in words, I could just as well have said: people are talking. But
since the type of meaning in question has something to do with inten-
tion, we have to focus on the people, not the talking.

In order to talk about meaning, it is first necessary to specify
what should be taken to be the unit of meaning; we must decide what
sorts of things can be said to have meaning. The basic unit of linguis-
tic meaning is often said to be the sentence, words having only a der-
ivative meaning.

> It may be justly urged that, properly speaking, what alone has
> meaning is a *sentence*...Nevertheless, it appears that the sense
> in which a word or a phrase 'has a meaning' is derivative from
> the sense in which a sentence 'has a meaning': to say a word
> or a phrase 'has a meaning' is to say that there are sentences
> in which it occurs which 'have meanings': and to know the mean-
> ing which the word or phrase has, is to know the meanings of
> sentences in which it occurs.[6]

The linguist Bloomfield says much the same thing, albeit with a slightly
different slant and a bit more force.

> It has long been recognized that the first and original datum
> of language is the sentence,--that the individual word is the
> product of a theoretical reflection which ought not to be taken
> for granted, and further, that the grouping of derived and in-
> flected words into paradigms, and the abstraction of roots,
> stem affixes, or other formative processes, is again the result
> of an even more refined analysis. It needs but little scien-
> tific reflection to make us realize that the grammarian ought
> by no means to extract such products with magic suddenness,
> live and wriggling, out of the naive speaker's hat.[7]

According to this view, it does not seem possible to talk about word-meaning without first knowing what the meaning of a sentence is. I believe this is fundamentally incorrect. Also, I think that sentence-meaning is a good deal more complicated than word-meaning, and therefore have a vested interest in wishing to discuss the latter first. How can this be justified?

Gilbert Ryle, in "Use, Usage and Meaning", distinguishes between language, "a corpus of teachable things"[8], and speech, "the activity or rather the clan of activities of saying things."[9] "Words, constructions, etc. are the atoms of a Language; sentences are the units of Speech."[10] I am not sure that Ryle's distinction is well made, but it does suggest several interesting things.

It suggests, for instance, that it is worthwhile distinguishing between our actual speaking, and the way we talk about our speech. I cannot agree that sentences belong to speech, and words to language, however; it seems to me that sentences are no less the result of refined analysis than are words.

First, most people tend to speak in jerks and starts rather than in well-formed formulae. Secondly, the word "sentence" can properly only relate to what is actually uttered by the speaker, whereas in normal speech we 'speak' with our eyes and our hands, etc. And thirdly, it is important to note that the grammatical sentence has a beginning and an end, while in actual speech there are rarely beginnings and ends, but rather pauses: why do we say that what occurs between pauses is a *sentence*? Perhaps because what is said is thereby put in more tractable

form for the theoretician.

Now, if it is as difficult to produce sentences out of the naive speaker's hat as it is to produce words, there seems ample justification for beginning a discussion of meaning with word-meaning. However, this involves two immediate problems. First, if we are going to talk about words, we must *have* them to talk about. This necessitates our attempting to isolate one word from another. Can we, for instance, make one word distinct from another by virtue of its meaning? Is the word "afternoon" one word or two? What of phrases like "at all", "in all", and so forth, where the phrase must be regarded as the unit of meaning rather than the component words?

Secondly, Austin's contention that the phrase "the meaning of a word" is a "specimen of nonsense"[11] must be dealt with. I will do this by distinguishing between the phrase "the meaning" and the phrases "has meaning" and "is meaningful". That is: I will distinguish between the questions: "What is the meaning of (for example) the word "rat"?", and "What is it for a given word, say "rat", to have meaning?"

Chapter I


## WHAT IS A WORD?

If we are going to talk about what it is for a word to have mean-
ing, or about the meaning of a given word, clearly we must first answer
this question. However, it should be noted that it is not at all
obvious what sort of question is being asked when we ask "What is a
word?" There are many different sorts of questions which may be asked
in the grammatical form "What is an 'x'?" For instance:

1. What is a chair?

2. What is a dimetrodon?

3. What is a sport?

4. What is a citizen?

In the first question, we may be wondering about the conflict be-
tween physics and naive realism, or trying to come to grips with Plato,
or what have you; what we are not doing is asking for the meaning of
the word "chair". On the other hand, this is precisely what is at issue
in the second question - we don't, or a lot of us don't, know what the
word "dimetrodon" means.

In the third question, we may have in mind various sports like ski-
ing, football, and bull-fighting, and be wondering what they have in common,
whether a comprehensive definition of the word "sport" is possible. (We
could, of course, also have this sort of thing in mind in asking the
first question.)

Finally, in the fourth question, it seems clear that we are asking
for the role of the individual vis à vis the state to be dilated upon.

I would maintain that this question is different from the rest in that being a citizen is not, as it were, an observable quality like being green is, for instance. Neither is the word "citizen" properly speaking the name of anything in the way I might say that the word "chair" was the name of the thing on which I am sitting. Citizens are individuals who stand in a particular relation to a given state, and are only citizens when considered in this role. This point will be made clearer when in Chapter III the notion of the standard use of a word is introduced.

Granted that we are not always asking the same sort of question when we ask "What is an 'x'?", it must be determined to which (if any) of the above questions the question "What is a word?" is analogous. I hope to do this by outlining the problem.

The problem - what are we talking about when we are talking about words? - can be approached in two ways. Some philosophers (e.g., Russell) assume that language consists of identifiable elements called words, and then ask how it is that we go about identifying different utterances (in time, and in pronunciation) as instances of the same word. Other philosophers (e.g., Quine) feel that "the principles behind the printer's use of spaces are dim";[1] in other words, it is felt that to distinguish one word from another in a given sentence in the way we ordinarily do is to adhere to an arbitrary convention - words are not distinguishable from one another in the same pat way in which, say, tables and chairs are.

The first approach to the problem takes note of pronunciation. A Texan and a New Yorker, a Liverpudlian, a Glaswegian and a Dubliner are all said to speak the same language, in the sense that they all use words

of the same language. But in what sense can they all be said to be using the same words? They certainly don't *sound* like the same words, and sound is what is important here. It is commonplace to find pronunciation varying to such an extent between some groups of speakers and others (at least in English) that speakers of the same language completely fail to understand one another. Furthermore, if we take into consideration the different ways in which non-native speakers of English sometimes pronounce English words, it becomes impossible to identify individual words on the basis of pronunciation. Russell says on this point:

> Some people say "dawg", but we recognize that they mean "dog".
> A German is apt to say "dok"; if we hear him say "De dok vaks
> hiss tail ven pleasst", we know that he has uttered an instance
> of the word "dog", though an Englishman who had made the same
> noise would have been uttering an instance of the word "dock".[2]

Russell goes on to conclude that a word is more than just an "occurrence in the sensible world";[3] "words, spoken, heard or written, differ from other classes of bodily movements, noises, or shapes, by having 'meaning'."[4] This is not really satisfactory as it stands of course - many bodily movements have meaning, even unambiguous meaning: sign language, semaphore, etc. - but it is a pointer in the right direction. Words, if they are to be distinguishable from one another, must be distinguishable by virtue of what they mean. It will, in fact, be argued later that it is impossible to talk about words without reference to meaning; so-called meaningless words, like "irzkwa", just are not words.

Before going on to outline the second approach to the problem of distinguishing words from each other - this second approach is really less of an approach than a denial of the possibility - I would like to discuss a few other things Russell says on the subject of words. I feel

that Russell makes several serious errors which are duplicated in other more contemporary theories of meaning. The reason for concentrating on Russell is that these errors are more easily visible in his work.

The word "dog" for Russell is not a single thing, but "a certain class of verbal utterances, just as *dog* is a certain class of quadrupeds."[5] People "can only utter instances of the word, not the word itself, which remains immovably in a Platonic heaven."[6] It is dangerous to assume, says Russell,

> that the same word can occur on different occasions, in differ-
> ent sentential utterances and even in different sentences.
> This, if we are not careful, may be just as misleading as it
> would be to infer that an okapi may be simultaneously in London
> and New York, on the ground that "an okapi is now in London"
> and "an okapi is now in New York" may both be true.[7]

This is wrong for several reasons. First of all, it is wrong on Russell's own account of words. Certainly, if words are simply verbal utterances without meaning (just physical occurrences in the world), they are non-repeatable, just as any historical event is non-repeatable. But once one has said that words necessarily have meaning[8] - unless one means that the meaning of a particular utterance is, like the word, an instance of another more permanent and Platonic meaning - one has also said that words are repeatable, even though no given physical occurrence of it is.

Secondly, the analogy between words and okapis does not stand up. Russell does not, I think, wish to say that there are *instances* of okapis in London and New York. But this is exactly where the analogy leads us: if two different occurrences of the word "red" are both instances of it, then it seems that two different okapis must be instances of the animal

"okapi", which, I take it, must dwell as immovably in a Platonic heaven
as the unfortunate word "red".

The fact is that the analogy is a bad one: words are not unique
non-repeatable physical occurrences. Words, the *same* words, are used
over and over again - but I will not argue this now as its justification
rests upon a distinction between speech and langauge which will be made
shortly.[9]

Russell's distinction between a word and a particular instance of
it is similar to the distinction sometimes made between words and tokens
of them. Quine writes, for instance:

> In Peirce's terminology, utterances and inscriptions are *tokens*
> of the sentence or other linguistic expression concerned; and
> this linguistic expression is the *type* of those utterances and
> incriptions.[10]

Searle, also, talks about our producing tokens of words rather than the
words themselves.[11]

It is a bit difficult to know what is meant by all this; the word
"token" is not being used in any normal sense, as in, for instance, the
phrase "a token of his esteem", or "a subway token". But I feel that the
token-type distinction parallels the one Russell makes. At least it
leaves the way open to ask what it is that the type of a word has that
the token of the word doesn't. If the answer to this is "Nothing", then
the distinction is, of course, no distinction at all.

But if there is a difference between type and token, what is it?
The only thing I can think of is that a token has a physical occurrence
and is therefore non-repeatable. But is it the *token* or the physical
occurrence which is non-repeatable - because if we say that it is the token,

surely this is tantamount to saying that the token is nothing but the physical occurrence.

This, however, renders words indistinguishable from noise; a unique physical occurence (a single utterance) can no more have meaning than can a single symbol in a code in which no symbols are repeated - and a code in which no symbols are repeated is, in any case, not a code. The notion of type must be introduced to lend stability and coherence to the flow of unique and non-repeatable tokens. But this, I think, leads to something "incurably Platonic"; the token is a token of its type, the latter being therefore something over and above the token. A type then turns out to be something just as mysterious as a *meaning*; and types were introduced, at least by Quine, in order to avoid talk of meanings, which he takes to be always equivalent to talk about entities.

Sentences too are often spoken of as tokens (and to do justice to Quine, it is with sentences that he is primarily concerned in the above quote). Since this way of thinking is widespread in contemporary philosophy, and since what I have to say about it is relevant to what I will have to say about words having meaning later on in this chapter, I intend to deal briefly with it now.

Sentences are too often thought of as sorts of prefabricated units which we select as the occasion suits from the grab-bag of language; they are thought of as somehow existing separately from our utterances of them. So Strawson writes in "On Referring":

> Consider again the sentence, 'The king of France is wise'. It
> is easy to imagine that this sentence was uttered at various
> times from, say, the beginning of the seventeenth century onwards,

during the reigns of each successive French monarch; and easy
to imagine that it was also uttered during the subsequent
periods in which France was not a monarchy. Notice that it
was natural for me to speak of 'the sentence' or 'this sentence'
being uttered at various times during this period; or, in
other words, that it would be natural and correct to speak of
*one and the same* sentence being uttered on all these various
occasions.[12]

I think that Quine has much the same idea in mind when he speaks of

"sentence tokens" and "eternal sentences",[13] and that Katz and Fodor have

much the same thing in mind when they say:

Since a fluent speaker is able to use and understand any sen-
tence drawn from the *infinite* set of sentences of his language,
and since, at any time, he has only encountered a *finite* set
of sentences, it follows that the speaker's knowledge of his
language takes the form of rules which project the finite set
of sentences he has fortuitously encountered to the infinite
set of sentences of the language.[14]

I will concentrate on Strawson's account, since it is for me the clearest

of the three.

It may indeed be natural to speak of "the sentence" or "this sentence" -

in fact, that is the way my language constrains me to speak of any par-

ticular sentence I have spoken or written. But is it natural *and correct*

to speak of uttering one and the same sentence at different times? I

do not think so,[15] and I think Strawson's contention rests upon an ambig-

uity in his use of the expression "uniquely referring use". He says:

We very commonly use expressions of certain kinds to mention or
refer to some individual person or single object or particular
event or place or process, in the course of doing what we should
describe as making a statement about that person, object, place,
event, or process.[16]

But consider now the different sorts of uniqueness that occur in

the following groups of sentences.

A. 1. The act of marrying Margaret took place in '74.

2. The act of marrying Margaret took place in '75.

B. 1. The movie <u>Julia</u> was seen by Joe on Tuesday.

2. The movie <u>Julia</u> was seen by Bill on Wednesday.

From the sentences of A, we can perhaps infer that Margaret really got around, but we are not likely to think that the *same* act, i.e., that of marrying Margaret, took place both in 1974 and 1975. We might say that her first husband went through more or less similar procedures in 1974 as did her second in 1975 - but we don't want to say that the particular event took place twice. It would be nonsense to say that *one and the same* particular event took place on different occasions.

On the other hand, we do want to say that one and the same movie was seen by both Joe and Bill. They did not of course see the same *showing* of the movie, but this is not what is at issue. What is at issue is that things like movies can have more than one showing, and thing like particular events cannot.

I think it is better to view sentences as particular events than as units which may be used more than once.[17] We can pack a movie away in its can - or at least the film by means of which the images on the screen are produced - but we can do nothing like that with sentences.

One of the reasons Strawson wishes to be able to talk about uttering one and the same sentence on different occasions is in order to introduce his distinction between "a sentence" and "a use of a sentence".[18] By virtue of this distinction, he tries to show, *contra* Russell, that someone uttering the sentence "The king of France is wise" when the king of France does not exist, is not uttering a false sentence but, in Strawson's words, is failing to refer. But I find the distinction of dubious merit. Ryle has this to say about it:

> Words, constructions, etc. are the atoms of a Language; sen-
> tences are the units of Speech. Words, constructions, etc.,
> are what we have to learn in mastering a language; sentences
> are what we produce when we say things. Words have histories;
> sentences do not, though their authors do. I must have learned
> the words that I utter when I say something with them. I
> need not, and, with reservations, cannot have learned the sen-
> tence that I come out with when I say something. I am its
> author, not its employer. Sentences are not things of which
> I have a stock or fund.[19]

There is both something right and something wrong about this. What

is right is that sentences cannot, generally speaking, be talked about

in terms of use. I think that there are cases in which one could be

said to have used a sentence:

> ...there is the story of Dorothy Parker going through a swing-
> door with Clare Boothe Luce who said--as one does on such
> occasions--'Age before Beauty.' Going ahead first, Parker said:
> *Pearls before swine.*[20]

In this case, a saying has been used to a particular effect - I think it

can be legitimately said that it is not the words but the sentence which

is being used. But if this is thought to be a genuine case of using a

sentence, then clearly we cannot talk generally about our using sentences.

Where I think Ryle goes wrong is, as I have said above, in his dis-

tinction between language and speech, and in his assigning of words to

the former and sentences to the latter. The distinction between language

and speech is a very important one to make, but although it is made by

many and diversely motivated philosophers, it is seldom made very clearly.

Russell's "instances" and "Platonic" words, Quine's "linguistic expressions"

and "tokens" of them, Strawson's "sentences" and "uses and utterances"

of them, all point to some sort of distinction which is at bottom, I think,

an attempt to distinguish between language and speech. Another instance

of this would be Chomsky's distinction between speaker performance and speaker competence.[21]

The difference between language and speech is best seen with reference to a few immediately obvious facts about language. First, it is not available for observation; we cannot examine language, we can only examine speech - written or spoken - or rather, individuals speaking, or what individuals have written.

Secondly, in the English language there are over half a million words; we would probably say of someone who was familiar with even a tenth of these that he had an enormous vocabluary.

Thirdly, a language includes within its compass, so to speak, all the individual traits individual speakers have: differences in pronunciation, differences in grammatical structure (from one non-standard dialect to another, for instance), and so on.

I don't wish to fill up the page with a surfeit of commonplaces; suffice it to say that many more could be adduced to substantiate what I wish to infer from the above, viz. that the word "language" is essentially an explanatory term used to talk about speech.[22] I would like to say that language stands to speech in the way that physics stands to the physical world. When we talk about language, we are talking about what we think about speech, our theories of speech. "Language" is, in a sense, a *theoretical term*, much the same as the word "gravity" is.

This is both an understatement and an overstatement of the case. That it is an understatement is obvious: I have spent only one paragraph in stating something which I think is very important. It is an overstatement for two reasons.

First, language cannot be said to be a theory in the way gravity (very loosely) is.

> For the purpose of analysis,[23] it will be useful to distinguish three components in a theory: (1) an abstract calculus that is the logical skeleton of the explanatory system, and that "implicitly defines" the basic notions of the system; (2) a set of rules that in effect assign an empirical content to the abstract calculus by relating it to the concrete materials of observation and experiment; and (3) an interpretation or model for the abstract calculus, which supplies some flesh for the skeletal structure in terms of more or less familiar conceptual or visualizable materials.[24]

I cannot easily claim that the term "language" can be fitted into such a mould. It would be better to say that language is analogous to a theory. Clearly, the terms I would like to claim are theoretical - "word", "sentence", "meaning", "rule of language", and the like - are not implicitly defined, nor are they basic notions of any system, nor can they really be said to constitute an abstract calculus of some sort. Briefly, is there any justification for claiming that these words are theoretical terms?

I think that there is if we simply contrast theoretical terms with observation terms. I would like to say that the word "book" is an observation term, whereas the word "gravity" is not. In the same way, the word "book" is an observation term, but the word "word" is not. When we use the word "word" we are describing speech. We are as little likely to find a thing called a word in speech which we can empirically study as we are to find a thing called "gravity" lurking at the centre of the earth.

This point will be made more clearly when I begin to talk about what I have called the standard use of a word.[25] For the moment, I would just like to say that I think that words like "language", "meaning", and so

forth, like the words "object" and "motion" for instance, can never be
used to name entities, but only to describe, abstractly, what is ob-
served. It is in this sense that I have called them theoretical.

> So one cannot say, for example, 'There are objects', as one
> might say, 'There are books'. And it is just as impossible
> to say, 'There are 100 objects'.[26]

The second way in which what I have said is an overstatement of the
case is the way in which I seem to be sharply distinguishing between
language and speech. I think that there is need at the outset to do
this, but it must be noted that while physics is not capable of altering
what happens in the physical world, language, on the other hand, often
does alter its subject matter, speech. For instance, we teach children
the contrary to fact conditional form "if I were", and correct them if
they say "if I was" on the grounds that the latter is ungrammatical; we
teach them proper pronunciation, spelling and sentence structure. Many
more examples could be given to show the way in which we talk about
speech actually affects our speech. Nevertheless, I think that the dis-
tinction I have made between the two is important to bear in mind, if
only to prevent us from looking for entities in speech which correspond
to what I have called theoretical terms in our language.

I am now going to return to the main problem of this chapter which
is to attempt to answer the question "What is a word?". When we talk
about speech, we traditionally talk about it in terms of words, sentences,
and meaning. Some philosophers have noted,[27] however, that what we call
"words" are never given in speech - what is so given is sentences. They

then conclude that to distinguish one word from another is to adhere, as I said above, to an arbitrary convention. Now, while I don't think sentences are any more given in speech than are words, it is still true that "the principles behind the printer's use of spaces are dim." I will give some examples.

Why is it that we say the word "afternoon" is one word rather than two? What distinguishes it from "after-taste" which we call a hyphenated word?

Why are the phrases "after all", "in all", "at all", etc., written as two words, when words like "nevertheless", "insofar", and "inasmuch" are written as one?

Wherein lies the justification of treating "the" as a separate word, when we call "pre" merely a prefix? The word "the", grammatically speaking, qualifies in some sense a noun, as may "pre": "predestination". As well, the prefix "pre" may be separated from the noun it qualifies: "pre-Christian era".[28]

Why treat the possessive form of a noun as a single word? While there is etymological justification for this, it is true that at one time in English, the possessive, if written out in full, would become two words (e.g., Sejanus His Fall, by Ben Jonson). In any case, the appeal to etymology for justification is weak. There is often no etymological justification for the way we spell things. We continue to spell "Virgil" with an "i", and "realise" with an "s", although these are, etymologically speaking, mistakes.

Finally, consider that the Latin word for "and" could either be

written as a separate word or as "que" (almost like a suffix) at the end of a word as in "Senatus populusque Romanus". It is interesting that the abbreviated form of this is "S.P.Q.R." and not just "S.P.R."

The commonest way to attempt to distinguish between one word and another is with reference to meaning. Robert Robins, in Ancient & Mediaeval Grammatical Theory, writes:

> Aristotle's definition of the word as equivalent in modern
> terms to 'smallest meaningful unit' may stand comparison
> with many definitions in current standard works. One may
> instance Meillet's definition, 'The association of a given
> meaning with a given group of sounds capable of a given
> grammatical employment', and Bloomfield's definition, which
> has become almost a classic one, 'Minimum free form'.[29]

However, all three definitions are open to the objections just listed against the possibility of the distinguishing of one word from another being anything more than an *arbitrary* distinction. The phrase "at all" as in "There's nothing at all in the fridge" operates as a unit whose meaning is no more a function of its component parts (words) than the meaning of the word "at" is a function of its component parts (letters). In other words, the phrase "at all" is a "smallest meaningful unit" or a "minimum free form". None of the above definitions succeed in clearly differentiating between what we would call phrases and what we would be inclined to call words.

There are several different paths one can take at this point. One can abandon completely the attempt to distinguish individual words from one another; against this, Edward Sapir says:

> But is not the word, one may object, as much of an abstraction
> as the radical element? Is it not as arbitrarily lifted out of
> the living sentence as is the minimum conceptual element out of
> the word?...It is true that in particular cases...it is not
> always easy to say whether a particular element of language is
> to be interpreted as an independent word or as part of a larger
> word. These transitional cases, puzzling as they may be on
> occasion, do not, however, materially weaken the case for the

> psychological validity of the word. Linguistic experience...
> indicates overwhelmingly that there is not the slightest dif-
> ficulty bringing the word to consciousness as a psychological
> reality. No more convincing test could be desired than this,
> that the naive Indian...has...no serious difficulty in dic-
> tating a text to a linguistic student word by word; he tends,
> of course, to run his words together as in actual speech, but
> if he is called to a halt and is made to understand what is
> desired, he can readily isolate the words as such, repeating
> them as units. He regularly refuses, on the other hand, to
> isolate the radical or grammatical element, on the ground that
> it "makes no sense".[30]

A second path to take might be simply to deny that some words
("at", "in", and so forth) mean anything at all, and to claim they
only could be said to have roles in sentences. Ryle argues against this:

> Mill himself allowed that some words like 'is', 'often', 'not',
> 'of', and 'the' are not names, even in his hospitable use of
> 'name'. They cannot by themselves function as the grammatical
> subjects of sentences. Their function, as he erroneously des-
> cribed it, is to subserve, in one way or another, the con-
> struction of many-worded names. They do not name extra things
> but are ancillaries to the multi-verbal naming of things. Yet
> they certainly have meanings. 'And' and 'or' have different
> meanings, and 'or' and the Latin 'aut' have the same meaning.[31]

Finally, one might conclude that since some words at least do not
appear to mean anything apart from their employment in a sentence, that
*no* words can have meaning outside their employment in a sentence.[32]

I think the problem involved in distinguishing between one word and
another can be quite easily solved by eliminating two unwarranted assump-
tions about words and meaning, viz. that all words belong, as it were,
to a single species and can be dealt with in the same way, and that if
a word is said to have meaning, then there must also be a meaning which
it has.

*All words* have meaning. All words have meaning simply by virtue
of being part of a language. That is: while we may certainly utter such
nonsensical sound as "irzkwa", we cannot call them words - because the

way we differentiate between words and nonsensical sounds is in terms of meaning. To put the matter another way: if we say that a particular sound has no meaning, we are not saying that there is anything intrinsically meaningless about it. "Irzkwa" could be given a meaning - we could use the word, say, to refer to the third Saturday of each month of the year which contained thirty-one days. It does not have meaning because it is not part of the English language, although it might have been *said* by someone, somewhere, and it certainly has been written several times during the course of this thesis.

Mere sounds cannot be members of a language (or units of language); as soon as we begin to talk about speech, we have begun to systematize it, to make a language out of it, and our units must be words having meaning. To use some terminology I am not particularly fond of, I take it that the sentences "Words have meaning", "Words are units of language", and "For a sound to have meaning, it must be a part of (i.e., a word in) a 'language", to all be analytic.

Although all words *qua* words have meaning, words can be used in a meaningless way. But as this is not a problem with words, but with their employment, and as words are used only in sentences, I will reserve a discussion of this until I begin to deal specifically with sentences.

This is all very well - a bit simplistic perhaps - but is it really possible to talk about the meaning of the word "of", for instance? It apparently *has* a meaning, but what is the meaning which it has? An objection like this is not so serious as it first appears, resting as it does upon a confusion.

The idiom "the meaning of the word 'x'" is not to be taken as synon-

ymous with the idiom "'x' has meaning" or "'x' is meaningful". I do not wish to say that the word "of" has *a* meaning, but only that it has meaning. To make this clear, I would like to distinguish between two sorts of words. The distinction is an old and familiar one - that between syncategorematic words and others - but I think it is an interesting distinction; or, at least, I think I can make it both interesting and fruitful.

Syncategorematic words have the following characteristics:

(1) It is appropriate to talk about their having meaning, but not about the meaning that they have.

(2) They cannot be used to talk *about* anything, and we cannot refer to anything with them.

(3) Although they have meaning, they cannot be said to be used meaningfully outside the context of a sentence; or better, they are a part of a language which only has meaning when being used in a sentence.

(4) They may be either words or phrases; to call them dogmatically one or the other is to adhere blindly to an arbitrary convention.

Categorematic words (which I will refer to henceforth simply as words), on the other hand, have the following characteristics:

(1) It is appropriate to talk both about their having meaning and about the meaning which they have.

(2) They can be used to refer to something, or to talk about it.

(3) They have meaning both in and 'out' of a sentence.

(4) One word can (almost invariably) be adequately distinguished from another; there is no temptation to call it a phrase.

In the next chapter, I will be dealing with syncategorematic words.

They will be divided into what I have called "verbal gestures" (i.e.,
verbal shrugs or eyebrow knitting); the words "although", "nevertheless",
"however", and "furthermore" are examples of these.

Then I will look at the logical words "all", "some", "the", and "a",
egocentric particulars, and finally miscellaneous prepositions and
ejaculations such as "on", "by" and "yes".

There are, however, several points to be made before going on to
the next chapter. Words, as opposed to syncategorematic words, have
what I would like to call both a "general" and a "specific" meaning.
For instance, if we consider a word like "horse" as simply a word, rather
than as a part of any particular sentence in which it has been used, it
certainly seems to have some sort of meaning rather than not. This mean-
ing I will term the word's general meaning - to say that a given word has
a general meaning is to say that it may be used to talk about something
when used in a sentence. On the other hand, in the context of a par-
ticular sentence, i.e., "I tended the horse", *that about which* I am talk-
ing, i.e., the particular horse, is often made specific. Here, the mean-
ing of the word is to a certain extent dependent upon who the speaker is,
where the sentence is spoken, and so forth; this is what I am calling the
specific meaning of the word. It goes without saying that I am not claim-
ing two sorts of meaning for every word. The general meaning of a given
word can be likened to some sort of broad guidelines for the use of that
word; the specific meaning refers to how we are using the word *now*.

I do not want to go into this in depth at this point, and I there-
fore trust that all objections may be kept under the hat until I have
dealt with the idea properly. I introduce it here for several reasons.

First, it is useful in distinguishing between words and syncategorematic words. Syncategorematic words have neither a general nor a specific meaning - I cannot, for instance, talk about the meaning, either general or specific, which the word "if" *has*, even though I say it is meaningful. I might say, loosely, that the meaning of "if" is "provided that", but this is *only* to say that on certain occasions - not, e.g., in "If you go, I'll be angry" - "provided that" may be substituted for "if" in a sentence. I cannot use the word "if" to talk about anything, and I should not be mislead into thinking that because I may say that "the meaning of 'if' is 'provided that'" that there is a meaning which the word has.[33]

Secondly, the distinction between general and specific meaning is similar to the common distinction between intentional and conventional meaning,[34] but has more explanatory power and involves fewer problems than the latter.

By tying the notion of specific meaning to that of reference, the latter can be clearly seen as only applicable to sentences, or rather as something that speakers of a language do only in sentences. This for two reasons. First, to refer is always to make specific or to identify what one is talking about. And secondly, no individual word, considered by itself - that is, outside the context of a sentence - can be said to refer to anything, nor can speakers be said to be referring to anything when they use a word outside the context of a sentence, for the simple reason that speakers cannot use words outside the context of a sentence.

Now if we consider that the specific meaning of a word is that *to*

*which* we are referring, or that *about which* we are talking in a particular sentence,[35] one of the chief difficulties with the notion that meaning is *use* is readily seen. Take the word "philosophy". If someone were to say, "I think philosophy is wonderful", we might ask him in which particular sense he was using the word "philosophy". He might be referring to a particular subject matter, or to a method, or to Hegel, or to the ease with which jobs are secured by those with such an academic background, etc. Here, to ask him what he means is the same thing as asking him to what he is referring when he is using the word.

Now, although there are a great many things to which I may refer when I use the word "philosophy", there are a great many more to which I cannot refer by using this word. I cannot, for instance, say that I mean by "philosophy" either the music I am listening to or the rug under my feet. There are limits on what I can legitimately be said to mean by the word. These limits, or broad guidelines for the use of the word constitute, as I said above, the general meaning of that word. When I say that I am using a given word in a particular way, I am presupposing a limit to the possible uses of the word in question. Although I cannot know what a given word means unless I attend to the way in which it is used, neither could I ever know that a given word could *not* be used in a given way solely by examining its use. People may misuse words.

For the moment then, rather than saying that the meaning of a word is its use in a language, and that the intentional and conventional aspects of this use must be considered in determining the word's meaning, I would like simply to reiterate that for a word to have meaning, it must be part of a language, and that words have both a general and a specific

meaning. The relation between what I mean by these terms and those more familiarly employed in contemporary theories of meaning will be clarified in subsequent chapters.

Finally, this idea of specific meaning indicates how it is possible to say that a word can (almost invariably) be distinguished from another. If a word can be used to refer, or to talk about something - can have a specific meaning - then it is possible to distinguish it from other words inasmuch as it is possible to distinguish between the things about which we are talking. On the other hand, we have no good reason for writing a syncategorematic word as a single word as opposed to writing it as two or three separate words: the word "nevertheless" could either be taken as a single word or as three, and the only wails of protest against such an ambiguity would hail from the orthographer.

To conclude: I fully agree with Austin that the question "What is the meaning of a word?"[36] is a specimen of nonsense. It is, however, to be clearly distinguished from the question "What is is for a word to have meaning?" And lastly, to which of the questions (if any) given at the beginning of the present chapter is "What is a word?" analogous?

I think it is most closely analogous to "What is a citizen?", if our answer to this question is something like: "A citizen can only properly be so called in a democracy." That is, if we talk about a given group of people as citizens of a democracy (neither citizens nor democracies being observable things), then I think the analogy to words and language (as opposed to sound and speech) is strong. This is not a very important point, of course, seeing as the question was answered before it was known

what sort of a question was being asked. I only include the analogy here to tidy up loose ends.

Chapter II


## SYNCATEGOREMATIC WORDS

In this chapter I will be discussing various types of syncategorematic words. This should not be construed as an attempt to exhaustively classify them; I will not even be discussing many of them thoroughly. My aim here is only to justify my distinction between syncategorematic words and others, and to criticize some of the views that have been held about the so called logical words because of the relation between these and what will be said on the same subject in subsequent chapters.

### Verbal Gestures

The first group of words I will look at I have called verbal gestures. Included in this group are, for instance, the following words: "as", "undoubtedly", "if", "ever", "surely", "but", "so", "indeed", "for" (as in "For it is well-known that..."), "consequently", "further", "inasmuch", and so forth.[1]

It is interesting to compare such words to what grammarians have termed "particles" in Greek. Examples of these are: *men, de, gar, ge*.[2] Greek particles are often thought of as untranslatable (or as having no real equivalents in other languages like English or French, say) - indeed they are often ignored in translation, since a rendering of them into English, for example, is considered superfluous to adequate translation. They are often used idiomatically and have no literal sense. And they are often thought of as syntactic rather than semantic units.[3]

Now, consider the English phrases "Yes, indeed!", "Is it ever big!",

"If not for you...", "Don't even say that!" (this last being said after someone has in fact just said whatever he is being asked not even to say.) Close translations of these into French would be "Bien sûr!", "Qu'il est grand!", "Sans toi" (or "C'est à cause de toi,") and "Il ne faut même pas le dire!"

What is immediately obvious from these examples is that often the syncategorematic words in question are used idiomatically and have no literal sense; that sometimes they do not survive in translation; and finally that there is a very noticeable syntactic difference between the English and French versions. For the sake of the argument, I have chosen what might be thought idiomatic or even colloquial examples, but I think that a lengthy analysis of these gesture words would show much the same thing.

A gesture word indicates how a sentence is to be understood. Sometimes, though not always, it indicates how a speaker wishes the sentence he is speaking to be understood - as in "*Surely* no one in his right mind could think that..." - but it may function merely as an indicator of the relative force of one sentence with respect to another (as, for instance, does the word "but" after the dash in this sentence). I call these words verbal gestures because they would seem to be the verbal counterparts of certain bodily movements we ordinarily call gestures: shrugging, raising of eyebrows, grimacing, waving of hands, etc. I am not trying to establish an equivalence between these words and bodily gestures - the analogy will, if not pushed too far, serve to illustrate what I am talking about.

One point before moving on. It may be objected that I have smuggled the word "if" in amongst the other words listed at the beginning of this chapter and that it really deserves special status owing to its importance in logic. But I don't see why this should be the case. Consider the following pairs of sentences:

A. 1. If it is snowing, I shall go home.

   2. As it is snowing, I shall·go home.

B. 1. If I understand him, he is saying that...

   2. Insofar as I understand him, he is saying that...

C. 1. If he passes the course, he will graduate.

   2. His graduation is conditional upon his passing the course.

In none of the above pairs can the sentences be said to be equivalent. But in all cases, the second sentence expresses as much of a logical relation as does the first. If "if" is to have some sort of special status, should not the same status be accorded "as", "insofar", and "is conditional upon"?

Furthermore, the word "if" figures in many different types of grammatical construction. Examples are the so called contrary to fact conditional (e.g., "If he were more serious, then he wouldn't be failing"), in a construction where it is replaceable by "as" (e.g., "If Caesar was assassinated, we may justifiably conclude..."), in a construction where it has the force of "whether", and so on. Now although all these sentences can be rendered symbolically in terms of the implication relation, there seems no reason to assert that this logical relation is equivalent to the relation expressed between sentences (or clauses) in English by the "if...then" construction, and that therefore the word "if" is some-

how more logical than words like "although", or "as", and the like.
It may be assigned a special status in logic, but this does not mean it
has one in English.

One of the important points about these (and other syncategorematic)
words is that while they must be said to have meaning, it is inappro-
priate to ask what that meaning is which they have. For example, take
the sentence "He has not said so, yet I wish he would". Here I may ask
what the speaker is talking about when he says "so" - what it is he wishes
the person to say. I may ask to whom he is referring, or whether by the
word "wish" he means either desire, or long for, or dreams without hope
of realization, etc. But the most I can say about the word "yet" is
that perhaps the sentence might have been clearer if the speaker had said
"but" instead. And then I am not talking about the meaning (so called)
of the word "yet" at all, but rather about what the speaker wants to
say, and how best that may be expressed.

If I had concluded after questioning the speaker that he should
have said "she" instead of "he", or "done" rather than "said", I would
no longer be talking merely about the clarity of meaning of his sentence.
At the very least I would be talking about the meaning of these words
and pointing out that, for instance, the word "done" does not mean the
same thing as the word "said".[4] One might say that changing a verbal
gesture in a sentence affects its *nuance*, whereas changing a word affects
its meaning.

To talk about the *use* of the word "yet" instead of its meaning does
not, I think, solve any problems, but rather creates them. Certainly
in one sense of the word "use", any given utterance of a word could be

said to count as a use of it in that it somehow has to do with what has been said. But consider the following analogy of words to tools. If I have a bunch of tools and am explaining their use to someone, I might point to a hammer and say that it is used both to bang in and pull out nails, show him a screwdriver and say that it is used both to screw in screws and to open paint cans, etc. I will basically be saying of each tool: "I use this to do that."

Now suppose, in demonstrating the use of the hammer, I say: "Don't bang the nail; the essence is speed and accuracy, not force." I have not shown him the use of the hammer so much as the *manner* in which I use it. I use the hammer to bang in nails; the way I use the hammer is by letting its weight rather than my strength do the work. I don't think that a particular way of banging in a nail can count as a use of the hammer - or at least not in the same way that banging in nails does.

To talk about the use of a particular word is to talk about what a given speaker is doing with that word. He may be describing something, or referring to something, or performing a speech act; the list goes on. But can we ask what a person is doing with a word like "yet" in a given sentence? We might try to say that he is qualifying in some sense what he is saying - but it is clear that in most cases the speaker is not actively qualifying anything. Rather all that can be said (in most cases) is that a word like "yet" *serves to qualify* the speaker's sentence. To think of all words (i.e., both syncategorematic and categorematic) as having uses is to assume from the start that all words may be dealt with in the same way. I think that syncategorematic words may only be said to have, so to speak, functional uses.

I will illustrate what I mean by saying that a syncategorematic word has a functional use rather than a use in language by means of an example which anticipates somewhat what will be said on the subject of logical words. Suppose that I regularly use a certain bus to get to work. If asked how I got to work on any given morning, I would be likely to answer: "I took the bus." Even if someone asked me if I'd taken a cab, I would normally say: "No, I took *the* bus."

Now what would be the conditions under which I would say either that I'd taken *a* bus or that I'd taken *some* bus (or other)? Normally I would say that I'd taken *a* bus if there happened to be a number of different busses which I could have taken, and I didn't regularly catch one rather than the other. I would only say that I'd taken *some* bus if I were, say, in a foreign city and ignorant of the bus routes, and I had been told by someone in a queue to take the same bus as him to get where I was going.[5]

What I gather from this is that if I say "the" bus rather than "a" or "some" bus, it is not because I am referring to it in some unique way; rather, it is because I am in some way adhering to a syntactical convention which dictates how I speak about busses in certain situations. One might say that I use the word "bus" to refer to busses, whereas the *way* I talk about them has to do with where and when I talk about them. Whether I use the word "the", or "a", or "some", I am after all talking about a certain particular bus, and in no case is the possibility excluded that I can make quite specific which bus it was that I took. I could say: "I took some bus or other - the 65", where my saying "some" would be quite

normal: say all I knew about that particular bus was its number and that it took me from the train station to a friend's house in a city that I didn't know. I am not *using* these logical words, although they do have a function.

It is true that I can use logical words like "the" in certain circumstances. I might for instance venture the opinion that so-and-so was a hero in the Second World War and be told that the person in question was in fact *the* hero of the war - here the word is being used to some effect. However, if this counts as using the word "the", then we cannot be said to use it in quite the same way as that in which we can ordinarily be said to use words. Furthermore, it is clear that the meaning of what I say as opposed to what I am told about this hero is in no sense dependent on 'the meaning' of the word "the" (as it would be had I been told that the person in question was the (or a) goat in the war). I am merely being told that my way of talking about so-and-so is inappropriate - or that the syntactical convention I am following is inappropriate when talking about so-and-so.

This is not as clear as I should like, but it does pave the way towards the distinction I wish to make between words which have functions (and not uses) and words which have uses. Suppose I say: "Although it's sunny and warm out, I must continue with my work." I have said two things: one, that it is a lovely day, and two, that I must continue not to enjoy it fully. But there is a relation between these two things, and while I have not *said* what this relation is, I have indicated - this time deliberately - what it is. The word "although" in the above sentence then functions to indicate the relation between the two things I

have said.

I do not, however, have to deliberately indicate how what I say is to be taken, and most times I do not do so. I develop a feel, as it were, for these gesture words so that eventually they become natural - in the way I develop a feel for certain gestures like shrugging and head wagging so that eventually it becomes natural to sometimes indicate agreement or disagreement with a nod or shake of the head, to indicate uncertainty with a shrug of the shoulders. With this difference of course: that these gestures may be said to mean something, whereas verbal gestures may not. To conclude: verbal gestures have functions in that they serve to indicate some sort of relation between the various things which are being said, but have no use in that they cannot be used to talk about anything.

There is one obvious difficulty about all this: on the one hand, it is so natural to speak of the use of a given word that it would be inconvenient and awkward to avoid the expression when referring to syncategorematic words; and on the other hand, I can think of no verb which indicates that these word do not have functions, but rather are *used functionally*. I shall probably therefore slip into talking about the use of syncategorematic words, but I don't think this need prove misleading provided that the distinction I have made is borne in mind.

## Egocentric Particulars

I include this group of words in the discussion only in order to indicate the number and variety of syncategorematic words. Examples are: "this", "that", "here", "there", "now", "then".

I think that all the words listed as egocentric particulars can be dealt with in the same way, and so I will concentrate on the word "this".[6] I cannot use "this" to refer to anything for the simple reason that to say "This is..." just *is* to be referring to something. In the same way, we cannot use the gesture of pointing to point something out - I use my arm - because the gesture of pointing just *is* pointing and not a means to achieve same.

Let me take an example to make this clearer. If I say: "The book is in the corner", I am referring to a particular book in the sense that whatever I say about it will be said about *it* and not something else; in other words, I make specific what it is I am talking about. If, however, I have already made it clear what it is I'm talking about, I may refer to the book again without using the word "book". I may say: "This is..." and be understood.

On the other hand, I cannot *use* the word "this" to refer to something, because by so doing, I in no sense make it clear what I'm talking about - that must already have been done, so to speak. I am obviously always referring to something when I use the word "this"; it is just that I may not succeed in making the reference. This is not dependent on 'the meaning' of the word - it has no meaning, although it is meaningful - but on whether or not I have previously made it clear what I am talking about.

It is often the case that philosophers have only such sentences as "This is red", or "This is a book", in mind when they talk about the word "this". What I am trying to say will be much clearer if it is borne in mind that such sentences are the exceptions rather than the rule. It is much more common to say something like "This is terrible" or "This is

how things ought to be."· The analogy between saying "This is..." and pointing is often very weak, and I think it is precisely this analogy which gives rise to the idea that "this" has a meaning which must be closely tied to whatever it is that is being pointed at.[7]

One point needs to be made before moving on to a consideration of the logical words, viz. the conspicuous absence of the personal pronouns from my original list of egocentric particulars.

Consider the sentence "He is in love." Now while it would be perfectly normal to ask for the sense in which the word "love" is being used, does it really make sense to ask how the word "he" is being used? Couldn't the same things said above about "this" be equally applicable to "he"? Well, it is true that we won't know *who* is being talked about in the above sentence unless we have already been told; but on the other hand, neither are we completely clueless. The word "he" is used in a virtually unambiguous manner to refer to human beings (and occasionally pet animals) of the male sex. Because of this, I don't think - although this is admittedly rather ironic - that the personal pronouns can be considered in the same way as the other egocentric particulars I have mentioned. The most that can be said is they share some of the characteristics of egocentric particulars.[8]

## Logical Words

In this section I will be discussing the logical words "all", "some", "the", and "a". It will be necessary to go into some depth in order to deal with them properly, but although it may seem a major digression from the subject at hand, I think it is warranted for the following reasons.

First, a correct interpretation of these words is important for logic and, therefore relevant to a theory of meaning insofar as logic-icans accept an incorrect interpretation of them "as giving a correct account of the use of such expressions in ordinary language."[9] Secondly, much that has been written about the logical words, and against which I will be arguing, has given rise to weird and not necessarily wonderful theories of truth and classes which in turn influence theories of meaning. And lastly, a great deal of what I have to say, especially with reference to existence and extension, is directly relevant to what will be discussed next chapter.

The greatest and most fundamental error - possibly because the least recognized - in the treatment of the logical words is the relation the words they modify are supposed to have to the existence or otherwise of the objects these last "denote" or "refer to".[10] For instance, Wesley Salmon, in Logic, speaking of Aristotle's four types of categorical statements,[11] says:

> It is, however, essential to note an important consequence of the use of the material implication in constructing the A statement: *the A statement does not imply that its subject term refers to any existent objects.* "All F are G" does not assert that there is anything of the type F"; "All diamonds are gems" does not imply that any diamonds exist, even though we all know they do...Terms of categorical statements are terms that refer to classes. A given class may or may not have members; it is perfectly meaningful to refer to classes that have none.[12]

Salmon gives as an example of meaningful sentences whose terms refer to classes that have no members the sentence "All 19th-century astronauts were male."[13] I mention this in passing merely because I regard such a sentence as devoid of meaning; this will be argued at length in Chapter 4.

Further on, Salmon continues:

> One point needs to be made concerning both the $I$ and $O$ state-
> ments. The word "some" is taken to mean "at least one." The
> statement "Some diamonds are gems" is interpreted to mean "At
> least one diamond is a gem." In spite of the plural form of
> the $I$ and $O$ statements, they are not construed as implying more
> than one.[14]

In short, the word "all" does not, and the word "some" does, imply the
existence of something corresponding to the words which they modify.

The word "a" is taken to be equivalent to either "all" or "some",
depending on the meaning of the sentence in which it occurs. In, for
example, "A man is more than just a machine", it is taken to have the
force of "all"; in "A man came to dinner", it is taken to have the force
of "some" - or "at least one".

"The" was taken by Russell to imply the existence of the object cor-
responding to the word it modified: "*the* so-and-so", for Russell, could
be analysed into three distinct sentences:

> There is at least one so-and-so.
> There is at most one so-and-so.
> If anything is a so-and-so, then it is also...[15]

Overmuch has been written about this analysis; although I will discuss
it later, I will attempt to be brief.

Strawson, in "On Referring", presents what I consider an almost per-
fect refutation of Russell's view; but also says:

> that to use such an expression as 'The king of France' at the
> beginning of a sentence, was, in some sense of 'imply', to im-
> ply that there was a king of France. When a man uses such an
> expression, he does not *assert*, nor does what he says *entail*,
> a uniquely existential proposition. But one of the conven-
> tional functions of the definite article is to act as a *signal*
> that a unique reference is being made--a signal, not a dis-
> guised assertion. When we begin a sentence with 'the such-and-
> such' the use of 'the' shows, but does not state, that we are,
> or intend to be, referring to one particular individual of the
> species 'such-and-such'.[16]

There is, I think, quite a lot wrong in this paragraph: am I really referring to one particular tower of Babel of the species 'tower of Babel' when I begin a sentence with 'The tower of Babel..."? But I will go into this later. I quote Strawson here only to show that he, just as Russell (albeit in a more palatable way than the latter), thinks of the word "the" as having some sort of existential import. For him, if that to which the speaker intends to refer does not exist, then a sentence beginning with the phrase "the such-and-such" fails to refer and as such is neither true nor false. For Russell, a definite description which does not describe anything makes the sentence in which it occurs false. I will return to this discussion of the word "the" after having dealt with the words "all" and "some".

## All and Some

My main contention in this section will be that neither of these words imply - or the speakers who use them do not imply by them - the existence of that which is being referred to by the word (or words) which they modify. That is: I generally agree with the way the word "all" is handled in logical theory, but disagree with the treatment of the word "some". Consider the following symbolic argument:

$$(x)(Fx \supset Gx)$$
$$\exists x(Fx)$$
$$\therefore \exists x(Fx \cdot Gx)$$

This is a valid argument - or at least it's supposed to be. But under the following interpretation it becomes what I think is an invalid one:

All swans are white.
There is at least one thing which is a swan.
Therefore some swans are white.

At the very least, common sense rebels against this inference: if I have said that *all* swans are white, how can I logically infer that (only) *some* are? The bracketed word "only" in the last sentence is important; surely if I say that some swans are white, I must mean that *only* some are, *not* all. As another example, suppose that there are ten green bottles on the table: does it make sense to say that some of the bottles are green? I do not think it does.

Another reason - the opposite side of the coin - for disagreeing with the normal treatment the word "some" gets at the hands of the logicians may be seen from the following example. If I say that some roses are red, then it would seem to follow that I can infer from this that some roses are *not* red. But such an inference is invalid in modern logic. The sentence "Some roses are red" is of the logical type $\exists x(Fx \cdot Gx)$, and the sentence "Some roses are not red" of the type $\exists x(Fx \cdot \sim Gx)$. To infer the latter from the former is not valid. On the other hand, it certainly seems alright to do it in English.

Why then can we not logically make the inference? One reason is that if we translate "some" as meaning "at least one" in a sentence such as "Some $S$ is $P$", the class of those things which are $S$ may turn out to be a unit class. From a sentence like "There is a friend of yours in the room", I cannot infer that there is a friend of mine who is not in the room, as the lonely possibility exists that I may have but a single friend.

Another reason for not allowing the inference is that it is impossible to infer from the mere existence of something the existence or non-existence of anything else. I cannot infer from the fact that there exists in Paris a tower which is called the Eifel Tower the existence of a tower

in Paris which is not so called - there may be only one tower in Paris. The main problem here seems to revolve around the unit class, or the class which contains only one member.

But does it ever happen in English that the term of an *I* or *O* type statement refers to a unit class? (I should point out that I am using, for the sake of the argument, some rather recondite terminology; this is to facilitate broaching the subject. Also, if what is wrong with the notions of class, denotation, etc., insofar as a theory of meaning is concerned, is to be clearly seen, I think it is necessary to find out what these notions are using the logician's own terminology.)

I don't think it does. We would certainly never say, for instance, that *some* Charles de Gaulle were president of France. But let's try to construct a few examples which seem on the face of it to support the log-ician's contention that "some" can, or does, mean "at least one". Sup-pose that I am lost in a labyrinth but know that there is a way out. I might say something like: "*Some* road is the right one." Does this have the logical form of an *I* statement? Certainly it does - insofar as the sentence "One of these roads is the right one" is an *I* statement. But this is precisely where the problem lies: in the lumping together of all positive non-universal sentences under a single logical form. That is: the sentences "John is brave", and "Some men are brave" are, on the Aristotelian interpretation, of the same logical form. This is quite clearly a mistake, and modern logic in fact treats singular categorical statements as universal statements, or as a mixture of universal and ex-istential statements. Thus, "John is brave" becomes:

(x)(x is identical with John ⊃ x is brave).

Similarly, "The author of Waverley is Scott" becomes:

(x)(x is identical with Scott ⊃ x wrote Waverley) or, following Russell:

∃x [( x wrote Waverley · x is Scott) · (y)(y wrote Waverley ⊃ y = x)]. The sentence "Some road is the right one" would be treated similarly. It will not have the form "∃x(Fx · Gx)" - the logical form of the sentence "Some men are brave" - because this would be to imply that while there was at least one right road, there could be more than one.

Now, if this is the treatment singular categorical statements get at the hands of modern logic - if, in other words, when we know that a term in our *English* sentence refers to a unit class, we feel constrained to point this out symbolically - does it make sense to treat the symbolic equivalent of "some" - "∃x" - as though it could be "at least one"? It seems rather as though we are taking with the one hand what we are giving with the other.

This is not really the place to go into this point in further depth. I only here want to mention the difficulty involved in thinking that sentences quantified by "some" can be referring to a unit class. This problem - and that of thinking that such sentences are only true if the class referred to exists, which will be gone into briefly in the following paragraphs - can adequately be solved by the introduction of a logical connective which I have written "⊂ ", the explanation, truth-table, and exemplary theorems of which I have detailed in Appendix I.

Should the form of an *I* or *O* statement be taken to imply the existence of that which the term refers to? Consider the sentences "Some witches are good", and "We have witnessed tonight some marvels": are we implying

that either witches are marvels exist?  Again: "Some questions which
have been asked by philosophers are meaningless."  What such a sentence
often means is that what some philosophers thought were legitimate
questions should not be taken to count as such.  In this case it seems
we can use the word "questions" to refer to things which we don't think
*are* questions.

To push this idea a bit further: I can quite easily quantify over
something using "some" and imply its non-existence at the same time by
placing the word "so-called" in front of the word which "some" modifies.
"Some so-called miracles are obvious frauds"; "Some so-called martyrs
were just opportunistic creations of the new government."  While in the
second case, I may think that genuine martyrs do exist somewhere, in the
first I may be saying that while I don't think that miracles exist, some
of "them" are more easily detectable frauds than the others.

The obvious dodge to this - for instance, that x = a so-called mir-
acle, and therefore satisfies the argument - is just that, a dodge.  I do
not think that we functionally use the word "some" to imply the existence
of anything; rather, we take what we are talking about to be either non-
existent or existent.  This point will be argued more cogently in the next
chapter.  At this juncture, I just want to say that I believe that the
idea that sentences quantified over by "some" have something to do with
existence results from a cluster of theories having to do with truth,
meaning and existence, and really amounts to nothing further than a pre-
judice.  I will now examine these theories.

## Satisfaction and Distribution

There is a cluster of theories which has grown out of the notion of the meaning of a word as the thing which it names: the thesis of extensionality, the doctrine of distribution, the idea of truth as satisfaction. Now, while it would not be particularly profitable to discuss the denotational theory of meaning, being as it is in an advanced state of decomposition, I think it is worthwhile to discuss briefly the theories which it implicitly gives rise to, in that they embody certain weaknesses not derivable from the original theory, and because such a discussion will serve, albeit indirectly, to introduce the notion of concept which will be gone into next chapter.

The following version of the notion of truth as satisfaction is taken from Quine's Philosophy of Logic. Quine talks about "open sentences" such as "x conquered y"; these may for the purposes of the present argument be thought of as what Russell has called "propositional functions". Quine then talks about "sequences of terms", or ordered sequences, referring to them as "singles, pairs, triples" and so on. Now the ordered sequence < Caesar, Gaul > is said to satisfy the open sentence "x conquered y" because the sentence resulting from the substitution of "Caesar" for "x" and "Gaul" for "y" is a true sentence. Quine then speaks of a sentence (open sentence) as "*true* when it is true for all values of its free variables and thus satisfied by all sequences."[17] The example he gives of a true sentence is "$x = x$."

The notion of sets or classes is closely related to this. "An open sentence is said to determine a set if the sentence is true of all and

only the members of the set."[18]   Not every open sentence determines a

set, of course: "the sentence '~(x ∈ x)' determines no set."[19]   Quine

takes this as a good reason for not talking about sets, i.e., as one

reason amongst others, and replaces talk of sets with a definition of

substitution (of sequences of variables).  However, the notion of sets

is really part and parcel of what Quine has called open sentences, so it

is worthwhile briefly mentioning them here.

Russell, in <u>Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy</u>, says the fol-

lowing:

> We shall come much nearer to a satisfactory theory if we try to
> identify classes with propositional functions. Every class...
> is defined by one propositional function which is true of the
> members of the class and false of other things.[20]

Further on he says:

> In the language of classes, if $a$ is the class determined by $\phi x$
> "$\phi x$ is always true" is equivalent to "everything is a member
> of $a$," and "$\phi x$ is sometimes true" is equivalent to "$a$ has mem-
> bers" or (better) "$a$ has at least one member."[21]

This accords with what he has said about the notion of existence in

an earlier chapter:

> The notion of "existence" has several forms...but the fundament-
> al form is that which is derived immediately from the notion
> of "sometimes true". We say that an argument $a$ "satisfies"
> a function $\phi x$ if $\phi a$ is true; this is the same sense in which
> the roots of an equation are said to satisfy the equation. Now
> if $\phi x$ is sometimes true, we may say there are $x$'s for which
> it is true, or we may say "arguments satisfying $\phi x$ exist."[22]

We can see from the above how closely tied are the various notions of

truth, existence, extension and meaning, always remembering that for

Russell sentences were either true or false, or nonsensical.

Now there are problems with this, and these problems pertain not

only to Russell's analysis but also to that of Quine.  (For Quine, it

may be said that most open sentences determine sets, and that at least in his definition of truth in terms of satisfaction, he has made use of at least one set, viz. the set of all sequences.) First, universal statements seem to have something to do with the existence of that to which the subject of the universal statement refers. For if a contingently true statement[23] is sometimes true because arguments (or sequences) satisfying it exist, it must be the case that all existing arguments satisfy a true (that is: always true) statement, and that no existing arguments satisfy a false (that is: contradictory) statement.

If it is said that a universal statement can be true without implying the existence of any arguments that satisfy it (i.e., implying only that any existing argument *would* satisfy it), and can be false without implying the existence of any arguments which do not satisfy it - the awkwardness of this last phrase should show us something - then equally it cannot be said that a statement involving the word "some" implies the existence of any arguments satisfying it. The notion of truth as satisfaction entails, I think, that universal statements be regarded as having some sort of existential import.

I don't think this conclusion would bother Quine very much; if a given sentence had no existential import, it would be, as it were, immune to revision[24] and Quine does not think that any statement is immune to revision.[25] That is: for Quine every statement may prove to have a counter-example, every statement is empirically falsifiable. When he talks, as in the Philosophy of Logic, of eternal sentences, he says that we must call them "eternal only to a particular language at a particular time."[26]

That Quine does think of universal statements as, in some sense,

having existential import is ultimately shown by his refusal to grant the distinction normally made between two types of universal statements - that is, between those sometimes called analytically true and those commonly referred to as inductive generalizations. While for many philosophers it simply makes no sense to talk about verifying or falsifying certain statements (i.e., those considered analytically or logically true), for Quine it makes no sense to talk about statements which *cannot* be verified or falsified. This being so, we may conclude that the notion of truth as satisfaction does indeed lead Quine to regard universal statements as having something to do with existence. In this regard, he is much more consistent than Russell.

I consider both statements quantified over by "all" and those quantified over by "some" to be universal statements. Arguments for this view will be found in what follows and also (more comprehensively) in Appendix I. I do not think of universal statements (i.e., involving either "all" or "some") as having existential import. However, the arguments presented thus far are quite insufficient to refute the position either of Quine or of Russell. To do this I must introduce the notions of infinite classes and distribution.

The notion of infinite classes that will be presented here is admittedly not very rigorous (although sufficient, I think, to undermine the idea of truth as satisfaction, or of regarding truth as an extensional function - in Russell's terminology - of a propositional function). For one thing, I do not wish to think of infinite sets as *countable*, although so-called infinite sets which can be placed in a one-to-one relationship with the set of all integers are normally termed "countable".[27]

This is, of course, why the set of all even numbers is said to have the same number of members (the transfinite cardinal Aleph null) as the set of all integers.

For the purposes of the present, I am following Kant in thinking that a "completed infinite" is inconceivable.[28] That is: the notion of infinite classes that will be discussed here involves nothing more than a notion of classes which are *indeterminately* large. Such classes must be defined intensionally, as indeed infinite classes always are (i.e., inductively or recursively). Quine defines satisfaction intensionally,[29] and Russell, in Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy, says that

> the definition which enumerates is called a definition by "extension," and the one which mentions a defining property is called a definition by "intension." Of these two kinds of definition, the one by intension is logically more fundamental.[30]

This last indicates that Russell changed his mind between the writing of The Principles of Mathematics and the writing of Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy: in the former he says:

> *Class* may be defined either extensionally or intensionally. That is to say, we may define the kind of object which is a class, or the kind of concept which denotes a class: this is the precise meaning of the opposition of extension and intension in this connection. But although the general notion can be defined in this two-fold manner, particular classes, except when they happen to be finite, can only be defined intensionally, *i.e.* as the objects defined by such and such concept. I believe this distinction purely psychological: logically, the extensional definition appears to be equally applicable to infinite classes, but practically, if we were to attempt it, Death would cut short our laudable endeavour before it had attained its goal. Logically, therefore, extension and intension seem to be on a par.[31]

It is easy to see why Russell changed his point of view: it is logically impossible to define an infinite class extensionally. To say that a function "$\phi x$" is extensional, i.e., to say that "its truth-value

is unchanged by the substitution of a formally equivalent function",[32] is not to say that the class defined by the propositional function in question can be defined extensionally - enumeration is always impossible in an infinite class. (Enumeration should not here be construed to mean the same as "countability"; the former means the possible counting of members of a class, the latter the possibility of putting the members of a class in a one-to-one relationship with the set of integers.) It is not simply that death would cut short our endeavour to define an infinite class extensionally; even if we were to live on indefinitely - if the number of days in our lives could be placed in a one-to-one relationship with the set of all integers - we would *still* not succeed in such a definition, for if we did, our set would be a finite one.

However, to say that an infinite class must be defined intensionally is at the same time to show the inadequacy of the idea of truth as satisfaction. If, for instance, I define the class of men intensionally by saying that "$(x)(x$ is a man $\supset x$ is a rational animal)", I am saying what (if anything) is to *count* as a man: if "x" is not a rational animal, neither is it a man. (The class of men is here considered indeterminately large, and no judgment has been made either on the existence or otherwise of men.)

What sense does it make, then to say of my statement that it is true if is satisfied by all men (or by the sequences of 'singles' all of which are men, in Quine's words)? Nothing which is a man can *fail* to satisfy this statement - this possibility is ruled out by the very definition. So to say that such a definition is true because it is satisified by all men involves a vicious circle: I cannot even *identify* "x" *as* a man until I know

he is a rational animal. 'It makes no more.sense to look for falsifying
instances of our definition - we could not find an irrational animal
which was also a man, because our definition would then insist that he
was not, in fact, a man - than it does to look for married bachelors.

This brings me to the doctrine of distribution. Salmon, in Logic,
says:

> A class is a collection of entities. When we speak of the class,
> as such, we are speaking *collectively*. When we speak of the
> members of a collection as individuals, we are speaking *distrib-
> tively*.[33]

In a passage quoted above, Salmon said that the terms in any categorical
statement referred to classes. Geach, in Reference and Generality, tries
to get clear about what this means:

> "Man" regularly denotes each and every man; it refers, however,
> now to some men only, now to all men, according to context, and
> is accordingly undistributed in the one sort of context, dis-
> tributed in the other.[34]

He then demonstrates the absurdity of the doctrine:

> Even if we knew what 'referring' was, how could we say that
> "some man" refers just to some man? The question at once arises:
> Who can.be the man or men referred to? When I say "Some men
> are P", does the subject-term refer to just such men as the pre-
> dicate is true of? But then which men will the subject-term
> refer to if a predication of this sort is false? No way suggests
> itself for specifying which men from among all men would then
> be referred to; so are we to say that, when "Some men are P" is
> false, all men without exception are referred to--and "men" is
> thus distributed?
>
> One might try saying that, when "Some men are P" is false,
> "some men" is an expression intended to refer to some men, but
> in fact fails so to refer. But if in the sentence represented
> by "Some men are P" the subject-term is meant to refer to some
> men, but fails to do so, then the sentence as a whole is intend-
> ed to convey a statement about some men, but fails to do so--and
> therefore does not convey a false statement about some men, which
> contradicts our hypothesis.[35]

It should be noted that the importance of the doctrine of distribution

traditionally has nothing to do with the realtionship between terms of categorical statements and the various classes or parts of classes they are said to refer to or denote - it has nothing to do with denoting or referring. Its real importance was supposed to lie in the rules which could be generated from it for testing the validity of syllogisms. There is therefore no reason why modern logic should look upon the doctrine with much favour.

However, the similarity between it and the notion of truth as satisfaction is striking. Suppose that our universe of discourse is emeralds. On Quine's analysis, the sentence "$(x)(x$ is green)" is true because the open sentence "$x$ is green" is satisfied by all sequences (in this case the sequences would be singles: $emerald_1$, $emerald_2$, and so forth).[36] If we extend Quine's analysis, we might say that the sentence "$x$ is uncut" is sometimes true - some sequences satisfy it, others don't. "$\exists x(x$ is uncut)" is true if and only if "$x$ is uncut" is satisfied by at least one sequence (Quine is of course treating the word "some" as equivalent to "there is at least one"). There doesn't seem to be much difference between all this and saying that the term "emeralds" is distributed in "All emeralds are green" and undistributed in "Some emeralds are uncut." At any rate, I think the problems in both the doctrine of distribution and the notion of truth as satisfaction are traceable to the idea that "a class...is essentially to be interpreted in extension",[37] against which I have argued.

Before proceeding to discuss "the" and "a", I would like both to indicate the relevance of the foregoing, and offer several ordinary language arguments against the doctrine of distribution. I will also try

to make clearer a distinction I have thus far only hinted at, that is, the distinction between "referring" and "talking about".

In the next chapter, I will be talking about words which not only have meaning but also have *a* meaning, and I will do so in terms of concepts, which last I will liken to intensional definitions. The intensional definition of a given word will, so to speak, comprise what I have referred to as the general meaning of that word. The question with which I wish to lead off the present discussion is this: "*Must* a word occurring in a sentence have a specific meaning, or is it sometimes possible to talk about a word's having only a general meaning in a sentence?"

It will be remembered that I said that reference was only applicable to what a speaker did in a sentence, and that therefore one should not speak of the general meaning of a word with regard to reference. This is because a speaker can only make his meaning specific (i.e., refer) in the context of a sentence. I also suggested that one could think of the general meaning of a word as that which it had outside the context of a sentence. However, it must now be said that words may occur in sentences without necessarily having specific meanings.

It is clear from the foregoing discussion that when I use a word which is modified by a logical word (including "the" and "a" which have yet to be discussed),    it is often the case that I am talking about an indeterminately large class of things, and therefore cannot be said to be talking about anything specific, i.e., referring to anything, at all. Certainly, when I say that all men are mortal, I am not referring

to all men - neither am I referring to the 'class' of men - but am merely specifying one of the things which "x" must be if it is to count as a man. If I say that some men are brave, I am not referring to those men and just those men who were, are and will be brave, but merely saying that if "x" is a man, he might also be found to be brave.

But if I am not referring to anything in the above cases, what am I doing? The answer lies in the distinction between "referring" and "talking about". In the first chapter, I treated these as though they were more or less synonomous, and said that it was fundamental to the distinction made between syncategorematic words and words that words could be used to refer to something, or to talk about it. I also said that to refer to something was to make what one was talking about in some sense specific.[38] It can be seen now that the phrases "talking about 'x'" and "referring to 'x'" are *not* synonomous - otherwise to say that I was not referring to anything when I said that all men were mortal would be to say that I was not talking about anything, which is absurd.

The distinction between these two phrases can be seen from the following.

1. The horse is in the barn.
2. The French love their food.

With regard to the first sentence, it is appropriate to ask both "What horse are you referring to?" and "What horse are you talking about?". Both of these questions can be taken as rather odd ways of asking simply "Which horse?" With regard to the second sentence, on the other hand, it is inappropriate to ask who is being referred to, but alright to ask who is being talked about. The speaker is after all talking about the

French, but is not in any sense making specific what it is he is talking about. We cannot ask him *which* French he means, or whether he means all those people presently living in France, etc. He is just talking about *anyone who happens to be French*, and saying, perhaps, that he thinks it's a good bet that anyone who happens to be French will be found upon investigation to love his or her food.

It is of course possible to refer to something in a sentence in which the subject-term is modified by a logical word. This most often, as we should expect, happens when the word is "the". But it is possible to refer to something in a sentence quantified over by the word "all", as will be seen from the following examples.

If I have invited ten people to a party and gotten a positive response from each, I could say "All of them are coming", and could legitimately be said to be referring to the people in question in that they together constitute a determinately large class of things. (It is the same with "Some of them are coming", when I know who is coming and who is not, but am not saying which. In both cases I can answer the question "Who is coming?")

It is a mistake, however - and this shows a fundamental inadequacy of any attempt to develop a theory of meaning in terms of mathematical concepts - to suppose that we always are referring to a class or to members of that class when it is finite, or determinately large. Although in a given village there will inevitably be found to be a certain number of streets (no less and no more than the number of streets there are, one might say), if I say "All the streets are covered in snow", I am probably treating the class of streets *as* one that is indeterminately large,

and therefore an analysis of the sentence would have to be along the lines given above for "All men are mortal." I would *not* be treating the class of streets as indeterminately large if I had, for instance, gone round the whole village, seen all the streets, and seen that each was covered in snow.

To summarize: I have argued in this section that sentences quantified over by the words "all" and "some" do not depend on the existence of that which is talked about for either their truth or their meaning; I have argued against the extensionalist view of truth, and derivately the extensionalist view of meaning; and I have suggested, by means of the distinction between referring and talking about, a way of dealing with universal sentences that does not involve talking about extension. In the interests of brevity and flow, I have relegated the detailed arguments on some of these subjects to Appendix I.

## The and A

I do not want to go deeply into the functional use of the word "a", and this for two reasons. First, for many purposes, it is, or can be thought of as, simply equivalent to either "all" or "some". The following pairs of sentences are generally thought to be equivalent in import.

1. A whale is a mammal.
2. All whales are mammals.

3. A number of them are sick.
4. Some of them are sick.

Secondly, when it is not equivalent to either "all" or "some", it becomes very difficult to deal with. It is of no great profit to contrast it with "the". Consider the following questions and answers.

1. Q. Who was at the door?
   A. A man.

2. Q. Who was at the door?
   A. The mailman.

I see no particularly good reason why I should say "A man" in the first case and "The mailman" in the second. Suppose that I neither know the man of group 1, nor the mailman of group 2. Suppose further that I have never seen the mailman before, being a fairly late riser. Even though I have no reason to suppose that the same fellow delivers to my house every day - mailmen may alternate routes - and even though, I have no reason to assume that the *same* man has been delivering the route on which my house is located for the last little while - he may be new - I would still not answer: "A mailman". Why not?

The question is best answered by looking further at the way the word "a" is used. Consider the differences between:

1. A bell is ringing. We might say this if we were by a church and heard *one of the* bells ringing.

2. A plane is going by. I take this to mean that I see something which I know to be a plane, but that I don't know what type, or where it's going, etc.

3. A general alarm was rung. Here, if I had said *the* general alarm, it seems to me that I would have been referring to the actual physical mechanism, whereas *an* alarm would refer rather to a state of alarm.

4. An appointment with death. Even though none of us has more than one, we still refer to this as *an* appointment.

The more one looks at the uses of the word "a", the more one is inclined

not to search for explanations of these uses. In particular cases, as in my example above concerning taking the bus, one can indeed indicate the various functional uses that "a" has. But in general, there doesn't seem to be any logic in its use. As Wittgenstein says (albeit in a different context): "If I have exhausted the justifications I have reached bedrock, and my spade is turned. Then I am inclined to say: "This is simply what I do."[39] But if there is no general rule or set of rules which I can establish for the use of "a", then it is clearly wrong, or just pointless, to contrast it with "the".

The word "the" is equally difficult to deal with, but because so much has been written about it, it is worth going into a little further, especially because the word is so often taken to indicate the existence of something corresponding to the word it modifies.

Russell called phrases beginning with the word "the" definite descriptions, and his main claim about these is that they imply the existence of the subject of the description. That is: to say that the king of France is bald is to imply the existence of something which is the king of France. This is the main ground upon which Strawson, in "On Referring", attacks Russell, saying that someone who uses a definite description "does not *assert*, nor does what he says *entail*, a uniquely existential proposition."[40] Rather, a definite description acts as a sort of "*signal* that a unique reference is being made."[41] Yet for Strawson, this signal is also, in some sense, a signal that there is a king of France. This is so because he regards the phrase "the king of France" as significant *whether or not* there happens to be a king of France.

There are two ways of attacking this problem: we can worry about the

significance of the phrase "the king of France" when there is no such person, and we can worry about the existential implications of definite descriptions. Although it is jumping the gun somewhat, I will briefly go into the problem of the significance of sentences, insofar as it is relevant to the "king of France" dilemma, and then discuss existence and its relation to the word "the".

What are Strawson's criteria for the significance of sentences?

> The meaning of a sentence cannot be identified with the assertion it is used, on a particular occasion, to make. For to to talk about the meaning of an expression or sentence is not to talk about its use on a particular occasion, but about the rules, habits, conventions governing its correct use, on all occasions, to refer or to assert. So the question of whether a sentence *is significant or not* has nothing whatever to do with the question of whether the sentence, *uttered on a particular occasion*, is, on that occasion, being used to make a true-or-false assertion or not, or of whether the expression is, on that occasion, being used to refer to, or mention, anything at all .[42]

Against this I have argued above; sentences are not repeatable units, and therefore no distinction is possible between the sentence, its use, and its utterance. I should simply like to say that the sentence "The king of France is bald" is *meaningless* when there is no king of France. I shall argue for this position in a few paragraphs. But Strawson is committed to thinking that *the sentence* is meaningful, and therefore must say how it can be so when France is not a monarchy. "We are not saying that what he is saying is either false or nonsensical";[43] the speaker simply fails to refer - his use of the referring expression is "secondary" or "spurious".[44]

I can see how, in Strawson's terminology, a given utterance of a sentence could constitute a spurious use of that sentence; that would be

more or less just to say that the sentence was inappropriate given the context. But it is the tendency to regard the sentence as somehow disjoined from the speaker which allows us even to say something like that. For how could a speaker *spuriously* use a referring expression? A sentence may be said to fail to refer, but how can I be said to fail to refer? Perhaps when I refer to the king of France, I am making a joke, or perhaps I am ignorant of the facts. But what if I am serious?

Consider the following example: I say "My daughter is teething" when I don't happen to have a daughter - this seems, insofar as the sentence goes, a prime case of failing to refer. Now what would be someone's immediate and unpremeditated reaction to this? Wouldn't it be that I had not made a significant remark? I would probably be asked: "What are you talking about?" or "What do you mean, your daughter?" - in short, I would not be understood. If, when pressed, I said: "My daughter - you know, the one I don't have - she's teething", wouldn't I be accused of talking nonsense? Now, if what I have said is nonsense, then isn't this just to say that my sentence is meaningless? It is not a question of simply examining the sentence independent of any speaker and determining whether or not it makes sense; the speaker must be brought into the affair and if he 'fails to refer', then his sentence is without meaning.[45]

As to the existential import of the word "the", Strawson says that "it would not *in general* be correct to say that a statement was about Mr. X or the so-and-so, unless there were such a person or thing."[46] I think Strawson is dead wrong in this. When I say that d'Artagnan was the fourth musketeer, I am both talking about d'Artagnan and saying something true. I do not, nor should what I say be taken to, imply that

d'Artagnan was a historical rather than a fictional character. If someone not familiar with Dumas takes me to be talking about a historical character when I talk about d'Artagnan, I say that he has not understood me properly. If someone tells me about d'Artagnan, thinking that he is talking about a historical character, I say that he is quite literally *talking nonsense*. I can talk about a fictional character because I treat him *as* fictional. Once I have classed him as such, I see no reason why I cannot talk *about* him.

Similarly with definite descriptions. I can use the phrase "gravitational pull" to explain why it is that people and things stay on the ground rather than fly up into the air without in the least way implying the existence of anything corresponding to my phrase. I can say that "The gravitational pull on the moon is less than on the earth", and be talking about something, all the while knowing that the phrase "gravitational pull" serves not to name, but to explain, something.

There is no ontology embedded in the syntax of natural language. Whether or not there is ontology embedded in the words of natural language will be discussed next chapter.

Thus far, I have not said anything positive about the functional use of the word "the". I think that, as was the case with "a", no comprehensive theory is really possible. To indicate the difficulty involved in formulating an all embracing theory of any of the logical words, I have listed a number of ways in which each is functionally used.

| The | A |
|-----|---|
| the length of... | an explanation |
| what's the point? | this is a real feast. |
| the need for... | a need for... |
| the way in which... | that's a clue.... |
| in the heat of the night... | a shot in the dark. |
| the power and the glory... | a whale is a mammal. |
| take the keys. | he though for a bit... |
| the Eifel Tower. | he had a look about him... |
| I was under the impression... | |
| he had the face of a murderer... | |

| All | Some |
|-----|------|
| all men are mortal. | some men are brave. |
| all in a day's work... | sometimes, somewhere. |
| It's all gone. | I'll have some pie. |
| he does that all the time. | some good will come of it. |
| all discussion is at an end. | in some way justified... |
| I want you all to come. | shed some light on the matter. |
| all of the men here are... | I'll have some of those... |

I think that all that can be hoped for here is a theory dealing with one of the many possible functional uses of each of the logical words. This is in fact what happens in logic, and what I have done with regard to "some" in this thesis. This should not be understood as a theory of all the possible uses of the word in question; what has been said about "some" is totally inapplicable to most of the functional uses listed above.

To take a last example of the problems attendant on a general theory of the word "the": what are we to do with the phrase "the Eifel Tower"? There is only one, so we can't really be said to be uniquely referring to it by the use of the word "the" - "the" is superfluous. Furthermore, "Eifel Tower" is a proper name like "Westminster Abbey"; why do we prefix the former with a "the" and not the latter? I don't think there is a reason; I think that looking for a reason is just a mistake. We speak the way we do - the endeavour to explain why sometimes reflects more the desire for explanation than the possibility that there might be one.

## Other Syncategorematic Words

I will here merely mention several other groups of syncategorematic words in passing without discussing them in any detail. The point of the preceding chapter was, after all, simply to demonstrate the usefulness of the division between syncategorematic words and others, and to talk about those which bore in some relevant fashion on future topics to be discussed. For the present purposes, an exhaustive list is not required.

What one might like to call the very prototype of syncategorematic words is the preposition. It is often with reference to words like "of", "by", "with", "from", and the like, that philosophers first begin to get disturbed by the idea that it is possible to talk about all words in terms of the meaning which they have.

There are several things worth noting about prepositions. First, their relative superfluity: non-inflected languages abound with prepositions, inflected ones do not. And secondly, the arbitrariness and ambiguity of the rules govening their usage. Why should "He was giving it me when..." be grammatically correct (as well as "He was giving it *to* me"), when "He was saying it me, when..." is not? But the clearest indication of this is to be gathered by examining the different uses to which prepositions are put in different languages. Why *do* some French verbs take an indirect object when it seems natural and correct that they shouldn't - as they don't, of course, in English.

The words "yes" and "no" are, I think, syncategorematic. However, they have so many different sorts of functional uses in English that I will just briefly give an example which clearly supports this claim.

If someone says: "Bill's not going to pass that course", I might respond either "Yes, I think you're right" or "No, I think he'll pull through alright." I don't wish to labour this point, but it seems to me that the use to which I put the "yes" and the "no" in the above answers is to indicate the manner in which I am responding to the claim about Bill's failing the course. I am, as it were, serving advance notice.

Finally, a short word about the conjunctions "and" and "or". Many writers would have included these amongst the logical words, and this for two reasons. First, they are often used in defining the words "all" and "some". "All men" would be said to be equivalent to the set $< man_1$ and $man_2$ and $man_3...man_n >$; "some men" to $< man_1$ or $man_2$ or $man_3...man_n >$. I have argued against this extensionalist interpretation, and hence did not see this reason as sufficient for including them amongst the logical words.

Secondly, they are the English equivalents of two of the commonest connectives in logic, and are therefore often considered as logical words. The logical words which I discussed, however, were all words that could be said to modify other words rather than simply connecting them. So while a comprehensive study of logical words would have to include "and" and "some", their inclusion would have been irrelevant for my purposes.

In the next chapter I will be discussing the relationship between words and things, concepts, and language settings.

To describe this period I personally invented the word 'trendy'. (This is not the same word 'trendy' which had been in common parlance for yonks, but an entirely new word which actually means the same thing.) This new word 'trendy' was pronounced with extra emphasis on the 'N', though it was considered 'untrendy' (another of my linguistic inventions designed to replace the obsolete word 'untrendy', but carrying the same meaning) to make this slight shift of emphasis apparent and so no one actually pronounced it this way at all and only two close friends and John Lennon were aware of the profound change I had perpetrated in the etymological fabric of the English language.

Graham Chapman, A Liar's Autobiography,

Volume VI (or VII).

Chapter III

## WORDS, CONCEPTS AND LANGUAGE SETTINGS

### Words and Things

In this chapter I will be discussing words that not only have meaning, but may also be said to have *a* meaning - that is, can be used to talk about something, or to refer to something. The most pressing question in this regard is: "What is the relationship between words and things?" Before attempting to answer this, however, it is necessary to examine another question, one which is often taken to be synonomous with the former, viz. "Why do we call different things by the same name?" I do not think that the two questions are in any important sense similar; the latter is heavily laden with assumptions from which the former is free. My immediate intention, then is to detail the differences between these two questions, and to show how the assumptions embedded in the second question have created many philosophical mistakes about the nature of the relationship between words and things.

Both questions are traceable to the fact that while an individual's vocabulary is an extremely limited thing, the number of things he may talk about, and the number of ways in which he may talk about them, is not nearly so limited.[1] Taking this as our point of departure, it seems natural and reasonable to ask our first question, i.e., what the relationship between an individual's vocabulary and that which is talked about in terms of it is. But although it may also seem natural to ask about the relationship which obtains between a particular word and the various in-

dividual things it is said to denote, refer to, or stand for, such a question is bristling with assumptions.

First off: if we intend that the question "Why do we call different things by the same name?" be somehow pertinent to words in general we are assuming one of two things. On the one hand, we may be assuming that all words are names, and that sentences are therefore mere lists, or, in Mill's terminology, that propositions consist of two names, the Subject and the Predicate.[2] Nowadays, thanks (especially) to Wittgenstein, it is not necessary to argue against such a view.

On the other hand, even if we are not assuming that all words are names, we are at least assuming that what can be said about the relationship between a name and the thing(s) it names may be affirmed generally of the relationship between words and things. Russell is certainly guilty of such an assumption when, in An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth, he wishes "to suggest that 'this is red' is not a subject-predicate proposition, but is of the form 'redness is here'; that 'red' is a name, not a predicate."[3] The notion that the one-many relationship which holds between a name and that which it names is a characteristic feature of all words has led some philosophers to talk of words as "signs" and things as "things signified"[4] or to think that a beautiful object must be an "instance of beauty", and so forth. There is no warrant for assuming that what may perhaps be affirmed of names is at all relevant to words which are clearly not names - just as there is no warrant for assuming that a careful examination of the behaviour of hockey players will afford us some clue as to what it is swimmers and footballers do.

Another assumption latent in the question "Why do we call different

things by the same name?" is an ontological one, the assumption is that since names, in order to be properly so called, must name *something*, that all words must have some sort of empirical content, or somehow have to do with existing things. This assumption is really derivative of that gone into in the preceding paragraph, but is of sufficient importance to deserve special mention.

The notion that there must be non-linguistic entities which correspond in some sense to the words we use has played an important role in the history of philosophy. And on the surface, the notion has plausibility. How can we both talk about 'x' and at the same time admit that 'x' does not exist? Aren't we then talking about nothing at all, and is this not tantamount to admitting that we are talking nonsense?[5]

On the other hand, if we examine some of the theories that this notion entails, its plausibility begins to evaporate. One classic example is the theory of Forms, with its reification of qualities. Consider standing by a lake under a clear sky; the colour of each, for the sake of the argument, is blue. My descriptive word "blue" would seem somehow to imply the existence of a non-linguistic quality, i.e., blue. A Platonic theory of forms would state that both lake and sky partook of an eternal and immutable Form (Blue), and that in fact the very possibility of their similarity was dependent upon their so partaking. Russell,[6] in order to account for the way two things may be compared and termed similar, introduces universals, which on inspection turn out to be weird entities that can be two or more places at once and are both simultaneous with and antecedent to themselves.

Why such theories are wrong, as well as *how* the lake and the sky in

.the above example may be compared without reference to universals, will

be shown later on. The point I wish to make here is simply that the non-,
experienceable Form or universal is unnecessary, and that we only look

for it in the first place because we feel there must be a non-linguistic

reality which corresponds to our word, and gives it sense.

> The idea now absorbs us, that the ideal '*must*' be found in
> reality. Meanwhile we do not as yet see *how* it occurs there,
> nor do we understand the nature of this "must". We think it
> must be in reality; for we think we already see it there.[7]

It is simply a mistake to think that because we have the word, we must

go on looking for the thing till we find it.

This point is easier to see if we move from the consideration of

an adjective like "blue" to words like: "reason", "history", "mind",

"substance", "idea", "perception", "conscience", and so forth. Few people

today would capitalize any of these words, although they have all, at the

hands of one philosopher or another, received this distinction. For

instance, for Hume, perceptions are things.

> Every distinct perception, which enters into the composition
> of the mind, is a distinct existence, and is different and
> distinguishable, and separable from every other perception,
> either contemporary or successive.[8]

Hume moves from the fact that we perceive things in time to the assertion

that these 'perceivings' are entities, from the fact that we experience

things to the assertion that we have 'experiences'. But consider: if we

experience terror, so to speak, even though it would be common enough to

say that we'd had a terrifying experience, it would not be correct to say

that we'd *had* an *experience of terror*, as though it were an instance of a

universal, and experiences were the sorts of things one could *have*. Nor

would it be correct to say that there was something called "terror" which

was an experienceable item in the same league as, say, chairs.

Perceptions are not things, and neither is history, reason, mind, etc. Yet these words may be used as names, although they may also be used as explanatory or descriptive terms.[9]

I would contend, also, that even the sort of words that we generally term "names" do not imply the existence of any sort of non-linguistic entity. We can, on occasion, talk about 'x' even though it doesn't exist, and not be talking about nothing. The reason for this will be apparent further on.

To return to the question "Why do we call different things by the same name?": I think the most important, and least noticed, assumption made is that there are, on the one hand, *words*, and on the other hand, *things*. That is: here we have our linguistic entity, the word, and there we have our non-linguistic entity, the thing - and the problem is to get them back together again. There is, of course, some obvious sense in which things *are* non-linguistic entities and words are linguistic ones, but it is not good from the outset to assume how they are to be distinguished from each other - to assume, in other words, that both words and things constitute separate realms of 'raw data' for empirical investigation.

This assumption has certain obvious and well-known consequences. The only justification for calling many different things by the same name, as mentioned above, must be found in some non-linguistic quality of the things in question. In response to the question "Why do we call different things by the same name?", then:

> the philoprogenitive invent theories of 'universals' and what not: some entity or other to be that of which the 'name' is the name. And in reply to *them*, the more cautious (the 'nominalists') have usually been content to reply that: the reason

> why we call different things by the same name is simply that
> the things are *similar*: there is nothing *identical* present
> in them.[10]

Of course, to say that the things designated, or denoted (the via-
bility of these terms as explanatory notions also depending upon the val-
idity of the above assumption) by the word in question are similar is
simply to fuel the realist's fire: "So long as they say the things are
*similar*, it will always be open to someone to say: 'Ah yes, *similar in
a certain respect*: and that can only be explained by means of universals'."[11]

In order to avoid this dilemma, I will, for the time being, interpret
the word "thing" rather broadly, i.e., as anything that may be a subject
for discussion, or function grammatically as the subject of a sentence.
Such an interpretation has both advantages and disadvantages. It may be
objected that the interpretation is too broad - why begin by populating
the non-linguistic universe with such *things* as blue, gravity, and omni-
presence? Against this, I would say that it is precisely this sort of
an ontological neutrality I am driving at. I do not wish to *begin* with
a non-linguistic universe at all, heavily laden as it must be with onto-
logical assumptions; I want to *get there*. I do not want to interpret
the phrase "talking about something" as being in any sense equivalent to
the phrase "talking about *some thing*". For now, talking about chairs will
be like talking about omnipresence, in that both will be accorded the same
ontological status.[12]

We talk about many different sorts of things:

   1. The sky is blue.

   2. Blue is a beautiful colour.

   3. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

In the first sentence, we are talking about what appears to be a sort of

dome which rests upon the earth, although we know there is no such dome,
and describing its colour. In the second sentence we are evaluating, or
giving our feeling about, the colour blue. And in the third, we are, as
it were, throwing this evaluation into perspective. In each sentence we
are talking about something, and in each we are using the same grammatical
form. It would be possible, therefore, to say that we are naming some-
thing and predicating something of it - and this is fine so long as
the word "something" has no ontological implications. But in the long
run, it would be less misleading to say simply that we describe, talk
about our descriptions, evaluate, talk about our evaluations, and so forth.

The point I am trying to make here is this: I don't want to examine
the word and deliberate as to whether or not there is some non-linguistic
entity to which it corresponds: I want to look at what we are doing when
we use words. I think it is possible to say that we standardly, or most
commonly, use words in one given way. For instance, we standardly use
the word "blue" to describe. We standardly use the word "beauty" to
evaluate - although some people might want to argue that we are describ-
ing something when we use the term. In any event, we do not standardly
use either word to name something. As I wish to suggest further on that
the best clue as to whether or not we should expect non-linguistic entit-
ies to exist corresponding to the particular words we use is to look at
the standard use of the word in question, I will now look more carefully
at this notion of *standard use*.

For the purposes of brevity and clarity, I have included the follow-
ing lists of words grouped together under what I consider their character-
istic or standard uses. I don't think it matters greatly if anyone disagrees

with the inclusion of this or that word in such-and-such a list; the
main point is that it is possible to make such lists at all.

| Explanatory | Descriptive | Evaluative |
|---|---|---|
| power | blue | beautiful |
| force | environment | good |
| attraction | democracy | true |
| cause | | |
| mistake | | |
| concept | | |
| meaning | | |
| distinction | | |
| thing | | |

### Explanatory/Evaluative

bourgeoisie
Providence
freedom

### Descriptive/Evaluative

sneaky
murderer
cowardly
polite
nymphomaniac

Again, I do not want to insist on any of the above apart from the claim
that there are, at a general level, distinctions to be made between dif-
ferent sorts of words according to how they are standardly used.

When I say that a given word (e:g., "power") has a standard use
which is explanatory in nature, I mean that we are usually explaining,
or attempting to explain something when we use the word.

> The scenes of the universe are continually shifting, and one
> object follows another in an uninterrupted succession; but
> the power or force which actuates the whole machine is entire-
> ly concealed from us and never discovers itself in any of the
> sensible qualities of body. We know that, in fact, heat is a
> constant attendant of flame; but what is the connection between
> them we have no room so much as to conjecture or imagine.[13]

Hume, in the above passage, is here arguing that the *power* which objects
appear to have to affect each other is a non-observable quality. I am
arguing, to the contrary, that such a term is used to explain the effect
objects have on one another, and that even to look for a "hidden power"
in an object results from a confusion of the *explanandum* and the *explanans*,

and the reification of an explanatory term from the latter. "Power",
"force", "attraction", and the like, are terms used to explain things,
and therefore it is just a mistake to look for a non-linguistic entity
corresponding to these words.

It would be nice at this point to be able to say: when I standardly
use a word to name something, I am not only talking about *something*, but
also about *some thing* - the relationship between names and the things
they name is the only thing after all that needs explaining to satis-
factorily delineate the relationship between words and things.

This would be wrong for three reasons. First, it is clear that words
like "blue", "force", and so forth *do* relate meaningfully to the world;
in fact, it will be the main thrust of this chapter to show that names
of things relate to the world in the same way as do words which describe,
evaluate, etc., and not the other way round, as is so often supposed.

Secondly, such a view leads directly to such claims as Russell advan-
ces in An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth with regard to what he calls the
"hierarchy of languages".[14] He talks about languages (within language)
being arranged hierarchically, beginning at the "bottom with the object-
language", and extending "upwards indefinitely".[15] He calls the object-
language the "primary" or "basic" language;[16] for him it consists of ob-
ject-words whose salient features are that they have meaning "in isolation",
that they are "words which have been learnt without its being necessary
to have previously learnt any other words",[17] and that the meaning of
these words is the objects which they name.

Now, although the phrase "hierarchy of languages" (or at I would like
to say: "hierarchy of uses") may be a handy way of talking, it is a mistake

to think that language itself is hierarchically arranged. I cannot see any reason to assume that a name like "chair" is any more primary or basic than a descriptive term like "blue"; nor can I imagine how a word could be learnt in isolation by "hearing it frequently pronounced in the presence of the object."[18] And finally, the meaning of a word cannot be defined extensionally, as shown in part last chapter, because an extensional definition would not enable us to identify *new* objects (ones we had never seen before) of the species "x" *as* members of that species. That is: we could not do so unless the notion of similarity is roped in, and this is tantamount to admitting that the word in question is in fact being defined intensionally.

The third thing wrong with saying that naming in some sense implies, or is a signal[19] that there is a non-linguistic entity corresponding to our linguistic one, is that natural languages such as English are full of metaphorical expressions, sometimes called dead metaphors.

Colin Turbayne, in The Myth of Metaphor, bases his definition of metaphor on Gilbert Ryle's definition of a category-mistake in The Concept of Mind: "the presentation of the facts of one category in the idioms appropriate to another."[20] He thinks of metaphor as "sort-crossing",[21] the description of one thing *as if* it were something else;[22] e.g., in the sentence "Man is a wolf",[23] the intention (Turbayne says) is not to claim that man is a species of wolf on a par with, say, a timberwolf - it is to *make believe* "that man shares the properties of wolves."[24]

Turbayne goes on to say that while we still recognize a metaphor *as* metaphorical, are "using" the metaphor, we are sort-crossing, but that it happens that we are sometimes "used by the metaphor"[25] - this is the case

when we take a metaphorical expression as having a literal sense - and

he calls this "sort-trespassing". Citing examples of what he terms

"sort-trespassing", which often happens when the metaphor goes from be-

ing a "'live' metaphor to one 'moribund' or 'dead'",[26] he says:

> In this...stage of metaphor we no longer make believe that
> camels are dogs, that sounds are vibrations, etc. Camels
> are now nothing but dogs; sounds are nothing but vibrations,
> and the human body is nothing but a machine. What had before
> been models are now taken for the things modeled. That is,
> special sets of implications had been invented for dogs, vib-
> rations, and machines, designed to explain the facts about
> camels, sounds, and human bodies, in dog, vibration, and machine
> language. Conclusions about one were reducible to the pre-
> mises about the other. But now reducibility has become reduc-
> tionism, for camels and dachshunds are now literally different
> sorts of dogs. The machine metaphor has become mechanism,
> for human bodies and clockwork now differ only in degree, not
> in kind.[27]

In a chapter entitled "Visual Language" in the same book, Turbayne

details the extent to which our descriptions of things involve sort-crossing:

> ...we want to say that ice *looks* cold, an apple *looks* tasty,
> a gong *looks* noisy, a suitcase *looks* heavy, and a carcass
> *looks* smelly.[28]

That is: adjectives that properly pertain only to one of the other four

senses are used to describe how a given thing *looks*. Many examples could

be given to demonstrate the prevalence of this sort-crossing in both

ordinary conversation and literature, for instance:

> The effect was magical. That apprehensive feeling left me, to
> be succeeded by a quiet sense of power. I cannot put it better
> than by saying that, as the fire coursed through my veins, Wooster
> the timid fawn became in a flash Wooster the man of iron will,
> ready for anything. What Jeeves inserts in these specials of his
> I have never ascertained; but their morale-building force is
> extraordinary. They wake the sleeping tiger in a chap. Well, to
> give you some idea, I remember once after a single one of them
> striking the table with clenched fist and telling Aunt Agatha
> to stop talking rot. And I'm not sure it wasn't 'bally rot'.[29]

This passage from P.G. Wodehouse is typically bursting with all manner of trope, but the average reader does not have to consult with the local acrostichal master before comprehension dawns. He is perfectly willing to accept that feelings can *leave*, a *sense of power* can be *quiet*, wills can be made of *metal*, and morales can be *built*. Now while there is a sense in which it is possible to say that such a phrase as "morale-building" has a *literal* meaning, I think it is important to remember that a morale is not the type of thing one literally builds.

There are several points to be made here. First, the application of metaphor to language must not extend too far.[30] It would be perfectly normal to say either:

1. The morale of the entire squad was boosted by Smith's individual heroics;

2. The news, coming when it did, totally deflated the morale of the troups.

In the first sentence, morale is likened to something which can go up and down, in the second to a balloon. These are fairly stereo-typed ways of talking about morale.[31] But consider:

3. All through the night, the sporadic gunfire chipped away at the morale of the troups.

4. His wit and cheer succeeded in insulating their morale from the cold realities of war.

These ways of speaking about morale are not usual (and perhaps, because of this, more evocative) I am inclined to say that there is metaphor involved in the latter two sentences, while not in the former, or at least that if the first two sentences cannot be said to have a straight-forward *literal* meaning, that the metaphor involved has become to stereo-typed as to be totally unambiguous in meaning. Similarly, while winds

commonly bite, gnaw, whistle and howl, they do not quite so commonly claw, maul, bellow and whine.

So while it is important not to extend too far this notion of metaphor in language, it is also necessary to recognize the richness of expression possible in language, and the diversity of ways of speaking. I think that any theory of meaning which attempts to define words extensionally must ignore this fact from the outset, because it if were taken into account, the theory would not stand a chance of getting off the ground.

Another point worth mentioning is that, strictly speaking, the terms "literality" and "metaphorical" apply to sentences, not to words; that is: the use of a given word in a sentence may be either literal of metaphorical, but the word itself is neutral in this regard. Furthermore, literality in sentences is a far more elusive quality than extensionalist theoreticians of meaning would like to admit. It is almost never the case, I think, that sentences in ordinary conversation are so straightforward as to be devoid of any "merely suggested meaning".[32] The most often discussed example of literal meaning[33] (Russell's "the cat is on the mat") is contrived in its simplicity. Rather than being a good example of what it is for a sentence to be literal, it seems to result from a predisposition to regard sentences as being neatly divided into the literal and the metaphorical, and the attempt to find an example of the former. Be that as it may, I think it is true that the class of literal sentences is so slender as to be uninteresting, and the class of non-literal sentences so large as to be unmanageable; the supposed dichotomy

between literality and the metaphorical is not, I think, tenable.

The point I am trying to make here is that it is the presupposition both that words may have literal meanings and that there is a firm and pat distinction to be made between literal and metaphorical meaning that leads to extensionalist theories of meaning. I have been trying to show not only that the terms "literal" and "metaphorical" do not properly apply to words, but that even when they are properly applied (i.e., to sentences) the distinction they represent is of dubious merit.

It may have been noted that in the last few pages I have been using the word "thing" in two ways, one to mean anything which can function grammatically as the subject of a sentence, the other to mean physical objects. The only excuse for this is that it is virtually impossible to talk about extensionalist theories of meaning without assuming from the outset a world of things separate and distinct from the language which, so to speak, corresponds to it. I will now revert to the exclusive use of "thing" to mean the former.

For a word to have $a$ meaning, we must be able to use it to talk about something. That is: it must have both a general and a specific meaning.[34] It may have either sort of meaning in the context of a sentence: in the sentence "Horses are quadrupeds", I am talking about horses, but not referring to anything; in the sentence "That horse has an awful temper", I am both talking about and referring to a particular horse.[35] I wish here to deal with what I have called the "general meaning" of a word.

Although it is methodologically sound to examine how speakers of a language use a given word in order to determine what it means, I do not

think a straight out equivalence can be made between meaning and use. First of all, for a speaker to use a word correctly presupposes that he knows what it means. Secondly, people do misuse words, and we can identify instances of this as a misuse, or mistake. (For instance, it is reported that a thirteen-year-old pupil once said to his teacher: "The soil is fertile, sir, because it is full of micro-orgasms.")[36] Therefore, meaning cannot be equivalent to all the uses of a given word in a language.

Thirdly, and most importantly, the 'meaning is use' theory, the way it is most commonly given,[37] is an extensionalist theory linking meaning to the multiple utterances of a given word. On the whole, the meaning is use' theory puts the cart before the horse; surely words must have meaning before they are capable of being used by anyone?

Before going on, I would like to say that the conclusions reached eventually in this chapter are very similar in substance to those I believe Wittgenstein reached in the Philosophical Investigations. Although this may seem like an odd claim after what has just been said, I think I can substantiate it. In the Philosophical Investigations, he ways:

> 43. For a *large* class of cases-though not in all-in which we employ the word "meaning" it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language.

> And the *meaning* of a name is sometimes explained by pointing to its *bearer*.[38]

He also says: "to imagine a language means to imagine a form of life."[39] (This is startlingly similar to: "*The limits of my language* mean the limits of my world", which Wittgenstein says in the Tractatus.[40])

The first quote I take to be more or less equivalent to my saying that words have meaning by virtue of being part of a language. The meaning which

they have, simplistically put, is the *part* they have in the language. By "form of life", I understand Wittgenstein to mean that a speaker's language defines his world. I will now try to elucidate both these claims.

What are we really doing when we ask for the meaning of a given word? I could say, perhaps, that we are asking for its standard use, or what it can be used to talk about, or even for a definition. These answers would all, I think, be in some measure correct, but in another sense they would only amount to a restatement of the question. What I believe we are doing when we ask for the meaning of a particular word is pretty much the same as what we do when we ask the standard first question in a game of Twenty Questions: "Is it animal, vegetable, or mineral?" We are looking for some sort of categorization - asking for genus and species, as it were.

However, this presupposes that we have at our disposal a certain range or scheme of geni and species at our disposal to which the new word may be made relevant - otherwise the word's meaning will not produce a significant cognitive response in us. So what I am in fact doing when I ask the meaning of a word is: how does this word *relate to the language which I already speak,* or how does what I may talk about with this word *relate to my world?*

An example will make this clearer. If asked the meaning of the word "appoggiatura", I might say: "It is a suspension without preparation, but which resolves just like any suspension."[41] Such a response would not, of course, make matters a jot clearer to anyone not conversant with musical theory in general, and the theory of counterpoint in particular. If you

had stumbled across the word in the sentence "All the appoggiaturas of time are lost",[42] even the Oxford definition would not do much good - "A grace-note or passing tone prefixed as a support to an essential note of a melody"[43] - unless you knew that an essential note in a melody is one which forms part of the chord being played.

An appoggiatura is, essentially, a particular type of musical frill. It pads the bare bones of harmony. Therefore, when Coleridge said "All the appoggiaturas of time are lost", he meant that all the details necessary for the creation of a historical image are missing, leaving a mere historical diagram.

What I want, then, when I ask the meaning of the word "appoggiatura", is to know that the term pertains properly to musical melodies, and has to do with an added detail which, though inessential, contributes to a more intense enjoyment of the whole. If I know what music is, what frills are, and what it is to be inessential yet pleasing, then I will know what an appoggiatura is. A new word has been introduced to me *in terms of what I already know*. On the other hand, unless I know what the terms "suspension" and "resolve" mean in a musical context, *and* that they indicate a musical context, my original definition is just nonsense.

Now: if the word "appoggiatura" has been explained as in the above paragraph, can I say I know what the word *means*? Wouldn't I have to know the ins and outs of 17th Century musical theory to really appreciate the meaning of the word? I think the answer to these questions must be an unequivocal yes to the first, and an unequivocal no to the second. The word now certainly means *something* to me. Even though I may not be able to recognize an appoggiatura when I hear one, I can still distinguish it

from, say, a work by Milton (<u>Areopagitica</u>) or an overweight but attract-
ive person (a podgy allurer). That is: I know, in an ordinary and non-
technical way, what I *cannot* talk about with the word; I can also under-
stand sentences in which the word occurs.

But: I am not in a position to distinguish an appoggiatura from a
mordent, grace-note or trill, which are all, essentially, particular
types of musical frills as well. So wouldn't it be appropriate for some-
one familiar with each of these musical devices to say that I didn't
really know what an appoggiatura was? No, it wouldn't. I can claim to
know what metre is in a poem, without being conversant with either tum-
bling fourteeners or iambs. Knowing that metre pertains to the rhythm
of the words in a poem, I know enough.

The reason for this is that meaning must be seen in terms of lan-
guage in general - and language in general is not context-specific. I
want to know whether an appoggiatura is a tree, or a star clustre, or
what have you; *not* whether it is a mordent or a grace-note. I want to
fix it in a certain relation to the other elements of my language. Now
while I can certainly say more about it than that it is just a musical
frill, and in some contexts I would have to, such exactness or extensive
definition is not a condition of my knowing the meaning of the word. I
may either glance at a painting or study it minutely in order to repro-
duce it, but in each case it is just this picture, and not another one.
At any rate, meaning would be a very elusive thing indeed for anyone
but the omni-erudite were a context-specific definition required before
the meaning of a word were understood.

What can we do if we know the meaning of a word that we can't do if

we don't? Well, perhaps we can define it loosely, or ostensively define it, or say what it is not. I think this last is the most important thing we can do when we know the meaning of a word: in fact, I think that knowing the meaning of a word *entails* knowing what the word doesn't mean. If we don't know the meaning of a word, it quite literally has not become a *word* for us - it is not part of our language - it could mean anything. I would like to say that if we know the meaning of a word, we have a *concept* of what it is we may talk about with that word.

## Concepts

Because the word "concept" has such an abundance of wholly negative connotations for this century's philosophers of meaning and language, I should like to begin by saying what concepts are not.

They are not non-linguistic entities. They are not the sort of thing I can have. When I use the word "concept", although I am talking about something, I am not talking about, nor intending to talk about, some thing.

A concept is not equivalent to meaning, nor does the concept in any sense *give* meaning to the word. Neither is a word meaningful *by virtue* of the concept.

A concept is not a picture, nor is it like a picture. Nor is the fact that, if our imagination is of the vivid variety, we can call to mind a given musical strain, or picture in our mind's eye a given land-scape *due to* the fact that we have a concept of these things.

I do not wish to imply that when we speak, the occurs a stream of concepts in our mind that somehow parallels our words.

However, the fact remains that we do use single words to apply to many

things, and that words may be used to talk about some things and not others, and I would like to explain our ability to use words in this way in terms of our having concepts. In other words, I will treat the word "concept" as being explanatory in its standard use - although I do not want to say that concepts *explain* how we are able to use one word to talk about a large number of things - just as when I say that an apple's falling to earth is because of gravitational pull, I am really only describing what has been observed to be a universal property of objects, viz. that they don't float about in the air. I am not saying gravity pulls them down.

I am using the word "concept" because it is a convenient tool in discussing word-meaning. The phrase "having a concept of 'x'" will be taken to mean "being able to define 'x' in some way, or ostensively define it, or be able to say what it is not." I might have said, with Searle, that to know the meaning of a word is to know the rules governing both "its conditions of utterance and what the utterance counts as",[44] which he calls its "semantic rules",[45] especially as I think of concepts as being something like intensional definitions. But the notion of rules has, I think, as many problems as that of concepts.

First of all, when I speak, I do not consciously follow rules, either semantic or grammatical. Wittgenstein, in the Philosophical Investigations, says something that might be construed as an objection to this: "...to *think* one is obeying a rule is not to obey a rule."[46] "When I obey a rule, I do not choose. I obey the rule *blindly*."[47] So should I say that although I don't feel or think I am obeying rules when I speak, I nevertheless am doing so, and that it is the business of philosophical analysis to discov-

er what these rules are? Searle would, I believe, answer such a question in the affirmative, but I don't think that Wittgenstein's idea of rules would lead to this sort of an assertion.[48] Roughly speaking, his 'rules' are like my 'concepts': to say that somebody is following a rule is, for Wittgenstein, merely to say that he is doing the same thing regularly. He wants to talk about the fact that people use words in the same way *in terms of obeying rules;* but does not want to say that rules in some sense explain *why* this is the case.[49] It is worthwhile mentioning that for Wittgenstein, the expressions "following a rule" and "obeying a rule" are somewhat paradoxical; rules are precisely a sort of thing which it is possible neither to follow nor obey.

However, if we want to make rules the condition of the successful performance of a speech act,[50] and the failure to follow one or more of the relevant rules an *explanation* of the failure to perform the speech act, then surely we should be able to be conscious of those rules we are said to be following? One way of distinguishing between the ways in which Searle and Wittgenstein use the word "rule" is as follows: in Searle, rules can be broken; in Wittgenstein, a broken rule is no rule at all.

What is wrong with saying that "speakers of a language are engaging in a rule-governed form of intentional behavior?"[51] Simply that the *analogy* of language to rule-governed activities has disappeared; language is now seen *to be* a rule-governed activity. It is possible, and often fruitful, to compare language to a rule-governed activity like a game; problems begin to arise, however, if observed regularities, or rules, are said to be constitutive of meaning. "Constitutive rules do not merely regulate, they create or define new forms of behavior."[52] Having said

this, Searle goes on to ask:

> What is the difference between making promises and, say, fishing that makes me want to say that doing the first in a language is only made possible by the existence of constitutive rules concerning the elements of a language and doing the second requires no analogous set of constitutive rules?[53]

But consider what may be said of the rules (constitutive and regulative) of, say, chess. First, until the early Middle Ages, they did not *exist*. Secondly, they were *decided* or *agreed upon*. Thirdly, they have been consciously *added to* or *changed*. And finally, if you don't know what they are, you can look them up in a book. The analogy between the rules of chess and those of language here is quite weak.

I think that while it is possible to treat language as if it were a rule-governed activity, it is a mistake to say that it is one - to simply assume the rules are there and set off looking for them. Many other examples could be adduced to demonstrate the dangers latent in talking about 'rules of language'; however, all I wish to say here is that one of the main reasons for introducing the term "concept" (where "rule" could really have done, if the term were appropriately qualified) was to avoid having to distinguish at every turn what I am saying from what Wittgenstein, or Searle, or Grice, etc. have recently said with regard to rules of language.

To have a concept of something is, roughly speaking, to have an intensional definition of it. I don't mean by this that one can *produce* such a definition - one does not *have* a concept or intensional definition in that way. I mean only that, generally speaking, when we have a concept of 'x', we can identify a particular 'y' as an 'x', and other-

wise not. When I say that we "have an intensional definition of 'x'",
I only mean to reflect the fact that we *can* do this.

Having a concept of 'x' does not mean that we can infallibly iden-
tify every given 'y' as either an 'x' or as something else. Just because
I may not be able to decide whether a given piece of furniture is a chair
or a stool does not mean that I cannot in general tell the difference
between chairs and stools. Borderline cases are just that - cases where
we are not sure.

My intensional definition does not have to be clear or exact. (This
is really a corollary of what was said in the previous paragraph.) In
general, the more frequently a word is used in a language, the more exact
a definition we must have. For instance, while it is generally enough
simply to know that a dimetrodon is a dinosaur in order to be said to
know the meaning of the word, it is not enough to know simply that a foot
is part of the body. Our concepts of things are, as it were, of unequal
value - some are rich, others are meagre. But this is not to say either
that the meagre ones are inadequate, or that the rich ones are exact.

It is worthwhile pointing out a major difference between the way I
am using the word "concept" and one of the ways it is often used in or-
dinary English. In the latter, it would be natural to use the word as
it is used in: "he has no concept of the intricacies of political life",
or "he has no concept of how this should be played." Both these sentences
say more or less the same thing, i.e., that a given person is unfamiliar
with something either as it is or as it ought to be. The assumption is
that should he become familiar with politics, or with bridge, he *would*
know how intricate political life was, or how to play a particular hand.

Concepts here are of something, and are tied to our knowledge of, or
how to do, something.

. Now by an extension of this reasonably natural use of the word; we
would not be surprised to hear it in a sentence like: "What is your con-
cept of how a clarinet sounds?"[54] or "What is it that makes all these
things we are sitting on *chairs*? What is your *concept* of a *chair*?" We
would not be surprised to hear sentences such as the above, but I think
we would expect the context in which they were spoken to be an academic
one. Here the point has been reached where our concepts are of objects
and sounds - they have almost become little pictures in the brain.

I am not using the word "concept" in this way. The words "clarinet"
and "chair" have meaning for us, and therefore we have a concept or inten-
sional definition of something - this, as I said above, merely reflecting
the fact that we can identify a particular thing as a chair or as a clar-
inet. But I do not want to say that either the chairs in the room or
the sound of a clarinet has *meaning* for me, and I do not have concepts
of *them*. Non-linguistic entities have not yet been reached.

By intensional definition, I mean something of the sort: "'x' is a
cigarette if and only if it is made of tobacco, is cylindrical, and you
smoke it." There are three points to be made here. First, that the def-
inition is open-ended, or open to either revision or having other essen-
tial predicates added. When I first run into Turkish cigarettes and dis-
cover them not to be cylindrical, I would most likely say: "What a funny
shaped cigarette", and not "What is that?" (unless by the latter I was in
fact alluding to the peculiar shape of the cigarette). That is: I would
think it enough like a 'normal' cigarette to call it one, but would notice

its shape.  My intensional definition of cigarettes would thereby be revised.

As to the addition of an essential predicate to an intensional definition - as odd as this may sound - the above example is a particularly appropriate one.  Most people nowadays, as opposed to forty years ago, will have added to their concept of cigarettes "and, very likely, they cause cancer."

The second point to be mentioned is that in the above definition I have used lots of words of which, it seems, I must also have concepts. Are these definitions then - that is: all of my concepts, taken together - going to be circular?  Mustn't we have some intensional definition the words of which do not need to be defined?

Insofar as definitions are composed of words, the sum of my definitions will indeed be circular in nature.  I don't think there is, or can be, a sort of rock-bottom language (like Russell's object-language) the meaning of whose words is not dependent on the meaning of other words. We certainly do build up our language (i.e., learn it), but this does not mean that the way we build it up must be analogous to the way we build a house - with the foundations holding the whole thing up.  If I am right in saying that a word has meaning relative to a language, and that to ask the meaning of a word is to ask what the word means relative to the language,[55] then it is clear that words cannot be learnt in isolation. In any event, that words cannot be learnt in isolation is shown by the fact that such an idea entails the possibility of a one-word language, and this last is just a contradiction in terms.

The idea that words can be learnt in isolation is closely tied to

that of ostensive definition. Indeed, if words could be learnt in iso-
lation, it could only be by ostensive definition. But ostensive defin-
ition is really part and parcel of a theory of meaning which is exten-
sionalist in nature, and which supposes that those things denoted by the
word *are* the meaning of the word. I cannot define anything ostensively;
I can only *give an example*. I can tell a child: "This is a chair", but
unless I say, or he understands, that I have shown him $a$ chair, and that
there are other things more or less similar which are also chairs, he
does not know what the word means. How could he ever identify a chair
he has never seen before as a chair simply on the basis of chairs pre-
viously viewed? Giving an ostensive definition can *help* him to develop
his intensional definition of the word "chair", but it cannot define it
for him.

—But, it may be objected, if the totality of these intensional def-
initions is circular, and if ostensive definition is not, in fact, def-
inition at all, how do we learn?

It is precisely due to the fact that our concepts are open-ended
that we can learn. A child may very well start off thinking of a chair
as "that in the corner" and be confused when he runs into another object
bearing the same name. He will then have to adjust his notion of what
a chair is. He will, if he is like most children, spend a good deal of
his early life running about with a questioning look on his face, saying
things like "Chair?", "Spoon?", "Car?", and so forth, asking for confir-
mation, until he has sufficiently adjusted the definitions of the things
in question so as always to be able to identify them. Wittgenstein says
that the meaning "of a name is sometimes explained by pointing to its

*bearer.*"[56]  I would rephrase this: "The bearer is a good, and sometimes necessary, *clue* to the meaning of the name."

Finally, when I say that the child nas adjusted his definition so as now to be able to consistently identify, say, spoons as spoons, I do not mean that there is a sort of causal relationship between definition and ability.  When he grasps what a spoon is, he does not simultaneously grasp a formula; when I say he has an intensional definition of something, that is just the way I am talking about what he can now do.[57]

The third point I wished to bring out about the intensional definition of a cigarette given above is the inclusion of "if and only if." My definition is therefore not simply about cigarettes; it is also about what does *not* count as a cigarette.  Part of my definition of a cigarette must help to distinguish it from cigars, cigarillos and cheroots.  To know what part a word plays in a language is at the same time to know that it doesn't play another part; to know what a word means is to know what it cannot be used to mean.

I would, for instance, say that part of the meaning of the word "red" is "not yellow or blue or green or...", that it is a colour, and not a sound, or taste, etc.  A word which could be truly predicated of everything is an impossibility: it would have no meaning because if it were to have universal application, all possibility of giving the word *definition* would have been removed.

This is not to say that these intensional definitions are infinite in length because of the fact that what a thing is *not* is taken to be part of the definition of what a thing *is*.  This would be true were meaning a thing, or were the definition a thing which was the meaning of the

word. But this is not the case. All that is meant is that if meaning is just *being part of a language*, then part of the meaning of a word must lie in the relationship it has to other words in the language.

The final point I wish to make concerning the intensional definition of "cigarette" given above is the importance of the variable "x". First, our concept of a cigarette is a concept of *something* which has the attributes in question. We have neither said that this something is a non-linguistic entity, nor, if it is, in what sense it is. Secondly, it shows how it is possible to talk about something in particular and something universally, as well as just generally (this harks back to the distinction made above between "referring" and "talking about".). And thirdly, it sheds light on the dilemma of proper names.

First: it is clear that we want our concept of cigarette, and our word "cigarette" to have some sort of relation to a non-linguistic entity - what sort of relationship will be gone into shortly - and so the definition given above is somehow lacking. I want to say that it is part of the meaning of the word "cigarette", that it is part of our definition of cigarettes, that they are *real*, just as it is part of the meaning of the word "unicorn", and part of our definition of unicorns, that they are imaginary.

Now, if our intensional definition of something is simply reflective of the fact that we consistently identify given 'ys' as an 'x', or consistently use a given word in a certain way, and the meaning of a word is the place it has in a language, then it is the notion of standard use introduced earlier which must explain this.

I standardly use the word "cigarette" to name something; I standardly

use the word "unicorn" to name a *fictional* something. If a child visit-
ing a zoo should ask to see the unicorns, we should not commonly say
that he didn't know the meaning of the word "unicorn", but I think this
is precisely what is the case. He would clearly have ranked unicorns
alongside horses, bulls, and so forth, in his mind, and therefore the
relation in which his definition of unicorns stood to his definitions
of horses, bulls, and so forth would not be the right one. The word,
so to speak, occupies a place in his language which it shouldn't: he
does not, therefore, know the meaning of the word. It could equally
well be said that his definition of unicorns was as yet incomplete in
that he had not grasped the standard use of the word, part of which is
to be able to identify white horses with horns *as* fictional.[58]

Whether or not existence may be thought of as a predicate is not
truly relevant to the above; but since I have said that whether or not
something exists is part of the meaning of a word, some minor elaboration
is called for. If I say "Tigers exist", it is true that I have said
nothing whatever about tigers. If I say, on the other hand, "Tigers
exist, unicorns do not", then I have said something important both about
tigers and unicorns insofar as I have determined their relation to each
other in terms of their existence. The answer to the question: "Is ex-
istence a predicate?" then, is "Sometimes."[59] And the element of my
definition of cigarettes that was missing is something of the kind: "and
it exists."

The second point I wish to discuss about the importance of the var-
iable 'x' in the intensional definition has to do with the distinction
between "talking about" and "referring". I can now explain more fully

the difference between talking about something in particular, or refer-

ring, on the one hand, and talking about something universally or *gener-*

*ally* on the other....

There is, I think, a large difference between saying "Go to the

store and get some milk" when there is only one store one could go to,

and saying the same thing when milk may be gotten from any number of

stores. In the first case, we are actually referring to a particular

store, *the* store; in the second, I am just talking about stores in gen-

eral as being the sort of places where one buys milk. In the first

case, I might just as well have said: "Go to Harper's and buy some milk",

supposing Harper's were the name of the only store in the vicinity; in

the second: "Go buy some milk." In the first case, the variable is spec-

ified, in the second, it is not. If my intensional definition of stores

is, say, "an 'x' which sells milk, etc.", then I may either make a spec-

ific reference to a given store, or I may leave what in particular I am

talking about *undetermined*.

I would like to finish this section with a discussion of proper

names. Proper names are not only interesting in themselves, but will

serve to illuminate and clarify a good number of the points I have so

far being trying to make in this section.

Do proper names mean something? The question has been variously

put and variously answered. They have been seen as being meaningless marks,

denoting but not connoting something, having a reference but not a sense,

having both sense and reference, and so on. The fact that none of these

answers is really satisfactory should lead us to suspect the variations

on the question as it has been asked - and it is there, I think, that

the problem lies. For the question seems to be roughly analogous to "Are games fun?", to which the answer is either "Some are, some aren't", or "I'm not quite sure what you mean."

Proper names do not belong to a tidy class over which one can easily generalize. Consider what sorts of things have proper names: people and pets; cities, countries, streets and sometimes houses; and also some household articles, books, musical groups, cars, busses, and so on. I want to briefly look at some of the things in this last grouping in order to show how very diverse in nature are proper names.

Books have proper names: for instance, <u>Tunc</u>, <u>Martin Chuzzlewit</u>, <u>Alice in Wonderland</u>, <u>The Basic Works of Aristotle</u>. The first, <u>Tunc</u>, is just a name: we know nothing of the contents from the title. The second is the name both of a book and of the hero of that book. Two points are worth noting here. First, the title has *something* to do with the content of the book in that we would, I believe, be quite surprised to find no-one of that name in the story - we would even be inclined to think of "<u>Martin Chuzzlewit</u>" as a meaningless mark in such a case. Secondly, it makes perfect sense to say that Martin Chuzzlewit is the hero of <u>Martin Chuzzlewit</u>. We can use the proper name to refer either to the book or to the hero.

<u>Alice in Wonderland</u> is both a title and a brief description of the story. The questions "What's it about?" and "What's the name of that book?" could get the same answer. This is not the case for <u>The Basic Works of Aristotle</u>: the book is not *about* but *is* the basic works of Aristotle. (With reference to these last two, consider the piece of music by Debussy entitled "The Girl with the Flaxen Hair"; here the title is meant to des-

cribe what the music is 'about', but the relation of title to music is - at least - not a discursive one.)

So even with regard to book titles, we seem to have moved almost from proper names being mere meaningless marks to their having both sense and reference. What other things have proper names?

Cars have proper names - not individual ones, but proper names nonetheless. If I ask you what sort of car you drive, you might say: "It's a Pontiac", or these days more likely: "It's a Toyota." Other brand names have ceased to be proper names and are now just names: vacuum cleaners and tissues are often simply referred to as hoovers and kleenex. Busses have names, and often these are numerical: "I caught the 105 to work"; what would "105" be in this case if not a proper name?

Some celestial bodies used to have proper names but no longer do: the word "sun" and "moon" are no longer proper names in English. On the other hand, I think that many people still treat these as though they were proper names. Although the sun is *really* a star, and the stars are really suns, and although there are countless 'moons' orbiting Jupiter, the way is still open for someone to say: "No, stars are those little twinkly things in the night sky; the sun isn't a *star*!" So although the word "sun" is no longer capitalized in English, there seems little reason to say that the phrase "the sun" does not contain a proper name, whereas "the Eifel Tower" does.

Very generally, it may be said that proper names have meaning - they are part of the language we use to talk about things. But some are meaningful without having *a* meaning - have a functional use like the syncategorematic words in chapter 2 - and some may be said both to be

meaningful and to have a meaning. Names of people, cities, countries, and so forth, are used and function in the same was as do egocentric particulars. For instance, if you walk into a room full of people you don't know, and I say to you: "Harold is looking very down in the mouth", you will not understand who it is I am referring to. For *you* to be able to understand who it is I am talking about, I must first have pointed out Harold to you. In the same way, you won't understand me if I simply say: "*He's* looking very down in the mouth", unless I first specify which person I'm talking about.

On the other hand, the word "Harold" is a word in the English language. This can be seen by contrasting it with a word like "Lemuel". If someone told me their name was Lemuel, I might, if impolite, respond: "Lemuel - that's not a name, surely?" or "No-one can be called 'Lemuel'!" That is: I am questioning its existence in English as a word which is functionally used to name a person.

It is, however, also possible to say that some proper names can be used to talk about something (in general), or to refer to something (in particular): for example, chain restaurants. I can refer to one, or talk about but not refer to one, or talk about one in universal terms. This is illustrated in the following three sentences.

    1. Let's eat at the McDonald's (there may yet be a small village somewhere with but a single branch).

    2. Let's go to a McDonald's; is there one nearby?

    3. McDonald's is a chain of restaurants serving food which begins with the letters *Mc*.

There is really no difference between the word "McDonald's" and the word "chair" in terms of what we can do with either. It is impossible, then,

to agree with Searle when he answers the question "'Why do we have proper names at all?'" with "Obviously, to refer to individuals."[60]

Although I think that what has been said thus far about proper names is correct, there is nevertheless something a bit disturbing about saying that proper names have meaning. Proper names do not, after all, appear in dictionaries, they are not allowed in Scrabble games, they are just *not like* other words.

Yet it is undeniable that we use them just as we use other words. The only thing I can suggest on this count is that, by and large, proper names are accorded to things which tend to have a cultural signifi-cance, or things that are man-made and - so to speak - arbitrary. On the one hand, kingdoms, chain restaurants, and car manufacturers, we tend not to think of as permanent and essential aspects of the world, and on the other, their importance to us is dependent upon our culture. What we expect to find in a dictionary are words like "horse" and "mind" and "difficult": words which we might find ourselves using in any imaginable cultural setting. A dictionary, we might say, tries to catalogue a world stripped of the veneer of a particular culture. Of course, it doesn't succeed in doing this, nor are the things we *tend to think of* as somehow not depending for their existence or significance on a par-ticular culture quite so culturally independent as they might appear. However, I don't think it is possible to answer a question like "Why do we have proper names?" - it is of the "Why is there *something* rather than *nothing*" variety of question - and so the above is merely a suggestion.

There are a few miscellaneous points to be made about proper names before going on. First, no proper name (even <u>Alice in Wonderland</u>) is a

description of what it names any more than the word "chair" is a description of a chair. Secondly, there is no reason why the thing named by the proper name should have to exist.[61] The idea that I cannot really refer to Aristotle because he doesn't exist is tied to the notion that Aristotle must be the meaning of the word "Aristotle", that a name, to mean something, must name *some thing*. If someone thought either that Aristotle was simply a product of historical imagination (as Homer is sometimes taken to be), or that Aristotle were still alive, then I would say he was confused. But if he was talking about a philosopher who lived some 2400 years ago and wrote the Poetics and the Rhetoric, I should say he was referring to Aristotle, even though the man in question happens to be dead. "When Mr. N.N. dies one says that the bearer of the name dies, not that the meaning dies."[62]

Thirdly, I would like to look briefly at the much discussed Tully/Cicero dilemma. Succinctly put: we know that the sentence "Tully = Tully" is analytic; is the sentence "Tully = Cicero" analytic or synthetic?[63] Searle defines analytic statements as follows: "A statement is analytic if and only if it is true in virtue of linguistic rules alone, without any recourse to empirical investigation."[64] They do not impart information. But the sentence "Tully = Cicero" could and sometimes does impart information; is it therefore synthetic?

A very simple answer to this would be: "For whom do you mean? I know that Cicero is sometimes referred to in English literature *as* Tully. I know that whether the name "Tully" or the name "Cicero" is used, the man referred to is Marcus Tullius Cicero, so I guess the sentence is analytic –

for me." The point is that though there was a time when I didn't know
what the word "bachelor" meant, nor what the word "extended" meant, now
I would say that the sentences "A bachelor is an unmarried man", and
"All bodies are extended" are analytic; again, *for me*.

But by virtue of what are these sentences now analytic? Well, by
virtue of the fact that when I am talking about bachelors I am talking about
the same thing as when I am talking about unmarried men, for instance, It
might be said that my intensional definition of each was the same. But
this is not to say that I use these terms interchangeably. I never re-
fer to Cicero as Tully; when I use the word "bachelor", I am certainly
talking about an unmarried man, but I am talking about him in a certain
way - for me it has certain evaluative overtones.

Sentences are not *by themselves* either analytic or synthetic; it
always depends on who's speaking and who's listening.[65]

A more complicated answer to the question as to whether the sentence
"Tully = Cicero" is analytic or synthetic would drag in the business of
names of people having a merely functional use in a language: "Tully = Cicero"
would be analytic if and only if that which I knew as Cicero was said to
be the same as what someone else meant by "Tully". I could then say that
whether someone said "Cicero" or "Tully", that he was referring to
the same thing; I would know who he was referring to either way. The an-
alytic-synthetic distinction will be discussed further with regard to sen-
tences in the next chapter.

A final point to be discussed with regard to proper names is that
delineated by Russell in "Descriptions":

> A proposition containing a description is not identical with
> what that proposition becomes when a name is substituted, even

> if the name names the same object as the description describes.
> "Scott is the author of *Waverley*" is obviously a different
> proposition from "Scott is Scott": the first is a fact in lit-
> erary history, the second a trivial truism.[66]

Russell wants to explain how it is that while both "Scott" and "the

author of <u>Waverley</u>" are applicable to one object, and only to that object,

"Scott is the author of <u>Waverley</u>" is not trivially true. On my

analysis of proper names it is not necessary to say, with Russell, that

names may be used *as* names, or that they may be used *as* descriptions, or

that definite descriptions are not "simple symbols", or what have you.[67]

If the proper name "Scott" has only a functional use in English - if there

is therefore not *a* meaning which it has - then the question as to whether

the above sentence is trivially true because of the meaning of its

component parts quite simply does not arise. I will explain this more

thoroughly.

There are not very many types of situations where it would be ap-

propriate to say: "Scott is the author of <u>Waverley</u>." It would be appro-

priate in the following three cases:

1. I know Scott (someone has introduced us or has pointed him

out to me) but I know nothing about him, or at least I don't know that

he wrote <u>Waverley</u>. Even if I didn't know whether <u>Waverley</u> was a novel

or a religious treatise, I would still have been told something which I

could understand, viz. that Scott *wrote*.

2. I know Scott (or of him) and I have read <u>Waverley</u> but don't

connect the two. I might say: "Who wrote <u>Waverley</u>?" and would understand

the answer "Scott".

3. I know Scott and I know <u>Waverley</u> but I think that <u>Waverley</u>

was written by Dumas *fils*. I tell someone as much, and they respond:

"No, Scott was the author of <u>Waverley</u>."

It would *not* be appropriate to say "Scott is the author of <u>Waverley</u>", in the sense that it would not convey any information, in the following case:

I *don't* know Scott and...

That is: before the sentence means anything to me, I must know who is being referred to when you say "Scott". Were he alive, you could perhaps point him out to me at a literary cocktail party; as it is, you will have to say something like: "Don't you know Scott? He's a British poet and novelist who lived between 1771 and 1832." Then, if you like, you can tell me that he wrote <u>Waverley</u>. Otherwise your sentence, for me, is very much like your saying "This is a vase" when I am blindfolded.

This point of view also serves to illuminate what sort of connection exists between the proper name and the person named. Searle puts the problem so:

> ...as a proper name does not in general specify any character-
> istics of the object referred to, how then does it bring the
> reference off? How is the connection between name and object
> ever set up?[68]

If the proper name "Scott" has only a functional use in English, and therefore cannot be used to talk about something, how is it that I can talk about Scott with the name "Scott"? And can I in fact refer to him?

According to what I have said about referring, it is not possible to refer to Scott. If I say: "I like that blue shirt best", then I am talking about shirts and am referring to one in particular. I cannot likewise say, when I am talking about Scott, that I am talking about *Scotts*, and one in particular. What do I mean, then, when I say I can talk about

Scott?

Well, I can say that he wrote Waverley, certainly; also that he
was extraordinarily prolific, and that one of his more famous books is
Ivanhoe... In short, I can say what I know of him. So isn't my saying
that I can talk about Scott equivalent to saying that I have a certain
number of facts at my disposal about a certain man? The name "Scott"
acts as a *cue*, or, so to speak, *establishes a context*: I know we are
talking about the man who wrote Waverley, etc. when you say "Scott".
If I don't know Scott - if the name doesn't *mean anything* to me - I know
nothing about him, and therefore the name is a cue to nothing.

The relation in question is therefore not between name and object,
but between name and what I know of the object. That this is true is
shown by the fact that names change. For instance, the name "Mary Rowan"
may mean nothing to me until I discover that the person in question is
the same as the Mary Smith I have known since boyhood. Now that I know
that Mary has gotten herself married, the name "Mary Rowan" will operate
as a cue for me if I hear it in conversation.

It would be difficult, if not impossible, to set up a relationship
between the name and the person named. This would involve, ultimately,
knowing all the essential characteristics of the person in question, and
knowing that they *were* essential characteristics. The person would have
to be defined: Aristotle would have to be the Greek philosopher, pupil
of Plato, who wrote the Physics, Metaphysics, and so forth, called the
"peripatetic" philosopher, etc. His name would relate to just these
facts, and not, for instance, to, say, the fact that he had scallops with
a friend to celebrate his 52nd birthday. But I can talk about Aristotle

if I *only* happen to know that he is a philosopher. The name "Aristotle" in this case would act as a cue that we were talking about philosophers. The name "Aristotle" would relate simply to what I knew of the man, not to the man himself.

## Language Settings

So far, I have been talking about concepts as merely reflecting the fact that we can identify something we are talking about consistently as one thing rather than as something else. I have tried not to specify in any sense what this *thing* is we are talking about. I will now try to answer the question "What is the relationship between words and things?"

I would like to say that insofar as language may be regarded as systematic, so may our *use* of it. As I have described our use of words in terms of concepts, I would like to describe our overall ability to use language in terms of a conceptual network. In fact, such a network is more or less entailed by what I have said above about the necessary interconnectedness of words and the impossibility of learning words in isolation.

There is a very strong connection between our conceptual network and our experience: the former conditions the latter. That is: the world we experience, insofar as it has *meaning* for us, is delimited by our language. When I say that the world has meaning for us, I mean insofar as we know it, insofar as we *can talk about it*.

Consider: if I look around the desk at which I am working, I see many familiar things: paper, coffee, pens, books, and so forth. And the point is that I see these things *as* paper, coffee, pens and books; I

don't wonder, and indeed *cannot* wonder what they are. Furthermore, when I look at that particular green-covered book, I no longer see it as a book but (having seen the title) *as* Quine's Word and Object.

What if now I turn out the lights and grope about on the desk for something. I find something which I can tell is small and cylindrical, but beyond that I don't know what it is: I can't talk about *it* - I don't know what it is, or, as I should now say, it isn't meaningful to me. Now I turn the lights back on and say: "Oh, it's the liquid paper." Before, it was just *something* small, cylindrical, and unrecognizable; now that I can see as well as feel it, it *is* the liquid paper.

But suppose it had been something I'd never seen before (as, for instance, the paper, coffee, pens and books would be to a troglodyte); I could describe the object in terms of things I was familiar with - its colour, shape and feel - but I wouldn't know what it was, or be able to talk about it: it would be meaningless to me, not be part of the world for me.

Now, if someone should come into the room and say: "Oh, I got you one of those; have you solved it yet?" and then apprised me of the fact that the unknown object was a diabolical puzzle invented by some fellow called Rubic, the 'thing' would begin to *make sense* to me. And then, if I were to see somebody intently twiddling a multi-coloured cube on the bus, I should identify the object of his attention *as* a Rubic's Cube - I should see it as such. Another way of arguing the same point is to say that when I look at something, e.g., a book, it is impossible to see it as something else, e.g., a table.

I would be a mistake to think that if a thing had no name, or if I

didn't know its name, that it would be meaningless to me. There are many

things which I am not even concerned to name: the lever which reverses

the direction of the ribbon on my typewriter, the small bits of fluff

on my sweater, the parts of the floor where the urethane has worn off,

and so forth. I am content to call these things "levers", "fluff" and

"bare spots", and not be more specific about them. But I know what the

lever on the typewriter does - it has meaning for me - whereas someone

unfamiliar with typewriters might think of it as perhaps a lever, perhaps

a button, or ornament. They would try to classify it in terms of what

they knew, but would no know what it was, would not see it, as I do, as

that particular lever.

Russell, in An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth, argues against the type

of view I am trying to put forward.

> It is surely obvious that every perceptive experience, if I
> choose to notice it, affords me either new knowledge which I
> could not previously have inferred, or, at least, as in the
> case of eclipses, greater certainty than I could have previous-
> ly obtained by means of inference. To this the instrumentalist
> replies that any statement of the new knowledge obtained
> from perception is always an interpretation based upon accept-
> ed theories, and may need subsequent correction if these theories
> turn out to be unsuitable. If I say, for example, "Look,
> there is an eclipse of the moon", I use my knowledge of astron-
> omy to interpret what I see. No words exist, according to
> the instrumentalist, which do not embody theories or hypotheses,
> and the crude fact of perception is therefore for ever ineffable.
>
> ...That there must be a pure datum is, I think, a logically
> irrefutable consequence of the fact that perception gives rise
> to new knowledge.[69]

I do not want to argue specifically with what Russell is saying here;

his ideas are based upon his notion of how it is possible (and for him

necessary) for words to be learnt by ostensive definition, against which

I have already argued. I introduce this passage here because of the

type of equivalence Russell sets up between perception and knowledge.

I do not mean to say that we don't experience things which, as I have said, have *no meaning* for us - that our language is a condition of the very possibility of experience. On the contrary, I am aware of much more than just those things which have meaning for me. "It is difficult to hear the common words of our native tongue without understanding them."[70] I would have said well-nigh impossible, unless one has in mind the game of repeating a word over and over until it seems either comical or senseless. On the other hand, don't we say that a musician *hears more*, or that a painter *sees more*, than people who have not studied music or painting? It is possible, for instance, for a musician listening to a piece of music to give a running commentary on it. "This is the subject: it's in the soprano. Now it's modulating to the dominant; now the tenor has taken up the subject, and the soprano is doing the countersubject. Those motifs will reoccur in..." Clearly, the musician hears more; what he hears *means* more to him than it does to the non-initiate. He can look at a bunch of staves and quavers and 'read' the music. Furthermore, just as it is impossible (as I think) to hear the common words of our language without understanding them, it is impossible for a musician to hear music without analysing it. And the more adept he is, the less he analyses, and the more he hears just those notes which are played *as* just those notes which are played.

The point is that although we do experience things that are meaningless to us, in order to be able to *talk about them at all*, they must become meaningful for us. In the same way as a new word must be defined for us in terms of words we already know, a new object must be fitted,

as it were, into the objects I am already familiar with.  Unless I fit

an unknown 'something' into what I already know - what I have called

the network of concepts - it cannot become *some thing* which I can iden-

tify and talk about.

If I wish to be able to go from merely being able to say: "Look

at that star", to "No, actually that's Venus, one of the planets" I

must learn something of astronomy.  "It is a mistake to talk of 'stub-

born irreducible facts.'  New theories not only say the appearances;

they change them, and even create new ones."[71]  If I see a star and

you see Venus, we are quite literally not seeing the same thing: you

are seeing the light in the sky *as* Venus; I am seeing only a light in

the sky.

But how is it that we are not seeing the *same thing*?  Aren't we

both pointing at the same thing?  This question is based upon the assump-

tion that there is a 'raw' world which is not in any sense defined by a

particular language, and which we can experience.  But such a world would

be *meaningless* to us: we could not talk about it at all.  And the mom-

ent we begin to talk about it, we are seeing it in a particular way - as

it were, through our language.

So the moment we want to say that we are pointing at the 'same'

object in the sky, we have to stop talking, because we can't elucidate

what we mean by the word "same".  It could only be the same object if

we could get beyond language to the thing itself.

Whether or not there is a world of raw data becomes unimportant,

inasmuch as we can't talk about it.  When we point at Venus, we are only

pointing at the same thing if we are both pointing at *Venus*, if we see

·it in the same way.

It might be objected that such a notion as this seems to render communication impossible. If what you refer to as Venus is just a star for me, if that book on the shelf is just a book to me, but to you it's Waverley by some fellow called Scott, in short, if my concept of something differs from yours, how can we talk at all?

Well, we all grow up in similar environments, live in the same culture, share a common language. (All of this taken together may be thought of as a language setting.) In general, our concepts are culturally defined and not private to ourselves. For I can say: "Waverley is a book written by a British author about 175 years ago", and in so doing fit Waverley into what you already know, if you've never heard of the book.

On the other hand, it must be realized that communication often *is* difficult. While I think it is true that people who speak the same language and live in the same culture share common concepts, or operate within the framework of the same conceptual network, it is also true that they each have their own interests, hobbies, occupations, and so forth - not to mention that what we loosely call the same 'culture' is really not more than a hodge-podge of related cultures - so that what two people mean by the same word may be very different. I cannot, for instance greet the suggestion "Let's go fishing!" with anything but a qualified enthusiasm, for the word "fishing" means no more to me than the attempt to drag cold scaly things from a body of water one would much rather look at than be on - and for the most part not succeeding. For someone else, "fishing" might mean sinkers and flies and whatnot.

In the above paragraph, I might have said the word "fishing" *connotes*

this and that, rather than means this and that. This did not seem advisable because of the various connotations the word "connotes" has for a theory of meaning. It would be natural enough to say that the word "fishing" has a different set of 'connotations' for different people; but I think it is clear that the word as it is used here is very different from the word as it is used in the denotation-connotation distinction. I should not like to say that either my dislike of fishing or someone else's enthusiasm for the sport had anything to do with the meaning of the term. Indeed, we both have to know what the word means before we can develop any sort of attitude towards the activity. Yet it remains true that I will inevitably use the word "fishing" pejoratively, whereas others will not, making communication less than straightforward.[72]

In general, to say that a given word means something different to two different people is just to say that it has more than one use, or plays more than one part, in a language. To some people, for instance, the word "collate" means "put the pages in order"; the phrase "collate the information" would strike them as strange.

Finally, to the question: "What is the relation between words and things?" The answer to this is just: "The question lacks sense." *Things* are the creation of language; and the question tacitly assumes that it is possible to get beyond language to the objects themselves - but these cannot be thought of or talked about until they have been classified in terms of what is already known, until they have a place in a system, until they are made part of a language. The relation is not between words and things at all, but between language and the world. Just as words have meaning by virtue of being part of a language, and the meaning which they

have is the part they have in a language, so things are what they are
by virtue of occupying a particular place in the world, and that world
is, insofar as it is meaningful, or can be talked about, delineated by
language.

Similarly, "Why do we call many things by the same name?" is a
loaded question. It is equivalent to asking how it is we can identify
a group of things as specimens of one type of thing. The only answer
to this is to say that in a particular language setting, they are all
so identified.

If the above is correct, then it is easy to explain why, e.g., we
feel 'culture shock' on going to a foreign country, why it is so difficult
to conceptualize historical periods other than our own, why translation
creates problems,[73] and so forth. Different language settings produce
different orderings of the world, different ways of looking at things -
literally, different things. What is difficult about the above-mentioned
is that we are forced to try to see the world through an unaccustomed
language, one other than our own. But once it is seen that there are not
just *naturally* divided classes of things, and that words are not tied
to things in some mysterious way, we cease to expect that other language
settings will have divided up the world just as we have.

One question remains: how far can we step out of our language setting;
how 'objective' can we be? I would say that insofar as we can learn other
languages and visit other places, that to a certain extent the blinkers
imposed by one's own language can be removed. But as we must always see
the world through a particular conceptual network, it does not seem pos-
sible to achieve the objectivity that, for instance, structuralism would

require, i.e., the ability to step completely 'outside' language and
talk objectively about what all languages did, or had in common.  This
would be tantamount to our metalanguage guaranteeing its own objectivity. .
But we can, as it were, appreciate the particular flavour of a given
historical period or piece of foreign literature.  And we can also, I
think, separate the way we look at the world given our language setting
from the various impositions of our collective cultural imagination.
That is: I can say that things like chairs, tables, and games, are qual-
itatively different from things like heroes, villains, and so forth.  I
can distinguish between the purely imaginative qualities foisted upon
the world by ideologies and the like, and those aspects of the experience-
able world that are traceable solely to language.  But further than that
I cannot go.

"Have you lost the girl you love?"

"That's what I'm trying to figure out. I can't make up my mind. It all depends what construction you place on the words 'I never want to see or speak to you again in this world or the next, you miserable fathead.'"

"Did she say that?"

"Among other things."

I saw that the time had come to soothe and encourage.

"I wouldn't let that worry me, Boko."

He seemed surprised.

"You wouldn't?"

"No. She didn't mean it."

"Didn't mean it?"

"Of course not."

"Just said it for something to say? Making conversation, as it were?"

P.G. Wodehouse, <u>Joy in the Morning</u>

Chapter IV

## SENTENCES AND MEANING

The meaning which a sentence may be said to have is of a fundament-
ally different nature from that which a word may be said to have - at
least, that is what I will be attempting to show in the following.  I
will also be arguing in more depth certain points previously mentioned:
that sentences do not come ready-made for the theoretician any more than
do words; that they are non-repeatable units; that a sentence's being
meaningful does not entail its being either true or false.  I shall even-
tually argue that the meaning of a sentence must be thought of in terms
of three things: the words the speaker uses, what he wants to say, and
when (and where) he says it.  However, because so much has recently been
written (e.g., by Searle, Alston, Austin, Grice, Strawson, to name a few)
about the idea of speech as an *act*, and because so much of this bears
directly on what I want to say about sentences, I am going to open this
chapter with a discussion of 'speech acts'.  I shall concentrate on what
Searle has to say on the subject.

"Talking is performing acts according to rules."[1]  All the elements
of speech act theory are to be found in this sentence.  The view that
speech is an act is argued for by saying that we cannot view speech as
a *natural* phenomenon, but "should regard it as having been produced by
a being with certain intentions."[2]  That we talk according to rules in-
troduces (in part) the notion of *convention*.  The acts involved in talk-
ing are: *utterance*, or the physical production of sounds, *propositional*,

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or what we refer to and what we predicate of it, *illocutionary*, what we are doing in saying what we are saying (i.e., questioning, reporting, etc.), and perlocutionary, or the "*effects* such acts have on the actions, thoughts, or beliefs, etc. of hearers."[3] The illocutionary act is "the minimal unit of linguistic communication",[4] that is: only sentences have *meaning*, and the meaning which they have is the illocutionary act performed in their utterance; furthermore, meaning is seen as intimately tied to communication. Finally, in performing an illocutionary act, one performs utterance and propositional acts.

The first thing to notice is that to call speech an act is somewhat odd in itself. I tend to think there is a large difference between saying something and doing something - between, for instance, saying I'm going to hit you and actually hitting you - between, so to speak, words and deeds. We would hesitate to call the vituperative belabouring of Socrates by Xanthippe an act of violence, whereas her heaving an urn at his head would count as such. It would be better from the outset to say that speech can be fruitfully viewed as *analogous* to action, rather than simply *being* an act.

Secondly, we would not generally term every form of behaviour "action". We might say: "He acted with great courage", or "His actions are scandalous"; the way we ordinarily use the term is to signify that so-and-so did something out of the ordinary and to some effect. We should not normally describe either walking or eating as an *act*. An even if we did wish to describe every type of movement a man did as an act, we would still be able to contrast his acting with his repose: we would contrast it with relaxing and sleeping, for instance. But speech is said to be an act -

everytime we way something, we are doing something. The question arises: an act as opposed to *what*? It is true that when we attempt to communicate we move our mouths, or shuffle our arms about with semaphore flags, or glide a pen across a page; it is true, but not very interesting. Just as saying that everything I do, with the exception of sleeping, is an act does not tell us much, saying that speech is an act, as opposed to not speaking, does not tell us much.

That some of speech can be fruitfully viewed as analogous to action is, I think, true; I do not, at this point, wish to question speech act theory except with regard to its purported scope. It is clear that promising can be seen as an act. If someone asks me: "Are you sure it's alright?", and I answer: "Yes, really, I promise", it seems to me that what I am doing is guaranteeing something, pointing out the fact that I *am* guaranteeing it, and in so doing (possibly) trying to set the person at ease. I am, as it were, saying "yes" all in caps.

But what if I had said: "What's that?", as I would if I had not heard the question? I don't think I'm doing anything here other than asking a question, asking for a repetition of what's been said. Whereas I can say that "to promise is effectively to guarantee something", I cannot say that "to question is effectively to..."[5] At any rate, I can question by merely saying "Hmm?" or even by just looking quizzical.

On the other hand, questioning may sometimes be a speech act. "I question your right to this land" would seem to involve an act. For instance I would say that in this case "to question is (more or less) to formally deny something." But this is quite different from the case above when my question was "What's that?"

The point I am trying to make here is that while sometimes what I say may be analysed in terms of what I am doing when I say it (and to understand fully what I say, must be), I think it is true that the great bulk of everyday speech consists in *just* saying things.

.The word "don't" can admittedly be used to plead, threaten, warn, advise, command, and so forth. But can't it, and isn't it usually, just "don't"? If someone should ask: "Shall I bother finishing this today?", and I say "No, don't", what speech act am I committing? I think that it is most likely that I am simply answering a question. It would be too strong to say that I was advising, or expressing an opinion, or what have you. The same sort of thing obtains when someone asks me the time. When I say: "It's 4:15", am I 'giving information'? No, I am just giving him the time. And if I say: "Here, I'll help you with that", I am not 'announcing my intention' to be helpful, I am just trying to be helpful.[6]

I think that it can be said generally that when we *intend* that our words have a particular effect, that we are doing something with words, i.e., committing a speech act, and not otherwise. Consider the following example: I am with a friend in a semi-formal situation, and I tell him he's got a spot on his tie. I might say this on purpose and for fun (or maliciously if he's not a particularly good friend) in order to embarrass him, or I might simply be telling him something I assumed he did not know. He might be embarrassed, or he might not be. Now, if I deliberately tried to embarrass him, I should say that I've committed a speech act. But if I didn't mean to embarrass him, and yet he *was* embarrassed, wouldn't I say something like: "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to embarrass you"? I would say it was *not my intention* to embarrass him.[7]

It is precisely with the notion of intention that I think speech act theory is weakest. We use the word "intend" in two distinct ways, as is shown by the following groups of sentences.

1. He intended to say 'x' - 'y' just came out. (Spooner is reported once to have said: "Which of us has not felt in his heart a half-warmed fish?"[8] He *intended* to say, one would imagine "half-formed wish"; the other just came out.)

2. He intended that you take him metaphorically, not literally. (I might say to a child: "You don't understand; I don't mean there's a pole at the North Pole.")

3. He intended to say 'x' - but he didn't make himself very clear. (We might say this of someone who is having difficulty expressing himself when we are trying to get at what he means.)
In none of the above sentences would we use the word "intend" to mean that there was something deliberate about what the speaker did when he spoke. He did not consciously *intend* anything. It should be noted with reference to the third sentence above that if what someone says is perfectly clear (e.g., "I'm going to the store"), it would make no sense to ask what it was he intended to say.

The following sentences are different from the above in that we do ascribe some sort of deliberateness to the speaker.

1. He intended to tell you, but he forgot. (It is assumed that for the purposes of this example, the person at some point was requested to   tell you something, or made a mental note to tell you something, etc.)

2. He intends to encourage you in every way possible.
In these sentences, we are indicating that someone is doing something for

a reason, doing something on purpose; in the first set, we are more or less just saying that whatever was said was not complete gibberish.

I think Searle confuses these two uses. When he says that we must regard speech as having been produced by a being with intentions, he is using the word in the way I used "intend" in the first group above. On the other hand, when he says:

> In the performance of an illocutionary act the speaker intends to produce a certain effect by means of getting the hearer to recognize his intention to produce that effect, and further-more, if he is using words literally, he intends this recognition to be achieved in virtue of the fact that the rules for using the expressions he utters associate the expressions with the production of that effect,[9]

he is using the word in the second sense. It is one thing to say that something has a purpose - to give the final cause of something - and quite another to say that something is done *with* a purpose - to give its efficient cause.

That Searle wants to ascribe deliberateness of some sort to all communication by speech is, I think, clear from the foregoing quote. I don't know how I could hope to get a hearer to recognize my intentions if I were not aware of them myself. But if this is the case, i.e., that Searle wishes to claim that whenever I say something, that I also *intend* something, then I find it difficult to understand him. I certain-ly do say some things with a purpose in mind, but I think that in the vast majority of cases, when I say something, I am not deliberately trying to get someone to recognize that I am deliberately trying to do something. If it were the case that I always intended something when I said something, how could I distinguish between, say, intending to en-

courage someone, and merely encouraging him.

A final point about intention that may crystallize what I have been trying to argue thus far: it might loosely be said that when I meet someone and say "hello", that it is my intention to greet him by so saying. However, this is quite different from my actually intending to greet someone. In the first case, we are endeavouring to explain what it is I am doing, and in the second we are talking about my going out of my way to greet someone, perhaps throwing a party, or what have you. The point is that it is a mistake to take the word "intention", which in most cases is part of our *explanation* of what we are doing, and apply it to the speaker, i.e., that which we are trying to explain.

Perhaps the best way of throwing speech act theory into perspective is by asking what problems it is attempting to solve. Austin says:

> It was for too long the assumption of philosophers that the business of a 'statement' can only be to 'describe' some state of affairs, or to 'state some fact', which it must do either truly or falsely.[10]

It seems obvious that Russell was wrong in supposing sentences to be of three sorts: true, false, or nonsensical.[11] There are sentences which are meaningful yet cannot properly be said to have a truth-value. Austin's preliminary examples of what he called "performative" sentences are cases in point: "I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*" and "I bet you sixpence it will rain tomorrow".[12] It is difficult to see how either of these sentences could be construed as being either true or false.[13]

Austin claims that the reason such sentences are meaningful at the same time as not having a truth-value is that they are, in effect, 'acts'. A performative utterance is one in which I perform an act, in which I

*do* something. Performative utterances are contrasted with constative ones in which I simply *say* something.[14] The latter group can be said to have truth-value, the former cannot - acts are neither true nor false.

Someone wishing to hold on to the idea that sentences must be either true, false, or nonsensical might object as follows: "The vast majority of the sentences mentioned may be dealt with by extending the idea of propositional attitude. While it is true that the sentence "I think it will rain" is neither true not false, containing as it does the expressed attitude of the speaker, *what it is that is thought*, i.e., the proposition "It will rain" has truth-value. No doubt words like "warn", "remark", "comment", "request", and the like can be handled in similar fashion." That is: he would try to fit speech act theory into a category already existing in his denotational and correspondence theories of meaning and truth.

On the other hand, speech act theorists push in the opposite direction - they wish to say that all sentences are performative. Austin feels that "the formula 'I state that...' is closely similar to the formula 'I warn you that...'",[15] and Searle, in his "What is a Speech Act?", includes the word "state" at the beginning of the list he gives of verbs "associated with illocutionary acts."[16] The difficulty with this is with the notion of truth. If the performative-constative distinction was originally set up, amongst other reasons, in order to show how sentences could be meaningful without having a truth-value, and all sentences are said to be performative in some sense, does that mean that no sentences are to be considered in terms of truth-value?

This is not, of course, the conclusion reached by either Austin or

Searle. But it is noteworthy that neither pays "truth" more than scant attention. Searle mentions it in passing:

> ...we characteristically use the word "true" only when a proposition is already under consideration, and because a proposition is characteristically put under consideration by the performance of some such illocutionary act as asserting, stating, or hypothesizing--because of these two facts--calling something true will place us in a certain relation to that initial illocutionary act (a relation, for example, of agreement or endorsement and conversely in the case of "not true" a relation of disagreement).[17]

Such a statement is likely to elicit from a correspondence theory of truth advocate a like response: "Surely the reason the sentence 'The sky is blue' is true is that the sky *is* blue; it is not a question of whether or not we *agree* with this. If agreement comes into it at all, we agree *because* the sky is blue." The relative merits of the 'agreement' theory of truth as opposed to the correspondence theory is not at issue here. Nevertheless, for speech act theory to be coherent it must be able to explain how some sentences are true while others are false, and it must do so in more detail than is to be found in either Austin or Searle.

I propose to bypass discussion of these two theories of truth by discussing *how* it can be determined whether or not a sentence has truth-value, rather than *why* it does. To determine whether or not a sentence can be regarded as either true or false, I suggest looking at the standard use of the operative words in the sentence. Is the speaker stating, describing, explaining, questioning (say, questioning a statement or explanation or description), doing something with words, or what have you? Looking at the standard uses of the words in question also helps to show the relationship between those more traditional rivals, the correspondence

and coherence theories of truth.

Consider the following sentences:

1. Smith came to dinner yesterday.

2. Smith's face is red.

3. Smith is ugly.

4. Smith's ego is rather oversized.

5. I bet Smith will be late.

In the first sentence, I am merely saying of someone that he did something, and specifying when. If in fact it was not Smith but Jones who came to dinner, and I wanted to conceal this fact, my saying that Smith came to dinner would be a lie: I would be asking you to accept a false sentence as a true one. Clearly the sentence has truth-value.

In the second sentence, I am describing Smith's face. In that the word "red" is neither evaluative (as is "boring" in "The story is boring") nor explanatory (as is "well-constructed" in "The story is well-constructed"), I would say that this sentence too has truth-value. On the other hand, things are not as clear cut as they were in the first example. We have to look to normal light conditions, the extent to which faces are normally red, and so forth, before being able to determine whether or not the sentence is true.

It is extremely important to note that these sentences above only have truth-value when the structure of the English language is taken into account (by "structure" I mean the language as system, i.e., the words of the language and their relationship to one another, as discussed last chapter). In a language used by a people who did not regularly eat in the evenings, or who divided the colour spectrum up differently

from the way we do, these sentences would be meaningless.

In the third sentence "Smith is ugly", I am making a value judg-ment; I am no longer merely stating a fact or describing something. If pressed to say what I meant, I might go on to describe his face as being red, his ears as too large, his eyes as bulging, etc., and say that I found this combination of features to be ugly. But to say something is ugly is to do more than describe it. It is to say what I *think* about it. The way is open for others to disagree. As my opinion of something can-not be said to have truth value, neither can the third sentence. The word "ugly" is standardly used to evaluate.

In the fourth sentence, I use the word "ego". This being a theor-etical term used to explain the behaviour of individuals, I cannot say that my sentence "Smith's ego is rather oversized" has truth value either. Egos are not observable items - when I use the word I am standardly explaining some bit of psychological behaviour, I am not describing any-thing. The question is not whether the sentence is true, but whether the explanation is a good one. And the answer to this will depend upon the coherence of a particular psychological theory and upon its ability to explain human behaviour.

In the fifth sentence, I am doing something rather than just saying something. The example (depending as it does on the word "bet") is essen-tially Austin's, from the first chapter of How to Do Things with Words, so I need not go into an explanation of why the sentence constitutes a speech act. It cannot be said to have truth-value.

The notion of standard use, as well as clarifying the relationship between truth and meaning, also serves to put in perspective the dilemma

introduced by Quine in his "Two Dogmas of Empiricism". Quine there contends that there are no sentences "immune to revision" - by which he means that there are no sentences of whose truth we can be absolutely certain. He says that any sentence's truth is dependent upon the truth of other sentences; its truth is determined by the measure in which it coheres to a system of already existing true sentences. He also claims - and these two claims are clearly related - that there is no sharp and firm distinction between analytic and synthetic sentences. Both the empiricist claim that there are sentences immune to revision and that there are analytic sentences (different ways of putting the same thing) rest, Quine says, upon the assumption that "the truth of a statement is somehow analyzable into a linguistic component and a factual component."[18]

One of the conclusions of the preceding chapter was that such a 'factual component' as Quine has in mind must be said to be determined by language. With this said, it is possible to re-evaluate what Quine refers to as empiricism's "two dogmas".

Are there sentences which are immune to revision? The answer to this must be a qualified yes. Insofar as (1) the language of the speaker determines the world which is meaningful to him, or that he can talk about, and (2) something is meaningful, it must be meaningful in terms of what the speaker already knows, it is clear that there must be *some* sentences which are immune to revision, given the language of the speaker. Language evolves and people's view of the world changes; but to suppose that every sentence spoken could at one and the same time be false is to suppose that the world could be completely meaningless to us. Some sentences

are immune to revision; *which* is quite another story.

If a sentence is taken to be what a speaker says at a given time, and not a repeatable unit,[19] then one ceases to worry about *the* sentence 'x' being true now and possibly false at some later date. Nevertheless, it is always possible to say that a certain speaker said 'x' at a certain time, and took it to be true, and that what he said is no longer taken to be true. Which sorts of sentences would be most unlikely to succumb to this fate? I think, generally speaking, it would be those sentences in which we are either naming or describing something, expecially if we are talking about the most common objects of experience. On the other hand, I don't think it is possible to say unequivocally that a particular sentence 'x' is immune to revision. Revolutions in the sciences do change not only our way of looking at even these objects, but, as has been suggested above, the objects themselves.[20] J.H. Plumb, talking about the agrarian revolution in England in the 18th century, when in 85 years the average weight of sheep increased from 38 to 80 lbs., says:

> Robert Blakewell of Leicestershire...pioneered the way in improved breeding of sheep and cattle. He changed English sheep, from the resemblance of a cross between a dog and a goat, to the plump, fleece-covered animal we know today... With the new soil techniques it became possible to grow wheat almost anywhere in England and everyone, including the poor, ate white wheaten bread.[21]

Someone *describing* the English sheep of the early 18th Century would not come anywhere close to accurately describing those of present day New Zealand.

The sentences which are most open to revision at a later date are those in which we attempt to explain something. I am thinking of the

types of claims one is likely to find in ideologies, religions, sciences, psychology, and of course philosophy. What is noteworthy is that we do not say that a given explanation has been shown to be false, but generally speaking that a new explanation can account better, or more completely, or in a simpler fashion, for the facts than the old one.

Quine's use of the word "revision" is handy in that it can be used to cover both the case where I name and describe something, and that where I try to explain something; however, and also because of this, it tends to muddy matters a little. When I am naming or describing something (that is: where what I say can be said to have truth-value), what I say is seldom open to revision - if what I say is true, it will not likely be shown false at a later date. If I say: "Fido is a dog", I am quite sure that Fido will not later on turn out to have been a cat, or that dogs and cats will be seen to be members of the same species. On the other hand, the psychological theory that purported to account for man's behaviour in terms of deadly sins and cardinal virtues is not nearly so respectable as it once was. Consider the sentence: "He was motivated by Greed", a sentence which I do not consider to have truth-value. The value of such an explanation is dependent upon the acceptance of a given theory; if, for some reason, we feel that the observable facts are not adequately accounted for by this theory, then the sentence "He was motivated by Greed" will not count as a *viable* explanation. If someone, while admitting that theory in question was not a good one, persisted in arguing that someone or other was in fact motivated by Greed, I should not say that his sentence was false, but that it was meaningless.

So when Quine talks about sentences being immune to revision, he is

talking about at least two things: first, whether we can ever be
certain when we name or describe something that what we have said will
always remain true; and secondly, whether or not explanations of why
things happen as they do will always remain viable. In empiricist
terms: whether on the one hand, the facts will always correspond to what
we have said, and on the other, whether our explanation will always be
coherent.

I think this argument goes some way towards elucidating the dif-
ferences between the correspondence and coherence theories of truth.
While I do not wish to say that explanatory sentences have truth-value,
yet I think our acceptance of them must be determined by our acceptance
of the theory on which they are based, or of which they are a part.
They must cohere. On the other hand, when I name or describe something,
the truth of what I say depends upon whether or not the facts (as deter-
mined by my language, i.e., the objects and relations described) cor-
respond, in some sense, to what I say.

The discussion above relates only to what may be termed "synthetic"
sentences; analytic sentences, if such things exist, are immune to re-
vision quite simply because they are not about the world - they are not
to be verified with reference to the world - and there is therefore no
means open to us which would permit of a revision. But the question as
to whether or not analytic sentences exist is not really important: the
real question is whether the analytic-synthetic distinction is in any
way valuable.

I don't find it particularly so: first, the distinction is essen-
tially meant to indicate the different ways in which we must arrive at

ascertaining a given sentence's truth or falsity. If it is not the

case that all meaningful sentences are either true of false, then it

seems pointless, whether true or not, to say that all sentences are

either analytic or synthetic. Secondly, a sentence may only be termed

"analytic" in a given language setting. The sentence "God is omnipot-

ent", while analytic for a Christian is not so for a pantheist. Third-

ly, and most importantly, it is difficult both to see exactly which sen-

tences should be termed "analytic", and the sense in which they may be

termed "true".

Is the sentence: "A bachelor is an unmarried man" analytic? The

first response to this, as I suggested above,[22] should be: "Analytic

for whom?" If the word "bachelor" is not known to the speaker, then the

sentence cannot be analytically true for him. For the sake of the argu-

ment, I will assume that the speaker has adequate competence in English

and knows what the word "bachelor" means. If this is the case, then

I would say that the sentence *is* analytically true for him. It is so

merely because he knows that it would make no sense to search the

world for a married bachelor.

It is analytic for him because the word "bachelor" and the phrase

"unmarried man" stand in the same relation to the rest of his language.

It is not a question[23] of whether the two terms are "interchangeable

*salva veritate*" - that wherever one was used, the other could be sub-

stituted for it with no change in the truth-value of the sentence - this

would imply that a word's meaning could be thought of extensionally and

that the sentence had empirical content. We are not referring to the

set of all possible bachelors in this sentence. I would say that we are

talking *generally*, about bachelors, but it could be argued that all
we are doing is describing the use of the word "bachelor", i.e., giving
a rule of language.

Neither is it a question of bachelors being "by definition" un-
married men. Such an explanation, as Quine says, presupposes a prior
relation of synonomy between the two terms. On the other hand, I don't
think it is necessary to provide the "sufficient condition of cognitive
synonomy" which Quine seems to require in order to call the sentence
"A bachelor is an unmarried man" analytic.[24] One might as well try to
answer the question as to why a thing is what it is and not another
thing. It is impossible to explain *why* "bachelor" and "unmarried man"
stand in the same relation to the rest of the words in the English
language - but anyone who knows the language competently also knows
that they do stand in the same relation.

As I said above, it is rather with regard to which sentences can
be properly termed analytic and in what sense they may be called true
that I think there is a problem. The following sentences illustrate
the first point:

    1. "Bachelor" means "unmarried man".

    2. It might rain.

    3. An unmarried man is an unmarried man.

Is the first sentence analytic or synthetic? Whereas it is not just
contingently true that bachelors are unmarried men, it is contingently
true that "bachelor" *means* "unmarried man". It would make sense to
consult a dictionary if unsure as to the meaning of the word "bachelor".
But surely it is silly to say that of two ways in which we say basically

.the same thing, one is analytic and one synthetic?

On one reading,[25] the second sentence could be construed as analytic. We could be said to be allowing both for the possibilities or rain and clemency - and this being all the possibilities there are, our sentence appears to be logically true. This is perhaps a petty jab at analyticity, but it does show the difficulties involved in attempting a mathematically precise classification of sentences into analytic and synthetic ones.

The last sentence is sort of a prototype of analyticity. A great part of Quine's argument in "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" consists in trying to show that "A bachelor is an unmarried man" is not equivalent to this "logically true" sentence.[26] If relations of cognitive synonomy existed between "bachelor" and "unmarried man", then the one term could be substituted for the other, and hence the latter could be thought of as being as logically true as the former.

But it is hard to see how a sentence such as "An unmarried man is an unmarried man" has any sense at all. Can we, for instance, say that it would make no sense to search the world for an unmarried man who is married? In the sentence initially under consideration, I could quite conceivably know what it was both to be a man and to be unmarried, but not know what a bachelor was. But how could I know what it is to be married without knowing what it is to be married? So here it is not our endeavour which lacks sense - that of searching the world - but our question itself. Not only does the sentence "An unmarried man is an unmarried man" not tell me anything, it *cannot* tell me anything. And if it is argued that analytic sentences are not about the world but about

our use of language, then in this latter sentence I have failed to
say anything about our use of language, and have literally said nothing.[27]

Finally, the conditions under which I would actually say "A bach-
elor is an unmarried man" are quite limited. The only situation, out-
side a philosophical context, when I would say this would be when asked
by someone who was unfamiliar with the word "bachelor" for its meaning.
I think I can say that my sentence is very like saying: "I standardly
use the word 'bachelor' in the same way as I use the phrase 'unmarried
man'."

Although I have ignored in the preceding the type of analytic sen-
tence typified by "All bodies are extended", I think enough has been
said to demonstrate the weaknesses inherent in the notion that all
sentences are either analytic or synthetic, and to show that the idea
of standard use is capable of illuminating a variety of philosophical
problems. I will now go on to a discussion of sentences *per se*.

As I mentioned above, I consider sentences to be non-repeatable
units of speech - unlike words, which are used over and over again.
As Ryle has put it: I am their author, not their employer.[28] This is
not to say that people don't often say the same things: we repeat our-
selves, often to the extent that we use the same words; certain forms of
activity are so codified (i.e., greeting someone), or lend themselves
so easily to stereo-typed language (e.g., sports commentating), that we
often hear the 'same' sentence over and over again; people develop char-
acteristic mannerisms (this being, for instance, one of Dickens's fav-
orite and most successful character-building devices); and so forth.
While it would be interesting to study the extent to which speech is

stereo-typed, the purpose here is simply to argue that stereo-typed modes of expression ought not to be confused with the repetition of sentences, as though sentences were things that could be repeated. Think of the absurdity of trying to make a dictionary of sentences.

It is the phrase "*the* sentence" which misleads. But the word "sentence" is, in the terminology I have been employing, no less theoretical than the word "word". Most people do not speak in what the grammarian would recognize as sentences. The abundance of punctuation marks that exist to depict the different types of pauses we hear when a speaker speaks (". ", ", ", " - ", " ; ", " : ", the use of brackets, parentheses and footnotes, the extra spacing between paragraphs when 'we begin to talk about something quite new, and so forth), is a very meagre reflection of the number and types of pauses people generally use in everyday speech. Division between sentences is often an arbitrary thing; and although it is helpful to be able to talk about what someone said in this sentence as opposed to that sentence, we should not be misled into thinking that in so talking, we are talking about one token of a certain type of sentence, or one utterance or use of a given sentence, etc.

If sentences are non-repeatable units, then clearly we no longer have to worry about what sort of thing 'in' them is repeatable. That is: the notions "proposition", "statement", "type" can be eliminated from a discussion of sentence meaning.[29] We do not need anything to connect two different utterances of the same sentence, because the same sentence cannot be uttered twice. What then is sentence meaning?

First of all, is it appropriate to ask, as I did when I was talking

about words, both whether a given sentence has meaning and what that
meaning is which it has? Well, if a sentence is what a particular
person says at a given time about something, then there is no point,
in making such a distinction. If I say "My daughter is teething"
when I have no daughter, I am talking nonsense; if someone else, proper-
ly endowed with a daughter who is in fact teething, says the same thing,
he will have said something which is not only meaningful but true. If
a sentence can only be said once, the difficulty does not arise about
'its' being meaningless at one time and true at another. If a sentence
has meaning, there will also be something which it means.

When we ask the meaning of a given sentence 'x', I think what we
are doing is asking: "What did 'y' mean when he said 'x'?". We are
asking what a particular person is talking about. And, loosely, what we
want to know is what the words mean, or what context the words were spok-
en in, or whether the words 'go together' (whether or not there is a
category mistake - e.g., Russell's "Quadruplicity drinks procrastina-
tion"[30]), or whether what we understand by the sentence is what the
speaker *meant*. That is: sentence meaning would seem to be only a matter
of word-meaning, context of utterance, and *intention* of the speaker.

Since I have already argued against the notion of intention in
speakers of a language, I should go into the use to which I am putting
the word here. It is only appropriate to speak of the intention, of the
speaker when his meaning (what we *think* he wants to say) is different
from what we understand his sentence to mean (for brevity's sake I will
just call this sentence-meaning). When we say that so-and-so intended
to say 'x', we mean that he got his words wrong, or that his fluency is

not what it could be, or that his grammar is at fault. We do not say that he *intended* to say what we take him to *mean*. If someone uses a double negative, I do not say that he intended to say something grammatically correct, but didn't. In a very real sense, I *translate* what he says into what I think of as correct English[31] - I would say that he doesn't express himself well, but I wouldn't say that he intended to express himself in a given fashion and failed.

Again: if I understand someone completely, it is inappropriate to talk about what he intended to say.[32]

It is obvious that sentence-meaning has to do both with word-meaning and context of utterance. With reference to the first, the sentence: "I am going to the store" is markedly different from: "I am going to the country." This is so simply because countries are not stores. It is also fairly commonplace to assign context of utterance a role in the meaning of a sentence. But I think what has been said so far indicates that I am placing a greater importance on context than is usual.

If I say: "I am going to the store", I may either be referring to a particular store, or talking generally about going to a store. If I am going to a neighbourhood store, and there is only one, then I will have been referring to a particular store - and if you know that there is only one, you will know which store I am referring to. If I am referring to a particular neighbourhood store, but there are several each selling different sorts of things, you might ask: "What are you going to buy?" If we both know the stores in question, and I answer: "Milk", you might then say: "Oh, I had hoped you were going towards the tobacconist's, you could have picked me up some cigarettes."

Finally, if I am a vistor in a foreign city and say: "I'm going to the store", my host might very well ask what I wanted to buy and instruct me as to the nearest store dispensing whatever product it was I wanted: In all of these cases, the meaning of what I say is different. I may know what store I'm going to, and know that you know as well; or know what store I'm going to, but not specify it (knowing that you are familiar with all the available stores); or have no particular store in mind at all (since I don't know the particular stores, but simply that stores are the type of establishment where one can buy milk) and have you direct me to a store that I have never seen before.

Part of what I mean when I say that I'm going to the store, and the only neighbourhood store is Harper's, is that I'm going to Harper's. This can be seen by the fact that if you are familiar with Harper's, know that it is the only store I could be going to, and know that it doesn't sell truffles, then it would make no sense at all for you to say: "Could you pick me up some truffles?"

Similarly, if I am directed by my host to a particular store that I don't know, and I ask if there's anything that I can pick him up while I'm there, it would make perfect sense for him to say: "No, there's nothing I need from there." I might know, for instance, that he needs coffee, and not know that the store I was going to didn't sell it. He, on the other hand, is aware of this. The word "store" as we would both use it in "I'm going to the store" would mean different things to each of us, and our sentences would not mean the same thing.

Sentence-meaning seems to be a matter of word-meaning, context of utterance, and, in the way I have specified above, intention of the speaker.

But there is something wrong with this: what I really mean is that sentence-meaning can be analysed into these components. Is there nothing *else* which *is* sentence-meaning? I don't think there is. Once I know what the words mean, once I know what the context is, and if I feel that the words of the speaker express his intention (he is saying what he means), then I know what the sentence means. The meaning of the sentence, *what* it means, is transparent, or obvious. It seems that sentence-meaning is just the way we talk about the combination of elements we think are necessary to clarity of utterance.

Consider the following example: if a car doesn't work, we might say that it's out of gas, or that the battery's dead, or the engine is seized up, or what have you. We will attempt to fix one part of it so that the whole will go. But we would not attempt to fix 'the car' as though this were something over and above its component parts that could be attacked directly with a blowtorch. I think sentence-meaning is very like this. If what we say is unclear, we attempt to clarify it with reference to word-meaning, intention, context. We would not think that we could somehow just go to the root of the problem and examine the 'meaning of the sentence' in order to correct it. Sentence-meaning is not, I think, anything apart from its component parts; it is just a convenient way of talking about them all together.

Certainly in this brief argument there are many things concerning sentence meaning which remain unclear. But I think it can be said that the difference between word-meaning and sentence-meaning has at least been indicated. First, what is essential about word-meaning is that the word is part of a language; nothing analogous can be said of sen-

tences. And secondly, there is nothing which I can say *is* sentence-meaning; what I like to call sentence-meaning appears to be nothing other than a function of word-meaning, context, and intention.

## CONCLUSION

I hope by having undertaken this analysis of linguistic meaning to have been able to shed light on what we are saying when we ascribe meaning to "people, actions, events, or situations", and to have shown also what sorts of questions we are asking by:

1. Don't people's feelings mean anything to you?, and

2. Does life have meaning?

Consider that epitome of hardness, Paul Dombey Sr., and his relationship with his daughter Florence in Dickens's Dombey and Son. He was entirely bound up in business - the most important feature his son seemed to possess was that of being his future business partner. One might say of him that his list of priorities began and ended with his shipping concern - people's feelings were not an important consideration, he had no room for them. So if we were to ask Mr. Dombey whether or not people's feelings meant anything to him, we could be said to mean: "is there any relation between the way most people react to sadness on the part of another person and the way you react to things in general", or "is there any place in your emotional make-up for other people's feelings"? If we were to abandon philosophical rigour altogether, we might even ask him whether his world was such a cold and callous place as to exclude the possibility of tender emotion - whether compassion were within his repertoire of emotional reactions.

In other words: we would be regarding feelings of compassion and kindness as having a place in one's general emotional reaction to things, and

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wondering if they had such a place in Dombey's.

In asking whether or not life has meaning, it seems that one of the things that is being asked is whether or not there is some sort of universal and eternal system of whose logic we are ignorant, but of which we form a part, albeit perhaps a smallish one. We are trying to see our entire life placed in a much broader context.

In general, when we say that people, or places, or events, or what have you, have meaning, I think we are always supposing some sort of a system, whether it is a set of fond memories, or important dates, etc., and are seeing the things in question as having a place, or being a part of this system. They are important, or have meaning, by virtue of a relation to other things in the system.

I think the notion of system is the pivotal one. When I say: "Your face means nothing to me", couldn't we just as well, and don't we often, say: "I can't place you"? If someone says that respect means a lot to him, could we not take this as equivalent to: "Of all the things he wants, respect ranks pretty highly on the list"?

But this is a subject which cannot be adequately explored in a conclusion. I am only trying to suggest that the subject of meaning need not be confined to language, and that what can be said about linguistic meaning can have applications elsewhere.

The scope of this thesis has been quite broad, and so I cannot hope to have dealt completely with any of the subjects discussed. However, it is impossible to talk about meaning without at the same time discussing

related notions such as existence, truth and so forth, all of which bear relevantly on a theory of meaning. It seemed more important to attempt a general and cohesive theory than to concentrate minutely on any one topic; I trust the breadth was not at the expense of at least minimally sufficient detail.

## APPENDIX I

If logic is to be able to deal adequately with "some", i.e. per-
mit such intuitively valid inferences as "Some roses are not red" from
"Some roses are red" and disallow such intuitively invalid inferences
as "Some men are mortal, from the conjunction of "All men are mortal"
and "There is at least one man", it must, I think, change the manner in
which it deals with the word. What follows should not be taken as an
all-embracing theory of the word "some"; I have already given examples
of why I don't think there can be any such theory. It should be taken
only as a proposal for dealing with "some" in sentences like "Some men
are brave" so that our symbolic rendering of this does not have to be
$\exists x(x$ is a man $\cdot$ x is brave).

I would like to suggest that sentences like "Some men are brave" be
regarded as a species of *universal* statement, and also as ones which are
essentially *modal*. To this end, I am introducing the symbol "$\subset$", or in-
verted hook (I have called it this in order both to compare it with and
distinguish it from Russell's "hook" which I take to mean simply "im-
plies"); I take this symbol to have as an English equivalent: "might imply".[1]
Its truth table is as follows.

| P | Q | $P \subset Q$ |
|---|---|---|
| T | T | F |
| T | F | T |
| F | T | T |
| F | F | T |

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"Some men are brave" becomes, with the inverted hook:

$(x)(x$ is a man $\subset x$ is brave).

A number of points must be made. First I have introduced the modality into the sign "$\subset$" rather than into the consequent. I have not, in other words, said that if 'x' is a man, that 'x' *might* be brave. This is because the sentence (or open sentence) "x might be brave" is tautologically true. This can be seen from the fact that one can infer from it the sentence "either x is brave or x is not brave" - or better, one might be tempted to write a sentence so expressed *as* an instance of the Law of the Excluded Middle.

Naturally, when we say in English that such-and-such is possibly true (as in "It's possible that he did that"), our sentence should not be taken as a tautology; we are, as it were, only weighing the odds of such-and-such being true, and not committing ourselves one way or the other. However, it is important here to ward off as many absurdities as possible from the outset.

It will be thought odd, perhaps, that in the above truth-table I have made "$P \subset Q$" false when both P and Q are true. The justification for this is that I consider, for instance, that if the sentence "All men are mortal" is true, then it must be the case that "Some men are mortal" is false - "some" is therefore taken to mean "not all". I cannot, however, deal with "some" solely in terms of "not all" - that is: I cannot write "Some men are brave" as:

$\sim(x)(x$ is a man $\supset x$ is brave).

Not only would this be a rather convoluted way of dealing with the sentence, but also, very loosely speaking, when I say that some men are brave, I am

talking about - though I am not *referring to* - those men who are brave, whereas when I say that not all men are brave, I am talking about those who aren't.

To make matters clearer, I offer the following as a partial determination of the relation of the sign "⊂" to the sign "⊃".

$(x)(Fx \subset Gx) \supset \sim(x)(Fx \supset Gx)$; and

$(x)(y)[(Fx \subset Gx) \supset (Fy \cdot y \neq x \supset \sim Gy)]$.

It will be seen that with this notation the subject-term of the type of sentence under discussion can never refer to a unit class -, otherwise both the above statements would be false. I think this reflects what is intuitively true: whatever we predicate of a single individual or thing is either true or it's not: John is either brave or he's not, and can't be both brave and not brave. However, when we say that some men are brave, both "x is brave" and "x is not brave" may both be true provided that the bravery and lack of it are predicated of different individuals.

This method of dealing with sentences of this type also has the advantage over the more normal method of dealing with them (i.e., "There is at least one...") in that we are not implying the existence of anything which our term "some" either 'denotes' or 'refers to'. It does create certain difficulties in the business of doing derivations, however: it places certain restrictions on our ability to instantiate upon existentially quantified conjunctions for the simple reason that there are not nearly so many of these about to instantiate upon. This point I will discuss a little further on.

I should be pointed out that the sign "⊂" is not to be restricted

in application to only quantificational logic - all the theorems given

below are in the sentential calculus.  Consider the following:

If Mary goes to the store, she might buy some apples.

If you drive her, Mary will go to the store.

Therefore, if you drive her, Mary might buy some apples.

The ordinary sentential calculus can certainly deal with such an argument -

but only at the expense of  ignoring its inherent modality.  I would

give a symbolic representation of the argument as follows:

$$P \subset Q$$

$$R \supset P$$

$$\therefore R \subset Q.$$

I would like now to indicate some of the important relations "⊂"

has to "⊃", "·", and "∨", and to solve, in rough and ready fashion,

some of the more obvious problems immediately encountered by it intro-

duction.  I will begin by ensconcing it in the sentential calculus, and

then move on to discuss its place in quantificational logic.

The following arguments are tautologies:[3]

1. $\sim P \subset P$

2. $[(P \subset Q) \cdot Q] \supset \sim P$

3. $[(P \subset Q) \cdot P] \subset Q$

4. $[\sim(P \subset Q) \cdot \sim P] \supset \sim Q$

5. $(P \subset Q) \supset (P \supset \sim Q)$

6. $(P \supset Q) \supset (\sim Q \subset P)$

7. $(P \supset Q) \supset (P \subset \sim Q)$

8. $[(P \supset Q) \cdot P] \supset \sim(P \subset Q)$

9. $(P \subset Q) \vee (P \supset Q)$

10. $[(P \subset Q) \cdot (P \supset Q)] \supset \sim P$

11. $(P \cdot Q) \supset \sim(P \subset Q)$

12. $(P \cdot Q) \subset \sim(P \lor Q)$

13. $(P \cdot Q) \subset (P \subset Q)$

14. $(P \lor Q) \supset (\sim P \subset \sim Q)$

15. $(P \subset Q) \equiv (Q \subset P)$

16. $[\sim(P \subset Q) \cdot \sim P] \supset \sim Q$

17. $[(P \subset Q) \cdot (\sim Q \subset R)] \supset (P \supset \sim R)$

18. $(Q \subset R) \supset [(R \supset (Q \supset P)]$

19. $[(P \subset R) \cdot (Q \subset R)] \supset [(P \lor Q) \subset R]$

One point before proceeding. It may already have been noted that the truth-table for "$\subset$" is identical to that which Russell has called the "stroke function" or the truth-function of "incompatibility".[4] This is purely coincidental, I think. Furthermore, the use to which Russell puts the stroke function is a purely definitional one; it is the truth-function in terms of which the truth-functions of negation, disjunction, conjunction and implication are defined. On the other hand, the sign "$\subset$" was introduced to deal with some anomolies resulting from the normal treatment accorded "some" in quantificational logic. As well, it can be useful in dealing with certain types of modality in English sentences (for further discussion on modality, see Appendix II), enabling the sentential calculus to more accurately represent them symbolically.

Natural derivation cannot easily accommodate "$\subset$". This is because the relation of each line of a derivation to the next is a relation of implication. That is, in order to deal with a sentence like "$P \subset Q$", I would have to convert it into an equivalent sentence not con-

taining the truth function "⊂", that is, one containing one (or more) of the truth functions "⊃", "∨", or "·". This would be tiresome. In order to convenience derivations, the following methodological devices are suggested.

1. □, or box;

2. /, or stroke;

3. _, or line.

Rules for employment of these devices are as follows:

1. Box the antecedent of a conditional (whether "P ⊂ Q" or "P ⊃ Q") and place, on the line immediately under it, the underlined ("_") consequent.

2. If the conditional is of the type "P ⊂ Q", place a stroke to the left of the underlined consequent; otherwise don't.

It is clear that any sequence of boxes and lines terminating in an unstroked line will yield an implication relation between the term in any preceding box and the last underlined consequent, and that any sequence terminating in a stroked line will yield a "possible implication" - I don't know what else to call it - between any preceding boxed term and the stroked line. An example of a derivation using these devices is:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. [( P ⊃ Q ) · ( Q ⊂ R )]  ⊃  ( P ⊂ R ) | | TO BE SHOWN |
| 2. ( P ⊃ Q ) · ( Q ⊂ R ) | | ASSUMPTION |
| 3. ( P ⊂ R ) | | TO BE SHOWN |
| 4. P | | LINE 2 |
| 5. Q | | LINE 2, 4 |
| 6. Q | | LINE 2 |
| 7. / R | | LINE 2, 6 |
| 8. P ⊂ R | | LINE 4, 7; Q.E.D. |

It is often impossible to proceed once one has arrived at a stroked line; in this case it is necessary to find an equivalent to the sentence expressed in terms of "⊂" (i.e., one expressed in terms of one or more of "⊃", "·", or "∨".) One, for instance, is:

1. P

2./ Q

3. P ⊃ ~Q

where the third line is an inference justified by T5 (in the list of tautologies above).[5]

A problem with the inverted hook that I will not go into is that it is impossible, where the truth of an argument depends on the truth-function "⊂" to demonstrate validity by a *reductio ad absurdum* argument. The argument: $[(P \subset Q) \cdot (P \cdot \sim Q)] \supset P \cdot \sim P$, is *not* valid. I am not going into this because it does not create any problems in the examples I give.

If I *can* proceed by a *reductio ad absurdum* argument, then if both an unstroked and a stroked letter follow from the same boxed letter, I have reached a *reduction ad absurdum* (which can be seen from T2 or T5).[6]

Before proceeding to examine the inverted hook and its place in quantificational logic, I should mention that I will be using, in that section, an uncommon type of *reductio ad absurdum* argument; rather than showing of valid arguments that they are valid, this shows of invalid arguments that they are indeed invalid - it is like the *reductio* in reverse, as it were. For instance, when confronted with an argument such as: $[(P \supset Q) \cdot (Q \supset R)] \supset (P \supset \sim R)$, I:

1. Assume the entire antecedent of the argument;

2. Assume the antecedent of the consequent ("P", in this case);

3. Assume the *conclusion* ("~R" in this case);

4. Derive a contradiction.

Hence, by assuming the conclusion, I derive a contradiction: the premises do not therefore entail the conclusion and the argument is invalid. The manoeuvre is not pernicious as it would be had I been trying to prove validity, because in assuming the conclusion, I have not assumed what I am trying to prove. This type of argument may be expressed symbolically:

For any argument "$P \supset Q$": $[(P \cdot Q) \supset (P \cdot \sim P)] \supset (P \supset \sim Q)$.

$P \supset \sim Q$ of course implies $\sim (P \supset Q)$. Hence if the assumption of the conclusion leads to a contradiction, the argument is invalid. It can be seen that this is a type of *reductio ad absurdum* by comparing it with the following symbolic representation of the *reductio* which enables us to sometimes establish the validity of arguments:

For any argument "$P \supset Q$": $[(P \cdot \sim Q) \supset (P \cdot \sim P)] \supset (P \supset Q)$.


There are many difficulties which arise in quantificational logic which were not present in the sentential calculus with respect to "$\supset$". For example, take the argument:

All men are citizens. Some citizens are women. Therefore, some men are women.

Shall we symbolize this as:

$(x)(Fx \supset Gx)$

$(x)(Gx \subset Hx)$

$\therefore (x)(Fx \subset Hx)$ ?

There are two things wrong with this; first, it is an invalid argument, and secondly, it is an incorrect symbolization of the above English argument.  It is an invalid argument in spite of the fact that: " [(P⊃Q )·(Q⊂R )]⊃(P⊂R )", but this is only to say that truth tables cannot be used to check the validity of arguments in quantifical logic, which is nothing new.  It is invalid because it tacitly assumes that the class of "F" (men) is coextensive with the class of "G" (citizens).  If this were the case (i.e., (x)(Fx≡Gx)), then the argument would be valid.  It is this same assumption that makes the symbolic argument an incorrect rendering of the English argument; a correct symbolization would be the following:

$$(x)(Fx⊃Gx)$$

$$(y)(Gy⊂Hy)$$

$$(x)(y)(Fx⊂Hy).$$

The above is not an invalid argument so much as an incomplete one, lacking as it does any premise to the effect that x≠y, or x=y.  The symbolization, however, shows the invalidity of the English argument - the latter is invalid insofar as it commits the fallacy of unwarranted assumption, i.e., that x=y.  That is why I use the variable "y" in the second premise; it goes without saying that when I instantiate upon a universal statement of the sort "(x)(Fx⊂Gx), I must preserve the distinctions made between variables in the universal statement - otherwise I would just be making a distinction in order to ignore it in the instantiation, that is: making it to no purpose.

Obviously, when using the inverted hook, we must be very careful to notice what we are talking about; are we talking about the same group

of things we previously attributed something to?  Consider the follow-
ing arguments:

    A. Some men are brave.  All those who are brave are good.

      Therefore, some men are good.

    B. Some men are brave.  Only those who are brave are good.

    Therefore, some men are good.

The first argument is invalid, the second valid.  A is invalid because
it might be the case that *all* men are good; B is valid because we have
made it clear in the second premise that the class of brave things is
to be coextensive with the class of good things (it doesn't matter to
either argument that there may be brave women).

It was for reasons like this that on p. 147 above I introduced:
"$(x)(y)[(Fx \subset Gx) \supset ((Fy \cdot y \neq x) \supset \sim Gy)]$" as a partial determination
of the inverted hook with regard to the hook. From this rather clumsy
notation it can be seen that if $(x)(Hx \supset Fx)$, that both 'x' and 'y' may
be 'F', while neither 'x' nor 'y' is both "H" and "G".

It can now be seen why some of the moods of the syllogism tradition-
ally held to be valid are in fact fallacious.  Russell, talking about
"Darapti" says that "'All M is S, all M is P, therefore some S is P,'...
fails if there is no M."[7]  This is not true; the conclusion does not en-
tail the existence of anything any more than do the premises.  Darapti
is fallacious simply because 'S' may be coextensive with 'P' (e.g., sup-
posing 'S' to be "rational animals" and 'P' to be "featherless bipeds"),
in which case the only correct conclusion is that "All S is P."  It is
the same in the case of "Bamalip" (the AAI mood in the fourth figure),
and with AAI in the first figure:

| | |
|---|---|
| All animals are mortal. | $(x)(Gx \supset Hx)$ |
| All men are animals. | $(x)(Fx \supset Gx)$ |
| Some men are mortal. | $(x)(Fx \subset Hx)$ |

Whether or not men exist has nothing to do with the invalidity of the argument. The invalidity rests upon the fact that the conclusion entailed by the premises is that *all* men are mortal, not merely that some are. Below I have shown the invalidity of the argument.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | $(x) [(Gx \supset Hx) \cdot (Fx \supset Gx) \supset (Fx \subset Hx)]$ | TO BE SHOWN INVALID |
| 2. | $(x)(Gx \supset Hx) \cdot (x)(Fx \supset Gx)$ | ASSUMPTION |
| 3. | $(x)(Fx \subset Hx)$ | TO BE SHOWN INVALID |
| 4. | $Fx \subset Hx$ | TO BE SHOWN INVALID |
| 5. | $\boxed{Fx}$ | ASSUMPTION |
| 6. | /Hx | ASSUMPTION |
| 7. | Hx | UNIVERSAL INSTANTIATION; MODUS PONENS; LINES 2, 5 |
| 8. | $Hx \cdot$ /Hx | LINES 6, 7; Q.E.D. |

In this case, the logical form in quantificational logic parallels the form it has in the sentential calculus; in both systems is the inference invalid. It is not surprising that it does so here, since there is no doubt about what is both 'F' and 'G', and about what is both 'G' and 'H'.

There are many problems connected with this sign that I have not dealt with - and no doubt quite a few that I haven't even thought of. However, I think enough has been said to throw what was said in Chapter 2 about the word "some" and the deficiencies in the way logic presently treats the word into perspective.

## APPENDIX II

The subject of this appendix, sentential calculi, is not directly relevant to the rest of this thesis. My reason for including it is that many of the subjects I have discussed - modality, the open-endedness of concepts, the relation in which concepts stand to one another, the analytic-synthetic distinction, the relation between true or false sentences and other meaningful ones, and so forth - are to be brought up again and will, by virtue of what is said here, be shown in a slightly different and, I trust, more powerful, light. Although I will be primarily concerned with logic, the result of the discussion will be directly relevant to the relationship between logic and language.

It is generally assumed in logic that a variable must have one of two values - that it must be either true or false. Many things conspire to render this assumption unquestionable: the notion of the tilde (along with its seemingly indisputable truth-table), and the Law of the Excluded Middle, one English version of which is that a sentence is either true, or it's false, are only two of the reasons for affirming logic an intrinsically two-value system.

The implications this view has held for philosophy have, needless to say, been tremendous, especially when it is coupled with the idea that logic is a symbolic representation of ordinary language, and that what may be expressed in ordinary language may equally well be expressed in symbolic language. The analytic-synthetic distinction rests at bottom, I think, upon the idea that all sentences are either true or false, as does (more explicitly) the once popular claim that ethical statements

were meaningless because they were incapable, in principle, of being verified. The idea that all sentences are either true or false is traceable in turn to the assumption that logic is necessarily a two-value system, or at least goes hand in hand with it.

After Wittgenstein and Austin, there is not, I think, much need to argue extensively that there are sentences which are meaningful but which cannot be properly thought of as being either true or false. The conclusion which is often drawn from this is that logic cannot adequately embrace all of ordinary language, that "ordinary language has no exact logic."[1]

While I think this is true, I also think that logic can be made to deal more adequately with ordinary language. The way I will show this is by examining the sentential calculus and showing that it is not an inherently two-value system - that the 'ordinary sentential calculus' is in fact a special case of a more general 'any-valued' calculus.

If we wanted to define the ordinary sentential calculus, we might go about it in the following (albeit cumbersome) way, requiring as given:

1. the vocabulary of the system (i.e., the sentence letters P, Q, R...);

2. the connectives "·", "v", and "⊃" (without specifying their truth-tables);

3. the definition of a well-formed formula and the definition of a valid argument (i.e., of what constitutes a theorem in the system);

4. the truth-table for the tilde;

5. the Law of Contradiction, the Law of the Excluded Middle, and the Law of Identity;

6. the procedural rules:

   a) $(P \lor Q) \supset (\sim P \supset Q)$

   b) $\sim (P \cdot Q) \supset (\sim P \lor \sim Q)$

   c) $(P \supset Q) \supset \sim (P \cdot \sim Q)$

7. Modus Ponens.

For the purposes of the present, when I say "define", I have in mind that we are already acquainted with the sentential calculus; I am not attempting to set up a system from scratch then; I am simply trying to list its essential characteristics, those from which the others may be derived.

This is clearly not the most elegant way to define the sentential calculus; much of the above could be eliminated by simply giving the truth-table for, say, the stroke function. The reason for including all of the above steps is as follows: from what is given here, it is possible to derive the truth-tables for the three logical connectives given without employing a notion which is superfluous to the system. Now, while in the ordinary sentential calculus the truth-tables for the logical connectives are for the most part intuitively obvious, it must be admitted that they would not be similarly obvious for a calculus which employed instead of merely two distinct values for its variables, perhaps ten of them.

The question that needs to be asked here is this: do the requirements given above define *only* the ordinary sentential calculus, or could they equally well - with certain minor modifications to be discussed shortly -

define a sentential calculus with, for instance, three values? It is my belief that they both can and do.

The main obstacles that must be cleared before it is possible to proceed smoothly from the ordinary to many-valued sentential calculi are the tilde and the Law of the Excluded Middle. These both seem to point unequivocally toward the conclusion that logic is necessarily a two-value system. First the tilde.

It is commonplace "to adopt the symbol ' ~ ' as an abbreviation for· 'it is not the case that'."[2] However, in two-value logic, the tilde has, in fact, two distinct uses between which it is helpful to distinguish for the purposes of the discussion below. The tilde in two-value logic may mean (or be an abbreviation for) either:

1. it is not the case that (P), or

2. it is the case that the negation of (P) is true.·

In two-value togic, we only have two choices - 'P' is either true or it's not - and therefore whatever is *not* P is of necessity the negation of 'P' (~P). If we consider, on the other hand, the possibility of a logic which has more than two values assignable to variables, then we quickly realize that '*not* P', rather than specifying a single value, specifies $n - 1$ values in an n-value calculus. The tilde, as it stands, is accordingly a useless symbol in any calculus other than the ordinary one, and if we are to set up an n-value calculus, replacement symbols must be found to do the job it does in the two-value calculus. Thus I will employ the symbols: "·" and ":" below when setting up a three-value calculus to be abbreviations for "not-P in way 1" and "not-P in way 2" respectively. It is also necessary to introduce a symbol which will be an abbreviation

for "anything but": to this end I will use the symbol "∴". "Anything but" means precisely what it says: "∴ P" will be equivalent to "·P v : P". For the non-system-specific symbol of negation I have employed the arithmetic subtraction sign "-". Hence the sign in two-value logic corresponding to "-" (as in "-P) would be "~", in three-value logic "∴".

That the Law of the Excluded Middle appears to indicate that logic must have only two values is not, I think, the fault of the law, but rather of our interpretation of it. An examination of the Law of Contradiction, sometimes expressed as "A thing is what it is and not another thing", reveals that it does not bind us to a two-value system; why then should the logically equivalent 'P v ~P' do so? A better interpretation of the Law of the Exluded Middle than one which is often given - "a sentence is either true, or it's false" - is:

A sentence either has one value or it has another.

Under this interpretation, it is clear that the law is applicable, or has a place, in logics other than the two-value one.

One brief word before continuing. Although it must be admitted that the names of both laws under discussion are inappropriate if we are dealing with a logic of more values than two, because a great deal of the terms connected with logic - truth, falisity, negation, truth-table, etc. - are similarly inappropriate, I have thought it best not to attempt to alter any of them, as this might occasion more confusion than their continued employment.

The general forms of the Law of Contradiction and the Law of the Excluded Middle will be then, according to the above:

-(P · -P), and P v -P, respectively.

I give these only in passing. While a general sentential calculus is more interesting to the philosophy of logic than is a three-value calculus, it seems more important here to establish beyond question the viability of a particular many-valued calculus - especially as this would establish by implication the viability of an n-value calculus.

One question that has thus far been held in abeyance is: is there any practical application of n-valued calculi to language, or is this merely of theoretical interest? In order to answer this, I will consider the following group of sentences:

1. Bob is a believer.

2. Bob is an agnostic.

3. Bob is an atheist.

Now while it is possible, in some sense, to talk about each of the above sentences in terms of their truth and/or falsity, there is clearly something wrong in doing so. This can be seen from the fact that any attempt to symbolize two of the three sentences above in the form of the Law of the Excluded Middle fails. It is not the case, for instance, that Bob *must* be either a believer or an atheist, because he may be an agnostic. What is important to note here is that it is only when we take each sentence *by itself* and examine it (that is, out of the appropriate context, in this case the possibility of Bob's having one of three distinct but implicitly related attitudes towards God's existence), that we are led into thinking that it is either true or false. However, when we take the sentences together and examine them, we see that they have not two, but three possible values.

A final point before setting up a three-value logic. As will be

seen further on, I think that modal logic is more easily and clearly

dealt with by a logic having three values assignable to its variables

than by the introduction, for instance, of the diamond sign ( ◇ ) into

the ordinary sentential calculus to signify possibility. Modality is

a complicated issue; I think both a three-valued system and the intro-

duction of the inverted hook in Appendix I can help us to deal with

it. However, modality for my present purposes is really a side issue,

so few conclusions are reached on the subject.

## Three-Value Logic

In the three-value calculus, the vocabulary, the logical connec-

tives, the definition of a well-formed formula, and Modus Ponens will

be the same as in the ordinary sentential calculus. The possible values

a given variable (sentence-letter) may have will be, instead of true

and false, the numerical values 1, 2, and 3. Following, then, the require-

ments listed above in our definition of a sentential calculus, we have:

- the definition of a valid argument: A valid argument is an

argument whose value is 1 (an invalid argument is one whose

value is 3 - this will be discussed below);

- the truth-table for the tilde:

| P | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| ·P | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| :P | 3 | 1 | 2 |

- the Law of Contradiction (because of the possible confusion between the symbols I have adopted for "not", and the common symbol for "and" (" · "), I have elected to use the ampersand as the abbreviation of "and", i.e., "&"): $∴ ( P \& ∴ (P))$ ;

- the Law of the Excluded Middle: $P v ∴ P$ ;

- the Law of Identity; as it does not involve any sort of negation, will be the same as in the two-value calculus;

- the procedural rules given above in (6) are:

   a) $P v Q ⊃ ∴ P ⊃ Q$

   b) $∴ (P \& Q) ⊃ ∴ P v ∴ Q$

   c) $(P ⊃ Q) ⊃ ∴ (P \& ∴ Q)$ .

The "anything but" symbol ($∴$ ) operates as follows:

$∴ P ⊃ · P v : P$

As is the case in two-value logic, it is possible from the laws and procedural rules given to derive the following truth-tables.

| P | 1 1 1 2 2 2 3 3 3 |
|---|---|
| Q | 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 |
| P & Q | 1 2 3 2 2 3 3 3 3 |

| P | 1 1 1 2 2 2 3 3 3 |
|---|---|
| Q | 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 |
| P v Q | 1 1 1 1 2 2 1 2 3 |

| P | 1 1 1 2 2 2 3 3 3 |
|---|---|
| Q | 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 |
| P ⊃ Q | 1 2 3 1 1 2 1 2 1 |

Although the following expanded truth-tables are rather long, I include them in order to substantiate the algorithm (given after the tables) for determining how many combinations of values will have a given value for each connective.

| | P | 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 |
|---|---|---|
| | Q | 1 1 1 2 2 2 3 3 3 1 1 1 2 2 2 3 3 3 1 1 1 2 2 2 3 3 3 |
| | R | 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 |
| P & Q & R | | 1 2 3 2 2 3 3 3 3 2 2 3 2 2 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 |

| | P | 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 |
|---|---|---|
| | Q | 1 1 1 2 2 2 3 3 3 1 1 1 2 2 2 3 3 3 1 1 1 2 2 2 3 3 3 |
| | R | 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 |
| P ∨ Q ∨ R | | 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 2 1 2 2 1 1 1 1 1 2 2 1 2 3 |

| | P | 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 |
|---|---|---|
| | Q | 1 1 1 2 2 2 3 3 3 1 1 1 2 2 2 3 3 3 1 1 1 2 2 2 3 3 3 |
| | R | 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 |
| P ⊃ Q ⊃ R | | 1 2 3 1 1 2 1 2 1 1 1 2 1 1 1 2 1 1 1 1 1 2 1 1 1 2 1 2 1 |

It is important to note that where three variables are involved, the brackets are, for example: P ∨ (Q ∨ R).

The following algorithm:

    a) $n^n - (n - 1)^n$,

    b) $(n - 1)^n - (n - 2)^n$,

    c) $(n - 2)^n - (n - 3)^n$...

    d) $(n - (n - 1))^n - (n - n)^n$.

determines how many combinations of values in an $n$-value calculus will have a given value. That is, in (for example) the three-value calculus, the number of combinations ($n^n$) having a value of 1 for the connective " v·" will be determined by (a), the number having a value of 2 by (b), and the number having a value of 3 by (c), which in this case is identical to (d).

Similarly:

| Connective: | & | | | ⊃ | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Value: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Number of values determined by: | c | b | a | a | b | c |

Unfortunately I have not developed any but system-specific rules for determining which combinations are to have which values; at least the truth-tables given above (i.e., those with only two variables) are, with certain exceptions, intuitively obvious. I shall deal briefly with two cases in the implication truth-table which may give some trouble.

Why is it that where P has a value of 2 and Q a value of 3 that the argument has a value of 2? Also, why is it that when P has a value of 3 and Q a value of 2 that the argument has a value of 2?

First, since an invalid argument is defined as one whose antecedent has a value of 1, and whose consequent has a value of 3, it is

clear that no argument whose antecedent has a value of 2 can be an invalid argument. But, on the other hand, it cannot have a value of 1 either, since this would indicate that a theorem could have a "false" consequent without also having a false antecedent.

Before proceeding to the second case, a word about validity and invalidity is necessary. Any argument that has a value of 1 under all possible assignments of values to its variables will be termed a theorem. Any argument that has a value of 3 under a given assignment of values to its variables will be thought of as a "contradiction". This terminology is admittedly awkward - but it is self-evident that in any system of logic, there should be a sufficient condition for arguments not being classed as theorems - if we are to retain some version of the reductio ad absurdum argument in n-value calculi, there must exist some step in that argument which qualifies as a contradiction. Similarly, any argument which may have, under different assignments of values to its variables, values of either 1 or 2, will be said to have the value of 2, and will be thought of as neither theorem nor contradiction. I realize that in this paragraph langauge is being placed under a great strain - I hope, however, that this is an indication of the great force exerted by the language (descriptive of logic) at my disposal, rather than an indication of weaknesses in the argument.

To return to the discussion above: where the consequent has a value of 2 and the antecedent a value of 3, the argument has a value of 2. It is not the case, as Russell thought, that anything follows from a false antecedent; rather, the argument takes on the value of the consequent, unless the consequent has the same value as the antecedent.

In two-value logic, this has the effect of making every argument with a false antecedent true; in three-value logic however, it would not be appropriate to call an argument a theorem merely by virtue of its antecedent's having a value of 3. Similarly with other n-value logics.

When we talk about modal logic, we think of a logical system where sentences may take on one of three values: true, false, and undetermined as to truth or falsity. The way this triad of values is dealt with here will indicate the importance involved in the correct assignment of the numerical values to the different types of sentences.

What I mean is this: if we attempt to convert the ordinary sentential calculus into a modal system, it is tempting to try to retain the true-false dichotomy and somehow squeeze the third value, that of possibility, "in between" them. Similarly, if we use a three-value logic to deal with modality - or some types of it - we might think that we should assign truth a value of 1, falsity a value of 3, and possibility a value of 2. However, this will not work. One the other hand, if we recognize that it is more appropriate to assign possibility the value of 1, with its "contradiction" impossibility (falsity) being assigned the value of 3, we get the following:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| If P is possible, then P is possible | If 1 then 1 | 1 |
| If P is possible, then P | If 1 then 2 | 2 |
| If P is possible, then P is impossible | If 1 then 3 | 3 |
| If P, then P is possible | If 2 then 1 | 1 |
| If P, then P | If 2 then 2 | 2 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| If P, then P is impossible | If 2 then 3 | 2 |
| If P is impossible, then P is possible | If 3 then 1 | 1 |
| If P is impossible, then P | If 3 then 2 | 2 |
| If P is impossible, then P is impossible | If 3 then 3 | 1 |

which is at least intuitively correct. It is extremely important to bear in mind that an argument's having, for example, a value of 2 in the above table in no sense should be taken to mean that the argument is true. It is true that in two-value logic we rather loosely term theorems either "valid" or "true" arguments; however, the terms "true" and "false" ought properly to be reserved for the types of values that a variable may have in the system, and the term "valid" used to refer to arguments which qualify as theorems. In the above table then, any argument having the value of 1 will be a theorem - it will not be the case that such an argument is "possibly true".

One of the more interesting results of the possibility of n-value calculi is the one-value calculus. It may at first blush seem an intensely odd system: all well-formed formulae end up being theorems. On the other hand, a one-value calculus certainly reflects the idea developed by many philosophers that there are sentences (usually ostensive definitions) which cannot properly be said to have truth values because they act as "rules of language" rather than being statements of fact. But this is merely a suggestion.

In general, I think it may be said that the possibility of n-value calculi holds forth interesting possibilities for both philosophical

logic and the philosophy of language. It would, on the one hand, free language from its none too happy ties with the traditional sentential calculus, and on the other, hold out some hope that symbolic logic can deal with langugage more successfully than I think it has hitherto done.

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# NOTES

## Introduction

1. Charles Dickens, Hard Times (Great Britain: T. Nelson & Sons, Ltd.), p. 8.

2. William P. Alston, Philosophy of Language (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), p. 10. It should be noted that Alston does not consider that a theory of linguistic meaning can be applicable to people, actions, events, or situations.

3. I do not think this sentence is 'analytic'. If we wish to talk within the analytic-synthetic framework, I think we must say that such a sentence is the *condition* of analyticity of a sentence such as "A bachelor is an unmarried man." In other words, to say that the word "bachelor" means "unmarried man" *is to say* that the two terms are cognitively synonomous. In Chapter 4, I will try to answer Quine's objections on this score made in "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" - I will try to show how the terms are cognitively synonomous.

4. This example comes from Colin Turbayne, The Myth of Metaphor (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1962), p. 14. What Turbayne says about the omnipresence of metaphor in language will become important later.

5. This example comes from H.P. Grice, "Meaning", in Readings in the Philosophy of Language, ed. J. Rosenberg and C. Travis (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1971), p. 436.

6. J.L. Austin, "The Meaning of a Word", in Philosophical Papers (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961, rep. 1962), p. 24. Many other philosophers have contended the same thing. Quine, for instance, treats words as one word sentences or as "a fragment of sentences learned as wholes." (W.V. Quine, Word and Object (Cambridge, Mass.: The M.I.T. Press, 1960, rep. 1964), p. 14). Wittgenstein says "Only propositions have sense; only in the nexus of a proposition does a name have meaning." (Ludwig Wittgenstein, Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961), #3.3. He says much the same thing in the Philosophical Investigations, #49.

7. Leonard Bloomfield, "Sentence and Word", in A Leonard Bloomfield Anthology, ed. C.F. Hockett (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970), p. 61.

8. Gilbert Ryle, "Use, Usage and Meaning", in The Theory of Meaning, ed. G.H.R. Parkinson (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 109.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid., p. 110.

11. Austin, "The Meaning of a Word", op. cit., p. 23.

## Chapter I

1. Quine, Word and Object, op. cit., p. 13.

2. Bertrand Russell, An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1940, rep. 1961), pp. 24-25.

3. Ibid., p. 23.

4. Ibid., p. 25.

5. Ibid., p. 24.

6. Ibid., p. 58.

7. Ibid., pp. 58-59.

8. I am not here arguing this point. I am merely repeating what Russell says, or at least implies, when he specifies the means by which one distinguishes between sounds and words.

9. cf. p. 16 below.

10. W.V. Quine, Philosophy of Logic (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970), pp. 13-14.

11. J.R. Searle, Speech Acts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), p. 16 and p. 75, for instance.

12. P.F. Strawson, "On Referring", in Readings in the Philosophy of Language, eds. J. Rosenberg and C. Travis (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1971), p. 179.

13. Quine, Philosophy of Logic, op. cit., 1. 14.

14. Jerold J. Katz and Jerry A. Fodor, "The Structure of a Semantic Theory", in Readings in the Philosophy of Language, eds. J. Rosenberg and C. Travis (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1971), p. 475.

15. I will return to this in Chapter 4.

16. Strawson, "On Referring", op. cit., p. 175.

17. This will be explored more thoroughly in Chapter 4.

18. Strawson, "On Referring", op. cit., p. 179.

19. Ryle, "Use, Usage and Meaning", op. cit., p. 110.

20. This example comes from Nigel Rees, "Quote...Unquote" (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), p. 31.

21. For example, cf. Noam Chomsky, "Methodological Preliminaries", in Readings in the Philosophy of Language, eds. J. Rosenberg and C. Travis (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1971), p. 325.

22. cf. what is said about standard use in Chapter 3.

23. Nagel says, with respect to this: "The three components mentioned... are not to be construed as separate items...but simply as features that can be isolated for purposes of analysis." This occurs in: Ernest Nagel, The Structure of Science (New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Atlanta: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1961), pp. 106-107.

24. Nagel, The Structure of Science, op. cit., p. 90.

25. cf. what is said about standard use in Chapter 3.

26. Wittgenstein, Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus, op. cit., #4.1272.

27. cf. above, pp. 5-6.

28. There does not seem any sure and firm reason why this should be written "pre-Christian era" rather than "pre Christian-era"; in fact, I think the latter more accurately reflects what we mean by the phrase.

29. Robert H. Robins, Ancient & Mediaeval Grammatical Theory (London: G. Bell & Sons Ltd., 1951), p. 21.

30. Edward Sapir, Language (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1921, rep. 1949), pp. 33-34.

31. Gilbert Ryle, "The Theory of Meaning", in Philosophy and Ordinary Language, ed. Charles E. Caton (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963), pp. 134-135.

32. cf. above, pp. 5-6.

33. The example is taken from Alston, <u>Philosophy of Language</u>, op. cit:, p. 21.

34. cf. Chapter 4 for more discussion of this.

35. In the next chapter, I will maintain that since use is tied to reference, or only has sense in terms of what is being talked about, that syncategorematic words cannot properly be said to have uses, or at least that the use they have is fundamentally different from what we would normally describe as word use. To mark this differ-ence, I talk about syncategorematic words in terms of "functional use".

36. Austin, "The Meaning of a Word", op. cit., p. 23.

## Chapter II

1. There are many such words. The reason for including just these words. is that I wanted to show how prevalent these words are in our writing and speaking; accordingly I selected a book at random - it turned out to be Dicken's <u>Martin Chuzzlewit</u> - and listed in order the ges-ture words I found in the first four paragraphs.

2. The grammar book from which these examples are drawn (<u>A New Introduc-tion to Greek</u> by A.H. Chase & H. Phillips, Jr. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961)) gives "on the one hand", "but on the other hand", "for, indeed", and "at least, of course" respectively as English translations of the words. It is hard, though, to say in what respect these *are* translations; on the one hand, they certainly are translations in the sense that "book" is not a translation for any of them; but, on the other hand: 1) *men*, which the above book says is often not translated, always appears in a construction with *de*; we might say it syntactically demands *de* somewhere else in the construc-tion; and 2) *gar* is also, at times, a merely syntactic device: *ei gar* may be used with the optative to express future wishes, with the im-perfect indicative (for the present time) or the aorist indicative (for past time) to express impossible wishes.

3. It is suggested to me by the Greek particles that "yes" might be thought of as a gesture word. These is no word in Greek for "yes"; what we would sometimes translate as "yes" occurs in Greek as "*panu ge*", "*emoge*" or "*emoige*" (if you subtract the *ge* from each of these, you get "very", "I", and "to me" respectively). For further brief discussion of this, see pp. 65-66 below.

4. Of course, it is also natural to say the word "yet" doesn't mean the same thing as the word "but". I think that in this case, however, it is misleading to say so.

5. This example is admittedly contrived, but that shows to great advantage how unusual it is to say something like "I took some bus" - or "I met some man" which some writers on the subject of the word "some" take to be a perfectly straightforward English sentence.

6. Russell says: "All egocentric particulars can be defined in terms of 'this'." In Russell, <u>Inquiry into Meaning and Truth</u>, op. cit., p. 108.

7. This prejudice results, I think, from the notion that the meaning of a word is the thing which it names.

8. cf. also what is said on the subject of proper names in Chapter 3.

9. Strawson, "On Referring", op. cit., p. 176.

10. These words are part and parcel of the theories I will be discussing; it would be senseless and difficult to abandon them here. I am using the word "modify" in its grammatical sense of qualifying the sense of a word or phrase.

11. $A$: "All $S$ is $P$"; $E$: "No $S$ is $P$"; $I$: "Some $S$ is $P$"; $O$: "Some $S$ is not $P$".

12. Wesley Salmon, <u>Logic</u>, Foundations of Philosophy Series, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973), p. 48.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid., p. 49.

15. Bertrand Russell, "Descriptions", in <u>Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy</u> (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1919), p. 177.

16. Strawson, "On Referring", op. cit., p. 184.

17. Quine, <u>Philosophy of Logic</u>, op. cit., p. 38. The section from which these examples are taken runs from p. 37 to p. 44.

18. Ibid., p. 45.

19. Ibid.

20. Russell, <u>Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy</u>, op. cit., p. 183.

21. Ibid., p. 187.

22. Ibid., p. 164.

23. It is difficult to avoid in this context the use of the word "statement". I prefer to use the word "sentence", and will more or less consistently do so in subsequent chapters.

24. Whether the statement were true or false, the point is that it would *always* be so: a contradiction would be immune to revision no less than a tautology.

25. W.V. Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", in <u>Readings in the Philosophy of Language</u> , eds. J. Rosenberg and C. Travis (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1971), p. 78.

26. Quine, <u>Philosophy of Logic</u>, op. cit., p. 14.

27. A set is countable if its members can be put in a one-to-one correspondence with the set of natural numbers. See, for instance, Roger Godement, <u>Algebra</u> (Paris: Hermann, 1968; rep. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., n.d.), p. 97: ·

    "A set X is *countable* if it is equipotent to N, in other words if there exists a *bijection*

$$n \rightarrow x_n$$

of the set of natural numbers onto the set of elements of X."
The negative definition is more intuitively obvious to someone unfamiliar with number theory. "A set X is said to be *finite* if it has the properties a) and b) of Theorem 3, and *infinite* otherwise.' Similarly a cardinal $x$ is *finite* if $x \neq x+1$, *infinite* if $x = x+1$." Property a) of theorem 3 is that "*the only set contained in X and equipotent to X is X itself*"; b) is that "Card $(X) \neq$ Card $(X)+1$." Godement, <u>Algebra</u>, op. cit., p. 95.

28. cf. I. Kant, <u>Critique of Pure Reason</u>, translated by F. Max Muller (Garden City, N.J.: Anchor Books, 1966), pp. 236-247.

29. Quine, <u>Philosophy of Logic</u>, op. cit., pp. 41-42.

30. Russell, <u>Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy</u>, op. cit., p. 12.

31. Bertrand Russell, <u>The Principles of Mathematics</u> (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1937), p. 69.

32. Russell, <u>Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy</u>, op. cit., p. 186.

33. Salmon, <u>Logic</u>, op. cit., p. 52.

34. Peter Geach, <u>Reference and Generality</u>, 2nd ed. (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1962), p. 5.

35. Ibid., pp. 6-7.

36. Quine's example is easier in that his open sentence is satisfied by people and places, and these have names. Hence the awkwardness here.

37. Russell, Principles of Mathematics, op. cit., p. 80.

38. cf. pp. 24-25 above.

39. Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, translated by
    G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford: Blackwell, 1968), #217.

40. Strawson, "On Referring", op. cit., p. 184.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid., p. 181.

43. Ibid., p. 184.

44. Ibid. "Secondary", Strawson say in a footnote, is a better word than
    "spurious" for what he wants to say. It should also be noted that
    Strawson does not use the phrase "referring expression"; it is con-
    venient here, however. (Strawson uses the word "expression" as short
    for "an expression which has a uniquely referring use." cf. p. 179.)

45. For a fuller discussion of this, see chapter 4.

46. Strawson, "On Referring", op. cit., p. 184.

Chapter III

1. cf. pp. 13-14 above.

2. cf. John Stuart Mill, A System of Logic (New York: Longmans, Green,
   and Co., 1898), p. 12. On the same page he says: "The predicate is
   the name denoting that which is affirmed or denied. The subject is
   the name denoting the person or thing which something is affirmed or
   denied of:"

3. Russell, An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth, op. cit., p. 97.

4. For example, Colin Turbayne, The Myth of Metaphor (New Haven: Yale
   University Press, 1962), p. 73 ff.

5. This is to be sharply distinguished from the example of "My daughter
   is teething", given above on p. 62. There I was purporting to
   refer to something which I admitted didn't exist - but I was talk-
   ing about it as though it did. Here I am arguing that I may talk
   about something which doesn't exist because what I am talking about
   is not held by me to exist.

6. Russell, An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth, op. cit., p. 97.

7. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, op. cit., #101.

8. David Hume, <u>A Treatise of Human Nature</u> (New York: The Clarendon Press, 1978), p. 259.

9. For example, the word "reason" may be used as a name: "Reason must prevail over the baser appetites"; as a description: "the age of Reason"; and explanation: "he must see reason".

10. Austin, "The Meaning of a Word", op. cit., p. 37.

11. Ibid., p. 38.

12 Above I likened language to theory, and words like "meaning" to theoretical terms. Hence, there was no temptation to look for entities corresponding to this type of word. The point here is to begin to regard all words in this light, at least provisionally, that is, as having as little to do with entities corresponding to them as the word "meaning" does. The introduction of the notion of standard use, and what follows from this, will provide much more cogent reasons for not seeking entities corresponding, especially, to what I have loosely termed "theoretical words".

13. David Hume, <u>An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding</u> (Indianapolis, New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1955), p. 75.

14. Russell, <u>An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth</u>, op. cit., p. 62.

15. Ibid., p. 63.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid., p. 65.

18. Ibid., p. 67.

19. Strawson, "On Referring", op. cit., p. 184.

20. Turbayne, The Myth of Metaphor, op. cit., p. 12.

21. Ibid., p. 21.

22. Ibid., pp. 13-17.

23. Ibid., Chapter I, passim.

24. Ibid., pp. 15. He says that we *make believe* when we use a metaphor on p. 17.

25. Ibid., p. 22.

26. Ibid., p. 26.

27. Ibid., pp. 25-26.

28. Ibid., p. 132.

29. P.G. Wodehouse, Jeeves and the Feudal Spirit (Coronet Books, Hodder and Stoughton, 1977), p. 12.

30. Turbayne, for instance, thinks of names of physical objects as metaphors insofar as they unwarrantedly lump together our different sensory perceptions - an apple, e.g., is really a visual, tactual, olfactory, auditory and gustatory experience; it is not a single thing of which we have these experiences and to which we may give a name. For Turbayne, all names are examples of sort-trespassing. cf. Turbayne, The Myth of Metaphor, op. cit., pp. 120-126.

31. The notion of stereo-typed sentences will be discussed further in chapter 4.

32. The Oxford English Dictionary, Compact Edition (Oxford University Press, 1971, rep. 1980), p. 1638, says of literality that it is "applied to the etymological or the relatively primary sense of a word, or the sense expressed by the actual wording of a passage, as distinguished from any metaphorical or merely suggested meaning."

33. cf. John R. Searle, Expression and Meaning (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 120-126.

34. cf. pp. 25-26, above.

35. cf. pp. 55-57, above.

36. This example comes from Rees, "Quote...Unquote", op. cit., p. 37.

37. cf. for example, Alston, Philsophy of Language, op. cit., p. 33; Ernest Gellner, Words and Things, (Pelican Books, 1968), chapter I, passim; and especially William P. Alston, "Meaning and Use", in Readings in the Philosophy of Language, eds. J. Rosenberg and C. Travis (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1971), pp. 403-419.

38. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, op. cit., #43.

39. Ibid., #19.

40. Wittgenstein, Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus, op. cit., #5.6.

41. This definition is a paraphrase of one in Eric Rollinson, Elementary Harmony and Counterpoint (London: The Frederick Harris Music Co. Ltd., 1963), p. 68.

42. The OED, op. cit., p. 102, gives the reference to this as: Coleridge, Table Talk, p. 289.

43. Ibid.

44. Searle, <u>Speech Acts</u>, op. cit., p. 49.

45. Ibid., p. 22.

46. Wittgenstein, <u>Philosophical Investigations</u>, op. cit., #202.

47. Ibid., #219.

48. That is: unless I have totally misread what is being said in <u>Speech Acts</u>. But cf. <u>Speech Acts</u>, pp. 54-71 on "How to promise".

49. cf. Wittgenstein, <u>Philosophical Investigations</u>, op. cit. #224-227, and #217.

50. cf. Searle, <u>Speech Acts</u>, op. cit., p. 57 ff.

51. Ibid., p. 53.

52. Ibid., p. 33.

53. Ibid., p. 37.

54. The example was used by Wittgenstein, although to a different purpose, in <u>Philosophical Investigations</u>, op. cit., #78.

55. cf. p. 83, above.

56. Wittgenstein, <u>Philosophical Investigations</u>, op. cit., #43.

57. Ibid., #151 ff.

58. I have not gone into the so-called problem of fictional sentences in any depth, principally because on my analysis of meaning they don't constitute a problem. It is the emphasis placed on the relation between meaning and existence which engenders the problem of what to do with fictional sentences: are they lies on the part of the author, are they about anything, etc.?

59. The example "Tigers exist" is taken from Moore's example of "Tame tigers exist". cf. G.E. Moore, "Is Existence a Predicate?", in <u>Logic and Language</u>, ed. A. Flew (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1965) pp. 299-312.

60. John R. Searle, "Proper Names", in <u>Readings in the Philosophy of Language</u>, eds. J. Rosenberg and C. Travis (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1971), p. 217.

61. This parallels what was said about existence and names above.

62. Wittgenstein, <u>Philosophical Investigations</u>, op. cit., #40.

63. The analytic-synthetic distinction will be dealt with more fully in chapter 4.

64. Searle, "Proper Names", op. cit., p. 212.

65. cf. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, op. cit., #126 and #128.

66. Russell, "Descriptions", op. cit., p. 174.

67. Ibid., pp. 173-175.

68. Searle, "Proper Names", op. cit., pp. 216-217.

69. Russell, An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth, op. cit., p. 124.

70. Turbayne, The Myth of Metaphor, op. cit., p. 83.

71. Ibid., p. 66.

72. On the other hand, I think it is true that what is sometimes iden-
tified as the connotation of a term is part of the meaning of that
term. I don't think we would say that someone knew the meaning of
the word "murderer" if they didn't know that the term was necessar-
ily pejorative.

73. There is an excellent article by W. Haas on translation which details
this. cf. W. Haas, "The Theory of Translation", in The Theory of
Meaning, ed. G.H.R. Parkinson (London: Oxford University Press, 1968),
pp. 86-108. I am indebted to this article for many of the ideas in
this thesis.

## Chapter IV

1. Searle, Speech Acts, op. cit., p. 22.

2. John R. Searle, "What is a Speech Act?", in The Philosophy of Language,
ed. J.R. Searle (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 40.

3. Searle, Speech Acts, op. cit., p. 25. On the preceding page, Searle
gives the information about the different sorts of speech acts which
is reporduced here.

4. Searle, "What is a Speech Act?", op. cit., p. 39.

5. It would have been better to have phrased this: "I can say something
like..."; I am not attempting an analysis of promising.

6. cf. p. 121 f., for more on this.

7. Usually, embarrassment would be considered a perlocutionary effect.
But I see no reason, if to warn someone is an illocutionary act, that
embarrassing someone cannot also be one.

8. This example is from Rees, "Quote...Unquote", op. cit., p. 35.

9. Searle, "What is a Speech Act?", op. cit., p. 46.

10. J.L. Austin, How to Do Things with Words (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 1.

11. Russell, An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth, op. cit., p. 172.

12. Austin, How to Do Things with Words, op. cit., p. 5.

13. Russell is committed by his theory of meaning to this claim. If what a word means is the object which it denotes, then it is impossible for a sentence to do other than describe some state of affairs in the world. Hence, if meaningful, it must be either true of false. Once it is accepted that sentences can be meaningful without being either true or false, this being tantamount to the rejection of the denotational theory of meaning, problems concerning sentences like "The king of France is bald" do not arise.

14. This is, of course, the distinction made at the outset of "Performative-Constative" by Austin. That near the end of this paper, Austin calls the distinction in doubt ("It is already pretty evident... that one can't issue any utterance whatever without performing some speech-act." J.L. Austin, "Performative-Constative", in The Philosophy of Language, ed. J.R. Searle (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 20) is not relevant to the argument.

15. Austin, "Performative-Constative", op. cit., p. 20.

16. Searle, "What is a Speech Act?", op. cit., p. 39.

17. Searle, Speech Acts, op. cit., p. 153. It is worthwhile comparing this to what Wittgenstein says in the Philosophical Investigations: "So you are saying that human agreement decides what is true and what is false?"--It is what human beings *say* that is true and false; and they agree in the *Language* they use. That is not agreement in opinions but in form of life." Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, op. cit., #241.

18. Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", op. cit., p. 77.

19. cf. p. 135 f., below.

20. cf. e.g., Turbayne, The Myth of Metaphor, op. cit., p. 83.

21. J.H. Plumb, England in the 18th Century (Penguin, 1950, rep. 1972), p. 83.

22. cf. pp. 102-103 above.

23. These examples come from Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", op. cit.

24. Ibid., p. 70.

25. cf. Appendix I for more on this.

26. Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", op. cit., p. 64.

27. I don't want to go into this in depth, as it is really a digression from the main topic. More on the subject may be found in Appendix II (with reference to the possibility of a one-value sentential calculus).

28. Ryle, "Use, Usage and Meaning", op. cit., p. 110.

29. Propositions, statements, etc. are also sometimes introduced to account for the 'common content' of certain sentences (cf. Searle, Speech Acts, op. cit., p. 22). I don't think they are necessary here either. What more need we say than we are referring to the same person, or talking about the same thing, in each of the given sentences supposed having a common proposition?

30. Russell, An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth, op. cit., p. 177.

31. I don't mean to say that we actually translate anything - but if we were called upon to express something which had originally been expressed badly, we would, in attempt to express the sentence better, be doing what I loosely called "translation".

32. This is unless a speech act were being committed, in which case it would be appropriate to talk about what someone intended.


## APPENDIX I

1. "Might imply" sounds almost like a contradiction in terms; it might have been better to say "might mean", or "for all x, it might be the case that if Fx, then Gx." I say "might imply" only in order to compare the inverted hook with the implication hook.

2. The inverted hook is not to be confused with the identical sign used in set theory to indicate that one set is a subset of another.

3. Many of these are biconditionally true; i.e., tautologies where the antecedent and the consequent mutually "might imply" each other. However, I did not wish to complicate matters further with the introduction of another sign.

4. Russell, Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy, op. cit., pp. 147-154.

5. Or T 10.

6. I should note that it is not strictly necessary to do this; I'm sure a more elegant way could be found.

7. Russell, <u>Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy</u>, op. cit., p. 164.

## APPENDIX II

1. Strawson, "On Referring", op. cit., p. 195.

2. D. Kalish and R. Montague, <u>Logic: Techniques of Formal Reasoning</u> (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1964), p. 4. The same notion of the tilde can be found, e.g., in Quine's <u>Philosophy of Logic</u>, and Strawson's <u>Introduction to Logical Theory</u>.

# INDEX

words