

# Quine, Analyticity, and Transcendence

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## 1. Introduction

In “Two Dogmas of Empiricism” [TD], Quine characterizes and rejects three approaches to making sense of analyticity. One approach attempts to reduce putative analytic statements to logical truths by synonym substitution; thus, supposing “unmarried men” is synonymous with “bachelors,” “All bachelors are unmarried men” reduces to “All bachelors are bachelors.” A second approach is to identify analytic statements with “semantic rules,” or “meaning postulates.” A third approach relies on the verificationist theory of meaning. According to that theory, “every meaningful statement is held to be translatable into a statement (true or false) about immediate experience” [TD, 38] or, less radically, “each statement, taken in isolation from its fellows, can admit of confirmation or infirmation” [TD, 41]. Analytic statements are, then, those that are confirmed come what experiences may. If either version of the verificationist approach were correct, then there would be objective facts about the extensions of terms from intuitive semantics, for example, “. . .’ is synonymous with ‘\_’” and “. . .’ is analytic,” across all languages. In short, such metalinguistic terms would be transcendent.

In this essay, I focus my discussion primarily on the third, verificationist, approach – though what I shall have to say will bear on the second approach as well. In particular, I explain the models of language contained in verificationism and the weaker confirmationism, and why most positivists abandoned the former for the latter. I explain the connection between confirmationism and intuitive semantics and why considerations of holism alone are incapable of

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severing that connection. More specifically, I argue that the acceptance of holism by itself does not undercut the confirmationist account of analyticity: a sentence is analytic just in case it is confirmed come what experiences may. Something more is required if that connection is to be severed. That “something more,” implicit in TD, is what I call “the transcendence requirement,” and I argue that neither verificationism nor confirmationism can meet that requirement. Consequently, attempts to ground analyticity on considerations of verificationism or confirmationism are forlorn.

## 2. Verificationism: Radical and Subtle

Why does Quine think that if verificationism were true, then intuitive semantics would be legitimate? Verificationism, what Quine calls “radical reductionism,” embodies a model of language [TD, 38–40], according to which, each sentence in a language is either a direct report or a shorthand description of a possible observation. Each sentence, so to speak, attaches to some piece of (possible) experience. Is this model plausible? Right or wrong, we do take a great chunk of our language to consist of statements whose function it is to describe or report observations. These sentences, the observation sentences, apparently do no more than describe some observable state of affairs or observable properties. Also, other sentences, though not direct reports, behave as if they were shorthand descriptions for observable experiences.

How else are we to explain that in the face of certain observations these sentences are apparently, contra Hume, conclusively verified or falsified? These data led many positivists to adopt this model of language and it leads even today some philosophers to harbor positivist tendencies.

No one denies there are kinks in the model. No sentence hooks on to one experience to the exclusion of all other sentences. Some sentences are verified or falsified by the same observations. Moreover, by virtue of verifying one sentence, other sentences may be verified as well. And lastly, some sentences do not seem in any obvious sense to attach themselves to any experience at all. These kinds of linguistic phenomena seem to tell against the model, or at least require refinements. Positivists were aware of these considerations. We may view, for example, synonymy, logical consequence, and analyticity as theoretical notions summoned to accommodate these apparently untoward phenomena.

Two sentences are synonymous iff they have the same verification conditions; one sentence logically implies another iff whatever verifies the first verifies the second; and lastly, a sentence is analytic iff no experience could falsify it. Analytic sentences have null experiential content and therefore they do not play

the same role other sentences in the language do. This was not news to the positivists. As Ayer says, they encode usage and not experience [Ayer, 79, 84].

A more profound problem for the model is that many non-analytic sentences seem to have empirical content, but do not seem to pose as disguised shorthand descriptions of observations, for example, law-like statements like “Pure water under 760 millimeters pressure boils at 100 degrees centigrade.” Which observations does this law state or describe? Presumably, if pushed, we could say that laws are shorthand statements (or descriptions) for indefinitely many observations: if A1 is some pure water under 760 millimeters pressure, then A1 boils at 100 degrees centigrade; if A2 is some pure water under 760 millimeters pressure, then A2 boils at 100 degrees centigrade; and so on. But, as Quine notes:

The most modest of generalizations about observable traits will cover more cases than its utterer can have had occasion actually to observe. The hopelessness of grounding natural science upon immediate experience in a firmly logical way was acknowledged. [“Epistemology Naturalized,” 74]

If this is so, then for these sentences, their verification conditions would be inaccessible and ineffable. But since we think we do understand these kinds of sentences and since understanding them involves knowing what they mean, verificationism is called into question. This some positivists acknowledged; and it provided the impetus for a move away from absolute (conclusive) verification and a move toward confirmation.<sup>1</sup>

When someone assents to a sentence like “Pure water under 760 millimeters pressure boils at 100 degrees centigrade,” he does so under certain conditions. What is the relationship between sentences of this kind and their conditions for assent? It is not description since they “describe” too much.

Some positivists respond by replacing verification conditions with confirmation conditions. This is what Quine tags “subtle reductionism” [TD, 41]. To opt for confirmation over verification is not to discard the original model. Language is still viewed as dividing experience into sets of observations to which sentences are wedded. Also, on this model, notions from intuitive semantics fall out; for example, two sentences are synonymous iff their confirmation conditions are identical. Standard empirical problems surround any effort to determine whether two sentences have the same confirmation conditions, but we know independently of any linguistic theorizing what must obtain in order for sentences to be synonymous.

How viable is this model? Its first challenge in TD is Duhem’s [TD, 40; see, also, “Mr. Strawson on Logical Truth,” 35–40]. Duhem argues that as a point of fact no statement is confirmed or infirmed in isolation from all others;<sup>2</sup> for Duhem, evidence is always for or against a group of sentences and never for a

single isolated sentence. It is not true that each synthetic sentence is associated with a unique range of possible sensory experiences or events such that occurrences of any of them add to the likelihood of the truth of the sentence. Suppose we have a hypothesis – some law-like generalization – and we want to determine whether it is true, or at least reasonable for us to believe. If it is, then according to the confirmationist, it makes sense to predict which observations are such that if they obtain, then the hypothesis is inquired. If the meaning of a hypothesis consists in the pairs of set observations which confirm and which inquire it, then if any member of the latter set obtains, the hypothesis is inquired.

Duhem, however, argues that by and large no hypothesis is ever established or refuted in isolation from all others. It is more realistic to suppose that a set of hypotheses face the tribunal of experience together: H1, H2, H3 + initial conditions (and any hypotheses they harbor) and from all this we can draw observational consequences. But then in the face of conclusions being denied, we cannot univocally determine which hypotheses ought to be rejected. We can revise one or more hypotheses [Web of Belief, 15–20, 43–44, 103ff.].

How serious is this for confirmationism? Positivists were aware of Duhem's considerations. Ayer, for example, embraced Duhem's thesis [Ayer, 38, 94–95]. He and other positivists recognized that sentences, for the most part, do not come in isolated pockets, that they in fact break up into groups. Grice and Strawson, in "In Defense of a Dogma," even suggest a way in which confirmationism can accommodate Duhem's views.<sup>3</sup>

Instead of saying that two statements are synonymous simpliciter, we now say that  $x$  and  $y$  are synonymous iff for any evidence  $e$ , and for any system  $S$ ,  $e$  confirms  $S + x$  iff  $e$  confirms  $S + y$  [92].

Note how perfectly general this is. So, if Duhem's data were the sole kink confronting confirmationism, it would seem not to amount to much. Or, so at least the positivists and Grice and Strawson contend. But, Quine saw that there was no obvious way to prevent Duhem's argument from being extended. It is not a manageable group of sentences which appear before the tribunal of sense experience; rather, it is our whole theory of the world; or, in Quine's mouth, our whole language. Which considerations, if any, does Quine advance for this extension?<sup>4</sup>

### 3. Transcendent Semantics<sup>5</sup>

Most philosophers recognize that Quine rejects analyticity/synonymy (a/s) not because of a counterexample he has to standard ways of drawing the

distinction, but because of an adequacy condition on criteria for drawing the distinction.<sup>6</sup> A key to understanding (some of) Quine's skepticism about the a/s distinction is what I shall call the transcendence requirement.<sup>7</sup>

According to the transcendence requirement, any adequate criterion for a metalinguistic notion must specify features common and peculiar to all languages. Thus, in order to satisfy the transcendence requirement any reference to particular sentences or languages in an analysis of analyticity must be eliminable [TD, 33].<sup>8</sup> A characterization of analyticity meeting this transcendence requirement is in contrast with an immanent characterization.<sup>9</sup> Transcendent notions, if applicable to any single language, are applicable to every single language. Immanent notions are more specialized; they are applicable only to a (finite number of) particular language(s). So, for example, it's unintelligible to ask for the extension of the disquotation predicate "... is true if, and only if, ..." (where the dots are replaced by the same sentence types) for any other language but English. Thus, this metalinguistic predicate is immanent. However, a common belief is that everyone who speaks a language utters significant sequences of sounds in this language.

Therefore, if this were true, regardless of how ignorant we were about another's language, there would be a fact of the matter to uncover with respect to which sequences of sounds in his language are significant. If this intuition is correct, then "... is a significant sequence" is a transcendent predicate, applicable to every sequence of sounds. And so, for the grammarian, there is a real job to do when he sets out to devise a grammar which will catalogue the significant sequences of the other languages he investigates, when he sets out to "specify the class of all possible linguistic forms, simple and composite, of the language under investigation" ["The Problem of Meaning in Linguistics," 47; cf., also, *Philosophy of Logic*, 19].<sup>10</sup>

Quine requires a transcendent characterization of "x is analytic in L" where "x" and "L" are variables ranging over all possible significant sequences and languages.<sup>11</sup> But why does Quine think analyticity must be transcendent? In fact, Quine doesn't; rather, a transcendent characterization of a/s is required only if the distinction is to realize positivist aspirations. The positivist claims that knowledge of mathematics and logic is possible only because the sentences of these disciplines are analytic. A sentence of logic is knowable a priori and it is necessarily true because it is analytic.<sup>12</sup> But logical truths are not limited to English and it is the positivist's claim that everyone who knows mathematics or logic, whatever his mother tongue, has this a priori knowledge of necessary truths because the statements in his language expressing these truths are analytic.<sup>13</sup>

Therefore, in characterizing analyticity care must be taken not to make essential use of immanent metalinguistic expressions; otherwise, we succeed at best in characterizing, for example, "is-analytic-in-English" – a notion which

cannot be utilized to explain how anyone can know a priori that  $2 + 2 = 4$ . Put somewhat differently, if asked to enumerate metalinguistic predicates applicable to English, our list might include “is a relative clause,” “is a plural form,” “is in passive voice,” “is an interrogative form,” “are synonymous expressions,” “is an analytic sentence,” and so on. Some of these predicates may demarcate transcendent features of our language and some may not. Therefore, in order to account for someone’s a priori knowledge, regardless of the language he learns and speaks, by appeal to a metalinguistic notion like analyticity, “is analytic” must be applicable to every possible language in which mathematical and logical truths are expressible.

Quine’s criticisms of Carnap’s discussion of analyticity and semantic rules, what I called the second approach in Section 1, are best understood in terms of this transcendence requirement.<sup>14</sup> According to Quine, Carnap, at best, offered us an account of an immanent notion of analyticity for some special formal language. The idea that the analytic sentences are those which are true in virtue of a semantic rule is, by its nature, immanent. Quine does not criticize Carnap’s account by citing counterexamples. He does not need to acknowledge that any sentence is analytic or that any sentence is synthetic. So, in arguing that a criterion is not adequate, Quine does not have to display any understanding of the disputed notion. All he needs to maintain is that the only notion of a semantical rule that can be given any force is an immanent one.

What sort of facts would determine whether analyticity is transcendent? There is a way of reading Searle’s [8] and Grice and Strawson’s [83] criticisms of Quine as supplying a proposal. They hold that, unless there is reason to believe otherwise, if people can apply the predicate “is analytic” to some sentences and withhold it from others, and moreover, if those who employ it agree with one another in how they use it and in what they say about it, and, lastly, if they learned to use the predicate by having been presented with sentences to which the term properly applies and to sentences to which it does not, and they have acquired a capacity which far outstrips these examples, then the predicate marks a difference. These authors endorse the following principle:<sup>15</sup>

If there is projective agreement about the use of a term or distinction, agreement about whether the term or distinction applies or fails to apply to an open class of objects, then the term or distinction must mark something; the distinction marks a difference.

Though I am uncertain whether the principle is correct<sup>16</sup> or even whether we can legitimately infer anything from it about the intelligibility of the a/s distinction for those who employ the distinction, appeal to this principle in confuting Quine’s attack on analyticity exposes less than full understanding of the point of this attack and the requirement transcendence imposes.

The positivists, and this is especially clear in Carnap's "Meaning and Synonymy in Natural Languages," presume that the notion of analyticity they are employing is transcendent. But a projective practice of the sort that Grice and Strawson, and Searle (and Putnam), envision at best establishes that those who use "is analytic" have mastered an immanent notion; that they have learned to apply the English term "analytic in English."<sup>17</sup> So, the story these people tell about analyticity is based on illusion, an illusion about the generality of their concept. The projective argument at best establishes that the people of some society have a term in their language on which they can project, not that there is a transcendent notion on which they are projecting.

On the other hand, Quine sees the possibility of a transcendent characterization of analyticity in traditional verificationism. As I interpret the last two sections of TD, Quine is arguing that were traditional verificationism correct, synonymy, analyticity, and other metalinguistic notions in the family of intuitive semantics would be transcendent [TD, 38].

So, what I'd like to do now is return to this verificationist model and articulate Quine's misgivings about it.

As I am interpreting TD, Quine is arguing that neither verificationism nor confirmationism establishes the transcendence of intuitive semantics. Since Quine never really appeals to more than Duhem-like considerations, there must be more than meets the eye, or at least more than met Duhem's and the positivists' eyes, in these considerations. There is. What Duhem establishes, if his data are correct, is that confirmation is theory relative (and therefore not a perfectly general notion). Borrowing and extending Quine's usage, confirmation is an immanent (and thus not a transcendent) notion. Put somewhat differently, if Duhem is right, then there are no theory-independent facts that determine whether one observation confirms a statement. But, of course, if there are no such theory- (that is, in Quine's mouth, language specific) independent facts, then it's incoherent to ask whether our predicate "is analytic" applies to another theory (that is, another language) prior to the formal construction of its extension. But this just concedes that the metalinguistic notion "is analytic in L" (for variable "L") is not transcendent. So, if Duhem is right about confirmation (which even the positivists believe), then "is analytic in L" is immanent even if we assume confirmationism as a semantic thesis.<sup>18</sup>

#### 4. Clarifications and Qualifications

Some philosophers, notably, Grunbaum [1962], Dummett [1973], and Glymour [1980], have responded with disbelief to what they take to be Quine's extension of Duhem's thesis in TD, when Quine writes that "the unit of confirmation is the whole theory." Glymour, for example, remarks that "even without analytic

truth we need not . . . defy history and good sense by insisting that evidence must bear on all of a theory (let alone on all of science) or none of it or that we must accept or reject our theories as a single piece" [Glymour, 152]. Glymour's point is that, given recalcitrant data, we can pick and choose which bit of a theory to give up; we don't have to give it all up. Glymour is surely right about this; but Quine does not intend to deny it.<sup>19</sup>

Quine's claim isn't that if you get recalcitrant data, everything has to go; it's that what goes and what stays is determined by theory. Specifically, what goes and what stays can't be decided a priori by appeal to semantics; and that's enough to thwart any effort to derive the legitimacy of "is analytic in L" from confirmationism. The heart of the argument is that confirmation is an immanent, not a transcendent, notion. So, "analyticity" defined as "confirmed no matter what" is itself immanent, not transcendent. But a transcendent characterization is required to ground mathematical and logical knowledge.

Someone might challenge this premise by trying to characterize confirmation as follows:<sup>20</sup>

e confirms H iff e raises the probability of H.

This characterization seems perfectly general, and therefore, it seems transcendent. Though it is true that whether e raises the probability of H or not depends on what theory one holds, why does this make the notion immanent? It seems to just make it relative.

This reply misses the point. The kind of characterization needed is one which looks at a body of data and a hypothesis and tells us how well confirmed the latter is by the former. That is, what's wanted is a confirmation function.

The charge of non-transcendence is that any formulation of such a function must be sensitive to empirical beliefs about what's connected to what in the world (that is, that different scientific theories license different claims about what evidence confirms which hypotheses, and by how much). Put somewhat differently, confirmation is transcendent iff all statements of the form "e confirms H" are true or false a priori. If whether e confirms H depends on empirical information, then it depends on which empirical theory is true. Appeal to relativity doesn't do away with this problem.

So, the main idea is that if "e confirms H" is true and if meaning is confirmation conditions, then if H means that e, then it is both necessary and a priori that e confirms that H, and this is what Quine is denying.

Another challenge to the premise that confirmation is immanent and not transcendent was run by Chomsky years ago in his "Quine's Empirical Assumptions," and appears again, recently, in my and Fodor's *Holism: A Shopper's Guide*. We all complained about the way Quine conflates theory and language. Whether

this charge is fair is irrelevant in the present context. In trying to individuate the analytic from the synthetic it's obviously inappropriate to appeal to a principled distinction between languages and theories (between facts that obtain as a matter of language alone and those that obtain by virtue of language and collateral nonlinguistic information).

I don't want to speculate about Professor Quine's interest in the determinacy of translation, but I cannot resist some conjecture. Positivists did not worry about the fact that the explications of "analytically true" that they offered were restricted to particular languages, and Carnap, in particular, didn't worry about this restriction in the discussions he had with Quine on the subject.<sup>21</sup> This lack of worry is owing to the operative fact that for philosophers like Carnap the explicans, in English, for "Karl knows that  $2 + 2 = 4$ " contains clauses to the effect that Karl's language contains a sentence translatable by " $2 + 2 = 4$ " and that the sentence so translatable is analytic-in-his-language. Of course, this maneuver is no better than the transcendence of "translation" and I take it that the central conclusion of *Word and Object* is that "translation" is not transcendent. If it were, then, on the assumption that there were perfect projective agreement about the extension of "analytic" among English-speakers, we need only translate a sentence of another language into English to determine whether it is synthetic or analytic, that is, to establish the transcendence of "analyticity."

I'd like to end by saying something about what isn't established in TD, namely, the unintelligibility of the a/s distinction *tout court*.<sup>22</sup> The considerations I advanced in defense of Quine are quite consistent with there being facts about meaning. What I offered has as its consequence only that there is no confirmation-based a/s distinction. To see what's at issue, imagine someone like Skinner, who holds that for "dogs" to mean dog in a certain speaker's mouth is for the speaker to have the habit of uttering "dog" when there are dogs around. Whether this is a good account or not, there are some lines of argument against which it is defensible. Suppose someone said if Skinner were right, then you could have a situation in which a speaker has two responses ("dog" and "shmog," as it might be) that are conditioned to exactly the same stimuli. But then it would follow that these responses would be synonymous for that speaker. So, then, the following sentence would be analytic in the speaker's language (assuming he has the logico-syntactic apparatus to frame it): "Whatever is a dog is a shmog." But, so this criticism goes, Quine showed in TD that there are no such things as synonyms or analytic sentences. So Skinner's semantics must be wrong. A priori! In fact, all semantic theories must be wrong, a priori, except for the nihilistic theory which says that there are no semantic properties.

As I am interpreting TD, Quine did not show, or ever argue, that there are no semantic facts, or even that there are no analytic truths. Rather, what he

showed is that if there is sense to be made of notions from intuitive semantics, it can't be reconstructed by reference to confirmation conditions. Because, Quine argues, what you are prepared to take as confirming a sentence of your language depends not only on what you intend your words to mean, but also on how you take the (nonlinguistic) world to be. And there is no principled way to separate the respective contributions of these factors. Knowing which conditions someone accepts as confirming his sentences doesn't tell you which he accepts a priori; so it doesn't tell you which sentences are analytic.

No notion of synonymy/analyticity that does not appeal to confirmation is in jeopardy of the sorts of considerations that Quine offers against confirmationism (and verificationism) in TD. For example, TD leaves it open that you might be able to reduce semantic relations to resemblance relations (the way Hume wanted to) or to conditioning relations (the way Skinner wanted to) or to nomological relations (the way Dretske and Fodor want to) or to nonepistemic relations of being appeared to (the way phenomenologists want to). Any of these reductions would imply corresponding notions of synonymy/analyticity. Ideas that resemble the same things are the same ideas; words that are conditioned to the same things are synonyms, and so forth.<sup>23</sup> But, of course, none of these accounts is of any use to the positivist. What the positivist was trying to show is that some confirmation relations are constitutive of intuitive semantic notions. This is what the considerations of TD, if they are correct, frustrate.

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### Notes

- 1 An alternative move would be to deny that laws have meaning. Put vulgarly, they do not express propositions. This is what those who call such sentences "inference tickets" have in mind.

- 2 The portrayal of Duhem's position that follows is not historically accurate. Duhem intended his holism to apply only to physical theory, not to our entire language, and certainly not to logic and mathematics. See, Vuillemin, in particular, 599–600, for references and for further discussion of the differences in scope of Duhem's and Quine's versions of the Duhem thesis. See, also, Quine's "Reply to Jules Vuillemin": "Duhem's holism just applies to theoretical physics, as distinct from pure mathematics on the one hand and natural history on the other. Mine does not respect these boundaries" [619].
- 3 See *Word and Object*, 64–65, for Quine's critical discussion of Grice and Strawson's suggestion that sentence synonymy might be defined on the basis of confirmation.
- 4 A cautionary remark: the footnote to Duhem in TD did not occur when it was first published in the *Philosophical Review* in 1951. More importantly, Quine has gone on record (in *Word and Object* and elsewhere) that he overstated his holism in TD. He considers himself now a "moderate" holist; he rejects what he now calls "extreme, legalistic, holism": the whole of science is *not* up for grabs, only significant chunks of theory are – re: "critical semantic mass" of his later writings. I owe this observation to Roger Gibson. However, I do not think that this caveat hinders anything I want to establish here. The essential point is that Quine – early, middle, and late – denies that any sentence has its own unique and well-defined fund of meaning.
- 5 Before proceeding, however, I should remind the reader of one standard interpretation of TD. It's Putnam's reading in "The Analytic and the Synthetic." It's also implicit in Grice and Strawson's article "In Defense of a Dogma," in John Searle's book *Speech Acts*, in Fodor's and my own recent book *Holism: A Shopper's Guide*, and in numerous other writings on Quine. This interpretation focuses on Quine's denial that there is any distinction between a priori and a posteriori knowledge: any sentence can be (rationally) retracted no matter what evidence there is.

In short, on this interpretation, Quine rejects the a/s distinction because it has no role to play in accounting for knowledge. Since there are no a priori truths, we don't need an a/s distinction to account for them. Those who endorse this interpretation also interpret Quine as holding that there is a perfectly adequate account for the data that philosophers invoked the a/s distinction to explain. In particular, Quine invokes the notion of germaneness (or centrality) to account for what others thought demonstrated the existence of a priorities. Though it is easy to understand why those who interpret Quine this way come to this interpretation, it can't be the entire story. This interpretation, for example, is consistent with the a/s distinction being perfectly intelligible; it is merely superfluous. And since Quine says that the a/s distinction is unintelligible and that those who employ it do not understand it, I seek an interpretation at least consistent with this stronger thesis.

- 6 There are many passages in TD where Quine does seem to offer counterexamples against proposed analyses for semantical terms. For example, in speaking about the interchangeability of terms as a criterion of synonymy, Quine writes that in an extensional language, interchangeability *salva veritate* is no assurance of cognitive synonymy of the desired type [31; see, also, 21, 23]. This suggests Quine

understands cognitive synonymy of the desired type, that he knows, for example, that the terms “renate” and “cordate,” though identical in extension, differ in meaning. So be it. But it is important to realize that in criticizing a distinction, criterion, or analysis, you can employ the method of counterexample against another’s definition, criterion, or analysis, without you yourself having to allow that the counterexamples are, in fact, counterexamples. It is only necessary to cite an example your opponent believes is a counterexample. Quine had some necessary conditions from Carnap; for example, all logical and mathematical truths should be analytic, including their substitution instances with empirical predicates. Also, he grasped, up to a point, the vague commonsense concept of something being an empty matter of words, thus, “no bachelor is married.” And he knew what Carnap wanted analyticity for, notably to explain why mathematics is necessarily true and why it is meaningful despite lacking contents. This was often enough sufficient for him to reject a proposed account of “analyticity.”

- 7 Standard interpretations of what Quine’s conditions on acceptable criteria are:
1. In filling the blank in “x is analytic in L iff\_\_\_,” Quine is insisting that we not make use of any predicate H which must be defined by “analyticity.” This interpretation of Quine has him rejecting any characterization which issues in a circle [Grice and Strawson, 86].
  2. Others read him as rejecting any characterization which invokes notions as dubious as “analyticity,” where dubiousness is fleshed out in terms of approved lists.
    - 2a. Some interpreters, taking their cue from Quine’s “Note on the Theory of Reference,” suppose Quine’s approved list to be fairly generous, consisting of any term from the theory of reference, for example, naming, satisfaction, truth, reference, and denotation [[TD, 29]; cf., also, Martin].
    - 2b. Others, taking their cue from Quine’s “The Problem of Meaning in Linguistics,” and his books *Word and Object* and *Philosophy of Logic*, suppose his list to be more austere, permitting only notions behaviorally characterizable [[TD, 24–25]; White, 276; Carnap, 234].

Are any of these interpretations correct? Some philosophers presume that every characterization becomes circular if pushed far enough. I doubt this is true. But relying on condition (1) requires its proponent to show that in fact every proposed criterion of “analyticity” is indeed invoking a notion inter-definable with it. Quine doesn’t attempt anything this ambitious. Indeed, he nowhere in TD alleges any fallacy of circularity. But, then, to interpret him as stipulating (2a) or (2b) as his approved lists would be to see him as courting his own dogmas.

It may be that Quine endorses only characterizations of metalinguistic notions that employ extensional or behavioral notions. But if this is so, it should be because he thinks he has advanced considerations to the effect that only such notions are legitimate in theorizing about language in general.

- 8 Quine is also explicit about the transcendence requirement in “Notes on the Theory of Reference,” 138, where he argues that “analytic-in-L” is in worse shape

than “true-in-L.” The essential difficulty with “analytic-in-L” is that “we have no clue comparable in value to:

(7) ‘. . .’ is true-in-L if and only if \_\_\_\_.”

This is absolutely basic to Quine. It explains why “true-in-L” is fine for Quine, even though we cannot provide a “single definition of ‘true-in-L’ for variable ‘L,’” and why “analytic-in-L” is not fine for Quine. See, also, his “Response to Dreben,” 501.

- 9 “In any discussion of a linguistic notion, reference has to be made to a language or a language system. A sentence is not simply true simpliciter, but true in a language, for example, true in English. A word is not a word of a language, but a word of French. In the case of a transcendent, as opposed to an immanent, notion the reference to the language need not be fixed” [PL, 19].
- 10 On whether Quine thinks “‘. . .’ is a significant sequence-in-L, for variable ‘L.’” is transcendent, see his “The Problem of Meaning in Linguistics” [51] and especially his *Philosophy of Logic* [22].
- 11 “The notion of analyticity about which we are worrying is a purported relation between statements and languages: a statement S is said to be analytic for a language L and the problem is to make sense of this relation generally, that is, for variable ‘S’ and variable ‘L.’” [TD, 33, my emphasis].
- 12 The positivists’ use of the analytic/synthetic distinction is much more extensive than I have indicated. Most empiricists came to see, especially the positivists, that a priori knowledge of necessary truths went well beyond mathematics and logic. If you want to be a verificationist, then you need some way to hook up theoretical terms with observable terms, for example. I will not explore this point here. See Glymour for further discussion and references.
- 13 Of course, this does not mean that in every language there must be some expression equivalent in meaning to the English “analytic” or even that those who have mathematical or logical knowledge must have a concept of analyticity, or even that there are analytic sentences in every language. It means only that analyticity is applicable to every sentence and every language. If it were not, the distinction would be incapable of performing the duty the positivists accorded it.
- 14 Although TD does not mention “a priori,” Quine’s “Carnap and Logical Truth” does. The only reason TD does not is that Quine assumes the only point to analyticity is Carnap’s and C.I. Lewis’s “reduction” of a priori to analytic. I owe the reference to Burt Dreben.
- 15 See, also, [Putnam, 96].
- 16 See Passmore’s “Arguments to Meaninglessness: Excluded Opposites and Paradigm Cases” for a critical discussion of the validity of the general principle.
- 17 After Strawson and Grice’s protest in 1956 that the notion of analyticity is clear with or without definition since people agree on its application, Jean Piaget, Leo Apostel, and others promptly conducted a survey and published a book on it: *Les Liaisons analytiques et sythetiques dans les comportements du sujet* (Presses

- Universitaire de France, 1957). The results were indecisive. I owe this reference to Professor Quine.
- 18 In his recent "In Praise of Observation Sentences," Quine notes that if observation sentences are holophrastically construed, then they are theory-independent [110]. Moreover, it is holophrastically that they serve as evidence. So, it would seem that observation sentences, holophrastically construed, *transcend* "theory-relative confirmation" [111]. I owe this reference to Roger Gibson.
- 19 Again, as I noted in note 4, this is misleading. As time goes on, Quine tends more and more to retract the apparently excessive holism of TD. See *Word and Object*, 13, note 5; see, also, his "Reply to Hilary Putnam" and his "Two Dogmas in Retrospect."
- 20 Of course, there are serious problems with this suggestion independent of what I'm construing as Quine's objection. For example, to employ the confirmability approach in a sufficiently general way, one must have some independent means of identifying analytic equivalences. Thus, we have the question: evidence *e* confirms that Karl is a bachelor. Does it or does it not confirm that Karl is an unmarried man?
- 21 This is evident from the correspondence between Carnap and Quine recently published in *Dear Carnap, Dear Van*, ed. Richard Creath. See, in particular, Carnap's short paper or memo "Quine and Analyticity," written in 1952 and never published.
- 22 Indeed, at least since his *The Roots of Reference*, Quine has found some use for some ways of taking "analytic."
- 23 Notice that although each of these accounts gives you synonymy/analyticity, none by itself gives you a word to phrase synonymy (and therefore lexical decomposed analyticities); and it's the latter that simplify to produce interesting analyticities (like "All bachelors are unmarried" or "All cats are animals" as opposed to "All dogs are shmogs").

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