

Philosophy 208
The Language Revolution
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Class 26
Some not-quite-final thoughts on Katz

The New Intensionalism versus Old School (Fregean) Intensionalism

- Consider Putnam's robot cats from Mars and Twin Earth water cases.
- Putnam presented the problem as the incompatibility of the following three propositions:
 - A. Our thoughts determine the meanings (senses) of our sentences.
 - B. Sense determines reference.
 - C. Reference can vary without variation in thought.
- The example supports C: whether Fluffy is a cat or a robot, and whether we are drinking water or twater, depends on facts that are unavailable to us.
- B defines the Fregean view.
- Putnam rejected A, and concluded that meanings were, in part, external to our thoughts.
- In contrast, Katz argues that we can hold on to A, and give up B.

The Autonomous Theory of Sense

- Katz argues that the theory of sense is completely autonomous from the theory of reference.
- Sense mediates, but does not determine, reference.
- Putnam's aluminum/molybdenum, Kripke's Feynman
 - The sense properties of each are not sufficient to distinguish the extensions.
 - They constrain, to some degree, our abilities to pick out the objects.
 - But, we can not from the senses themselves, determine the references of those terms.
- The theory of reference will have to accommodate factors other than sense properties in determining how we refer.
- Among those factors will be the role of the community and the division of linguistic labor, and pragmatic considerations of communication.
- Such factors are independent of the meanings of the terms, but relevant to our references.

Circularity and the Thin Notion of Sense

Sense is that which determines intensional properties.

- D: Sense is that aspect of the grammatical structure of sentences that is responsible for their sense properties and relations (e.g. meaningfulness, meaninglessness, ambiguity, synonymy, redundancy, and antonymy).
- D violates the anti-circularity condition on definitions of meaning, on semantic theory.
- It is ordinarily considered fallacious, or at least empty, to define a term circularly, as in L.
 - L₁ Logic is the study of argument.
 - L₂ Arguments are subjects of logic.
- D seems to commit the same error, for semantics.

Quine on Semantic Circularity

- Quine noticed that we could define the analyticity of B_1 by invoking B_2 .
 - B_1 All bachelors are unmarried.
 - B_2 Necessarily, bachelors are unmarried men.
- He argued that such a definition was unacceptable because it explained one intensional idiom (synonymy/analyticity) in terms of another (modality).

“Our argument is not flatly circular, but something like it. It has the form, figuratively speaking, of a closed curve in space” (Quine, “Two Dogmas of Empiricism”, 160).

Virtuous and Vicious Circles

- We accept theoretical definitions on the basis of the whole theory they yield, rather than on the basis of a reductive explication.
- Logical consequence
 - We define the rules of inference in terms of the consequences they yield.
 - We define logical consequence in terms of the rules of inference.
 - We look at the entire logical theory to see whether it is all acceptable.
- “In grammars conceived of as hypothetico-deductive systems, there is nothing circular about axiomatically defining the members of a family of linguistic concepts with respect to one another, since the axiomatically expressed relations among the members reveal their interconnections. There is nothing arbitrary either, since the axioms can be judged in terms of whether their consequences are confirmed by the linguistic facts...D is a theoretical definition. In using concepts belonging to the same family as the definiendum, D specifies the part of grammatical structure which is sense structure. This general specification of sense is fleshed out in the process of mutually adjusting definitions of sense properties and relations to representations of sense structure in the process of accounting for instances of such properties and relations of expressions and sentences in the language” (“The New Intensionalism”, 698-9).
- Quine’s arguments against the autonomy of sense would boomerang on his defense of logical truth.

Analyticity

- According to Katz, a sentence is analytic just in case it has a referring term with a sense that contains the sense of the entire sentence.
 - Bachelors are unmarried.
 - I exist.
- On Frege's theory, a sentence will be analytic if it follows from the rules of logic.
- For Frege, most mathematical propositions turn out to be analytic, since they are derived from axioms (seeds) using rules of inference which are obviously truth-preserving, and analyticity-preserving.
- Katz argues that the fruitfulness of Frege's characterization of analyticity, eliminating the class of synthetic *a priori* statements, does not make it useful.

Fregean Senses are Too Weak

Nothing is simultaneously red and green.

- It has the air of a necessary truth, because of its analyticity.
- But, Frege's notion of analyticity can not capture that fact.
- We could, with Carnap, introduce a meaning postulate from which its analyticity follows.
- But, as Quine rightly argued, we need to explain why it is analytic, not merely label it as such.

Fregean Senses are Too Strong

$$P \vdash P \vee Q$$

- According to Frege, this sentence is analytic.
- But, you can't analyze 'P' and find 'P \vee Q'.
- That plant isn't really in the seed!
- Frege's notion is both too strong and too weak; it is just the wrong notion of analyticity.

Frege's Puzzles

identity, presupposition, and opaque contexts

- Cognitive Content
 - ▶ 'Hesperus is Hesperus' has different cognitive content from 'Hesperus is Phosphorus' because 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus' have different senses, despite their different references.
 - ▶ Katz rejects direct-reference semantics for proper names.
- Empty Reference
 - ▶ 'Santa Claus' and 'Pegasus' have sense, even if they lack reference.
 - ▶ So, when people use those names in sentences, they can express propositions which contain the senses of those names, independently of their empty references.
- Opaque Contexts
 - ▶ Really a problem for the theory of reference
 - ▶ D can serve just as well as Frege's definition of sense.
 - ▶ But, it is not a problem that the theory of sense must solve.

Katz to Chomsky

- Katz's new intensionalism posits a universe of decompositional sense structure which lies beneath the logical relations among propositions and beneath the coarse analysis of propositions into subjects and predicates, even relational predicates.
- Meanings, for Katz, are found by taking what looks like simple concepts, like 'cat' or 'stroll' and analyzing them into component concepts.
- The technical work of formulating a complex, mereological semantic theory is done elsewhere, in large part by invoking what Katz calls semantic markers.
- We analyze using introspection or reason.
 - Rationalism!
- Katz was a young colleague of Chomsky's and developed his rationalism largely in response to inadequacies in Chomsky's nativism.