

The Limits of Analytical Interpretation of Classical Metaphysics The Case of the Verb “to Be”

In the post-Aristotelian phase, metaphysics focuses on matters of the **Being**; but in the 20th Century, one of the most important reforms of metaphysics was the analytical critics of the ambiguous language especially metaphysical ones. The perspective on metaphysics was separated between the classical (continental) – focussing on being – and the analytical. This paper is a return to the first step of metaphysical language analyses, following a pragmatic analysis of the universe created around the verb “to be” and its noun.

- First we will examine the arguments regarding the problem of language ambiguity. We consider there are different kinds and levels of ambiguity from fuzzy notion until Wittgenstein’s ambiguity of “meaning” (*Blue Book*, 1953) that puzzles the mind. In relation to these different kinds of ambiguities the analytical philosophy tries to develop a critic and comprehensive discourse.
- The ambiguity of “to be” is different because it is the only verb without image. Existence itself cannot project an image, and if we want to represent images of “to be” or “being”, such images cannot be generated. It is a different kind of ambiguity determined by the void of representation that establishes the unstable border of between “all” and “nothing” as the space for metaphysical speculations.
- The verb “to be” is not only ambiguous, but also needless because through a pragmatic analysis of the verb we can observe that the influence on linguistics, grammar and logic is only for interrelations. For example, in the Aristotelian perspective, the verb *to be* does not represent any element, which in our interpretation implies it will not project any image by itself. : “For neither are 'to be' and 'not to be' the participle 'being' significant of any fact, unless something is added; for they do not themselves indicate anything, but imply a copulation, of which we cannot form a conception apart from the things coupled.” (Aristotle, *On interpretation*, 16 b)

In conclusion, the status of the verb “to be” is special, and it permits metaphysical interpretations. It doesn’t have a representational role, neither a fundamental one in the construction of the language ones (there are languages without “to be”). I think its importance is metaphysical and this necessitates a reinterpretation of the verb’s ambiguity.