

LECTURE 19: PHILOSOPHY AND SYNTAX

1. Main thesis: All “legitimate” philosophical question are questions of (formal) logical syntax. (legitimate = scientific)

§72 “... all philosophical problems which have any meaning belong to syntax.”

2. Types of questions

(a) Object questions

(b) Logical questions

i. Material

– questions of meaning, sense, content

– Carnap: either they yield to formal treatment, or they are psychological

ii. Formal / Syntactic

(c) Pseudo-object-questions

– pseudo-object-sentences = quasi-syntactical sentences of the material mode of speech.

3. The logic of science (*Wissenschaftslogik*)

– it does take up object questions, but only those that can be translated into syntax questions

– pseudo-object-questions: “questions which because of a misleading formulation, appear to refer to objects while actually they refer to sentences, terms, theories, and the like — and are, accordingly, in reality, logical questions.” §73

– testing philosophical questions for legitimacy: “translatability into the formal mode of speech — that is, into syntactical sentences — is the criterion which separates the proper sentences of the logic of science from the other philosophical sentences — we may call them metaphysical” §73

4. Sentences about “meaning” are pseudo-object-sentences.

5. Sentences with universal words are pseudo-object-sentences.

6. Relativizing philosophical sentences to a language

Five is not a thing but a number.

‘Five’ is not a thing word but a number word.

Babylon was mentioned in yesterday’s lecture.

The word ‘Babylon’ occurred in yesterday’s lecture.