* The Principle of Verification (PoV) provides a criterion to establish the MEANINGLESSNESS of a sentence
* A SENTENCE has meaning if it expresses a VERIFIABLE (either analytically or synthetically) PROPOSITION
* It could be said that PROPOSITIONS are only true or false and this fact alone implies their MEANINGFULNESS (since every SENTENCE expressing a PROPOSITION has meaning)
* To fend off critiques, Ayer makes use of the word STATEMENT:
* Every significant grammatical form is a SENTENCE
* PROPOSITIONS are MEANINGFUL (at least literally) SENTENCES
* Every INDICATIVE SENTENCE expresses a STATEMENT
* PROPOSITIONS are a subset of STATEMENTS/ INDICATIVE STATEMENTS
* The PoV determines whether a STATEMENT express
* In the end Ayer applies the PoV to STATEMENTS, as they would be MEANINGFUL if they are either way (i.e. analytically or synthetically) VERIFIABLE
* A counter-argument could be ‘’what do SENTENCES express?’’, but since there is not a single thing they all express, while the answer to ‘’what does a particular SENTENCE express?’’ should come by translating that SENTENCE into another one

VERIFIABLE

WEAK SENSE:

if it is possible for EXPERIENCE to render it probable

* This sense is required in Ayer’s formulation of the PoV

STRONG SENSE:

a PROPOSITION is VERIFIABLE if its truth could be conclusively established in EXPERIENCE

* All PROPOSITIONS are HYPOTHESIS continually subject to the test of EXPERIENCE, so truth can never be established once and for all (not even gravity)
* In Ayer’s first formulation, this sense is useless; no PROPOSITION could be VERIFIED conclusively
* Ayer modifies his theory to accommodate critics; BASIC PROPOSITIONS (i.e. referred to single, individual EXPERIENCES) can be VERIFIED conclusively
* These are INCORRIGIBLE, as there’s no way to get them wrong if not by verbal mistakes and there won’t be further evidence of that precise EXPERIENCE
* However, these are nearly useless, because no further knowledge will come from them
* Ayer reformulates again his PoV including the OBSERVATIONAL-STATEMENT (O-S), a STATEMENT recording actual or possible observations
* PoV = a STATEMENT is VERIFIABLE ( => MEANINGFUL) if some O-S can be deduced from it in CONJUNCTION with other premises, without being deducible from the latter alone
* Ayer admits this could theoretically work for any piece of NONSENSE provided it’s an INDICATIVE SENTENCE, but also avoids being too narrow by excluding hypotheticals
* EMPIRICAL PROPOSITIONS are vague: to VERIFY a STATEMENT the occurrence of a SENSE-CONTENT in a fairly indefinite range is sufficient
* Only through the truth of some O-S, any STATEMENT about a material thing is VERIFIED
* Any STATEMENT can be represented as entailing (i.e. implies) a DISJUNCTION of O-S with infinite terms
* We shall not be troubled by vagueness, as we are not deducing particular OBSERVATION-STATEMENT, but a random one of a set (its members have a SENSE-CONTENT within a certain range) of such STATEMENTS
* DIRECT VERIFICATION: -> a STATEMENT is an O-S itself

-> in CONJUNCTION with other O-S not deducible from the premises

alone

* INDIRECT VERIFICATION: satisfies some conditions:
* Entails DIRECTLY VERIFIABLE STATEMENTS not deducible from other premises
* These premises are not analytic, DIRECTLY VERIFIABLE or independently INDIRECTLY VERIFIABLE
* Again, PoV is reformulated: it requires a non-analytic literally MEANINGFUL STATEMENT, either way VERIFIABLE (DIRECTLY or INDIRECTLY)
* Metaphysics was excluded by countless empiricists, however Ayer argues that the rebuttal of metaphysics has to be supported by the refusal of individual metaphysical arguments