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Ernst Tugendhat , Translated by P. A. Gerner  
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# **Traditional and Analytical philosophy**

## Lectures On The Philosophy Of Language

ERNST TUGENDHAT

TRANSLATED BY P. A. GORNER



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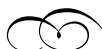
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*To the memory of Martin Heidegger*

## Contents



<i>Preface to this edition by</i> HANS-JOHANN GLOCK	<i>page</i> ix
<i>Preface</i>	xi
<i>Translator's preface</i>	xiii

### **Part I Introduction: confrontation of analytical philosophy with traditional conceptions of philosophy**

1 A question of method	3
2 A philosopher in search of a conception of philosophy	12
3 Ontology and semantics	21
4 Has formal semantics a fundamental question?	36
5 Consciousness and speech	51
6 The argument with the philosophy of consciousness continued	68
7 A practical conception of philosophy	81

### **Part II A first step: analysis of the predicative sentence**

8 Preliminary reflections on method and preview of the course of the investigation	99
9 Husserl's theory of meaning	113
10 Collapse of the traditional theory of meaning	128
11 Predicates: the first step in the development of an analytical conception of the meaning of sentences. The dispute between nominalists and conceptualists	140
12 The basic principle of analytical philosophy. The dispute continued. Predicates and quasi-predicates	159
13 The meaning of an expression and the circumstances of its use. Dispute with a behaviouristic conception	172
14 The employment-rule of an assertoric sentence. Argument with Grice and Searle	186
15 Positive account of the employment-rule of assertoric sentences in terms of the truth-relation	201

16	Supplements	216
17	'And' and 'or'	236
18	General sentences. Resumption of the problem of predicates	253
19	The mode of employment of predicates. Transition to singular terms	267
20	What is it for a sign to stand for an object? The traditional account	280
21	The function of singular terms	294
22	Russell and Strawson	307
23	What is 'identification'?	321
24	Specification and identification. Specification and truth	334
25	Spatio-temporal identification and the constitution of the object-relation	349
26	Supplements	360
	I The connection between object-relation, situation-independence and the truth-capacity of assertoric speech	360
	II Reciprocal dependence of the identification of spatio-temporal objects and the identification of spatio-temporal positions	370
27	Results	386
	I The analytical concept of an object	389
	II The mode of employment of predicative sentences and the explanation of the word 'true'	396
28	The next steps	406
	<i>Bibliography</i>	427
	<i>Index of names</i>	432
	<i>Index of subjects</i>	434

## Preface to this edition

HANS-JOHANN GLOCK



Like modern physics, analytical philosophy is mainly the invention of German speakers. Unfortunately, Nazism drove analytical philosophy out of *Mitteleuropa*. As a result, it had to be rediscovered after World War II. This process took several forms. Some Germanophone philosophers without prior allegiances adumbrated analytical philosophy wholeheartedly, and became mainstream analytical philosophers. Others approached analytical philosophy from their own indigenous perspective, such as the critical hermeneutics of Apel and Habermas. But their use of analytical philosophy is often eclectic. This book constitutes a far more profound attempt to combine analytical, traditional and so-called ‘continental’ philosophy. Ernst Tugendhat is a German Jew who, in 1949, returned from exile to study with Heidegger, and later immersed himself in analytical philosophy. Throughout he has used analytical tools to pursue his own questions, derived mainly from Aristotle and Heidegger. Moreover, he has done so in a way which transforms *both* the traditional questions *and* the analytic methods. His discussion of analytical and traditional philosophy is not based on pointing out interesting but ultimately inconsequential analogies, e.g. between Frege and Husserl, or Heidegger and the later Wittgenstein. Instead, it takes the form of a sustained and ambitious project which is analytical in its argumentative rigour, and continental in its methodological ambitions and historical awareness. Tugendhat tries to make a *rationaly compelling* case for analytical philosophy by showing that it alone can realize the legitimate aims of traditional philosophy. Starting out from a highly sophisticated reflection on meta-philosophical themes, he makes a powerful case for holding that the method of linguistic analysis is the ‘defensible core’ of the venerable idea that philosophy is *a priori*. This case is all the more relevant, given the contemporary revival of meta-philosophy and the largely knee-jerk repudiation of conceptual analysis by an unholy alliance of analytic naturalism and essentialism on the one side and ‘continental’ irrationalism on the other.

Tugendhat demonstrates that both the ontological problems of Aristotle and Heidegger and the projects of Kant and Husserl are best pursued in

the context of semantics. His theory combines a Davidsonian formal semantics with speech-act theory and Wittgensteinian ideas about use and verification in a way that is both clearer and more compelling than the far better-known attempt by Dummett. It also features what I regard as the most plausible account of singular terms, informed not just by debates between Fregeans and Kripkeans, but also by fascinating insights from traditional philosophical theories about the nature of objects.

When I started reading philosophy at Tübingen in the 1980s, the only positions reckoned with were left-wing Hegelianism, right-wing Hegelianism and Kantianism. Tugendhat's book came as a beacon of light to me and other analytic 'dissidents'. The reissue of its translation into English could not be more timely and welcome. For all those who are interested in a serious debate between analytical and continental philosophy and in the prospect of a 'post-analytic' philosophy, Tugendhat's work remains the best place to start.



## Preface



In so-called analytical or language-analytical philosophy there is little reflection on its own foundations, and today less than before. For the most part the problems treated are inherited problems which are not questioned. Partly this is due to a lack of historical consciousness. A way of philosophizing can only become a fundamental philosophical position by confronting it with earlier conceptions of philosophy. This reflection on foundations is not just an additional act of self-clarification. It is a condition of a philosophy's ability to perceive the task that has always been the genuinely philosophical task: the examination of existing questions, methods and basic concepts, and the development of new ones.

These lectures aim to provide an impetus in this direction. They therefore have the character of an introduction. By means of a confrontation with traditional philosophy's fundamental orientation to the subject-object schema they attempt to bring questions which already exist in analytical philosophy into the context of a specifically language-analytical fundamental question. As regards content, they move in a field of investigation that is by no means new; and even in this field they take only a first step.

The book is directed at three different groups of readers. The reader whom it addresses directly in the form of lectures is the philosophical beginner, for whom it could serve as an introduction to the philosophical way of thinking. At the same time it is directed, if only in an oblique way, at the reader who is already well-versed in linguistic analysis. Above all, however, it is directed at those who, being more or less familiar with traditional philosophical modes of conception, miss in analytical philosophy a fundamental question which can be compared with the great traditional approaches. This book seeks to build a bridge for such readers, by trying to show that analytical philosophy contains a fundamental question which can not only compare with the traditional approaches but actually proves to be superior to them.

This aim is a reflection of my own development, which started out from Heidegger and led to language-analytical philosophy. I became convinced that Heidegger's question about the understanding of 'Being' can only acquire a concrete and realizable meaning within the framework of a

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Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

---

xii

PREFACE

language-analytical philosophy. Although there is hardly any mention of Heidegger in these lectures I owe to him the specific mode of access with which I approach the problems of analytical philosophy. For this reason the book is dedicated to him.

It has its origin in lectures I gave in Heidelberg in the summer semester of 1970. Although I have re-written and expanded the text it seemed to me sensible to retain the lecture-form.

E. T.  
*Starnberg*  
*March 1976*

## Translator's preface



My aim throughout this translation has been to combine accuracy with readability, but at times the latter quality has had to take second place. Whenever possible, long sentences have been broken down into several shorter ones, but in some cases to have done this would have significantly altered the sense of what is being said.

As for my translation of individual words the following require some comment. For *Vorstellung* I have used 'representation' rather than 'idea', for to have chosen the latter would have made it impossible to translate the verbal forms *vorstellen*, *vorgestellt* etc. I considered the more literal 'presentation', but in the end settled for 'representation' because of the currency it has acquired through Kemp Smith's translation of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. For both *Bezugnahme*, *bezugnehmen* and *Verweisung*, *verweisen* I have had to use 'reference', 'refer'. For the most part it is clear from the context which sense is intended, but where there is the possibility of confusion I have put the German term in brackets. For *gegenständlich* I have used the artificial 'objectual' because 'objective' would have been positively misleading. *Gegenständlich* means something like 'having the character of an object'. It has nothing to do with 'objective' in the sense in which, for example, a judgment may be objective (rather than subjective).

In translating quotations from Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen* I have in the main followed J. N. Findlay's translation. In the case of Wittgenstein I have simply reproduced the standard English translations without making any changes.

I would like to thank Professor Tugendhat for the thoroughness of his comments at every of the translation, my friends Eric Matthews and Guy Stock for some very helpful discussions of points relating to the translation, and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for enabling me to have two periods of study in Germany with consequent benefit to my knowledge of German philosophy and the German language. Finally, I wish to thank Professor Hans Werner Arndt of the University of Mannheim for having first drawn my attention to Professor Tugendhat's book.

P. A. GORNER  
*University of Aberdeen*