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The Analytic-Continental Split: A Comparative Study of Language Use in Philosophical Works

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Abstract

Comparative philosophy, distinct from other comparative disciplines, has encountered specific challenges concerning its legitimacy. Scholars have questioned its feasibility, employing Wittgensteinian theories that address the incommensurability of disparate cultures. However, figures such as Robert W. Smid and Ralph Weber argue that comparative philosophy seeks to engage with this incommensurability and is fundamentally inclusive. Meta-philosophers have also grappled with the analytic-continental divide in 20th-century philosophy, a rift between "Platonian" thought and "logical analysis." This paper addresses the analytic-continental divide highlighted in Richard Rorty's work, adopting the inclusive approach of comparative philosophy as proposed by Weber and Smid. It examines passages from the works of eight philosophers – Heidegger, Wittgenstein, Saussure, Putnam, Smart, Austin, Derrida, and Butler – representing both analytic and continental traditions, focusing on their use of language as a tool. In the context of the 20th-century linguistic turn, language serves various functions in analytic and continental philosophy; this paper proposes a tripartite system: "using language for its meaning," "using language to establish language theories," and "using language theory for fields outside semantics." By classifying these philosophers' works under a unified system based on language use, this comparative study embraces the notion of inclusivity articulated by Smid and Weber and strives to bridge the analytic-continental divide referenced by Rorty.

Introduction: The Viability of Comparative Philosophy and Its Inevitable Features

The methodology of comparative philosophy has long been put into doubt. After the debate on whether to categorize non-Western thoughts as philosophies, while most scholars have come to accept that comparative philosophy encompasses all thoughts worldwide, a new problem emerges: the viability of comparative philosophy is questioned by scholars like Samuel Fleischacker, who explicitly points out the methodological error in comparative philosophy, an issue due to cultural incommensurability:

> His [Fleischacker's] argument has roots in Wittgenstein's view that knowledge depends on a background of shared assumptions and standards of evidence. "World pictures" are embedded within cultures. Our world picture involves not only a distinctive set of beliefs about the world but also an ordering of interests that determines how we go about trying to have reliable beliefs. This ordering differs from those dominant in other cultures.[1]

Studies of comparative philosophy are thus refuted by epistemology and the philosophy of language. Wittgenstein's theories in *Philosophical Investigations* point out the essential disconnection between the language and the referents, or in Wong's language the *world pictures*.[2] The tight connection between such images and the cultures is preventing scholars from drawing comparisons between philosophies of, for instance, China and Western Europe; since cultures are vastly different so much so that the languages used cannot represent equivalent referents, it is impossible to compare them under the same realm.

Nevertheless, scholars like Ralph Weber and Daya Krishna argue that comparative studies should disregard culture as a barrier;[3,4] Weber attributes the concern of culture as a *pre-comparative tertium* to intentions other than philosophy itself, claiming:

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[1] David Wong, "Comparative Philosophy: Chinese and Western," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2020 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/comparphil-chiwes/.
[2] Ludwig Wittgenstein et al., *Philosophische Untersuchungen: Philosophical Investigations*, Rev. 4th ed (Chichester, West Sussex, UK; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 13–15.
[3] Ralph Weber, "'How to Compare?' – On the Methodological State of Comparative Philosophy," *Philosophy Compass* 8, no. 7 (July 2013): 593–603, https://doi.org/10.1111/phc3.12042.
[4] Daya Krishna, "Comparative Philosophy: What It Is and What It Ought to Be," *Diogenes*, 1986, 58–69.

> Those who rely on cultures as philosophically relevant pre-comparative *tertium* may have radically different reasons and purposes in mind, from the worst of chauvinist culturalism to the best of strategic essentialism.[5]

Furthermore, Weber claims that the more cultures are taken as the *pre-comparative tertium*, the more ambiguities become pertinent. As an example, Weber argues that the inclusion of the cultural tag as the *pre-comparative tertium* gives Mou Zongsan's criticism of Immanuel Kant a classification of Chinese Philosophy rather than a conventional "criticism of Kant's take on intellectual intuition (had the criticism been offered, say, by a German or US American Kant scholar)."[6]

Finally, comparative philosophy lacks disciplinary boundaries – what kind of study qualifies? Weber, in the same article "'How to Compare?' – On the Methodological State of Comparative Philosophy," brought up Robert W. Smid's definition of comparative philosophy in *Methodologies of Comparative Philosophy* to refine the borders of the study. Smid claims:

> Comparative philosophy can be defined by its attempt to move across the boundaries of otherwise distinct philosophical traditions – especially insofar as these traditions are divided by significant historical and cultural distance – thus enabling a comparison of what lies on either side of the boundary.[7]

Smid concludes that a comparison between Descartes and Locke would be equal an instance of comparative philosophy to one between Mencius and Aquinas.[8] Therefore, comparative philosophy does not have to encompass a large difference in space or time, as long as the two *relatas (comparatas)* invite classification as "otherwise distinct philosophies."[9]

This paper contrasts the use of language (and language theories) in 20th-century philosophy, specifically addressing a way to categorize the use of language among continental philosophy and analytic philosophy despite the long-existing split.[10] A few specific works from the two philosophical realms are examined, whose authors include

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[5] Weber, "How to Compare?," 601.
[6] Weber, 601.
[7] Weber, 599.
[8] Weber, 599.
[9] Weber, 595.
[10] Richard Rorty, *Consequences of Pragmatism: Essays: 1972 - 1980*, 11. printing (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2008), 223.

Heidegger, Putnam, Smart, Butler, Derrida, Saussure, Wittgenstein, and Austin. These works focus on a wide range of topics, from "Being" to brain functions, social performatives, gender, and political philosophy. Among these authors, a few are considered continental philosophers – Heidegger and Derrida – and a few are known for their analytic approach, such as Putnam and Smart.[11] Despite the variety of issues and topics each philosopher addresses, one characteristic in their works will be examined: their use of language as a tool. Taking on Weber and Smid's argument that comparative philosophy seeks comparison between otherwise distinct philosophies, this paper attempts to suggest a system that universally categorizes these works based on their use of language:

1. Using language for its meaning (Heidegger)
2. Using language to establish language theories (Wittgenstein, Saussure, and Austin)
3. Using language theory for fields outside semantics (Putnam, Smart, Derrida, and Butler)

Part I of this paper introduces each philosopher's use of language in their works; Part II analyzes each work, classifying them by the three categories above and explaining why they belong to their category. The last section, "Comparative philosophy in the analytic-continental split", presents the analytic-continental split in Richard Rorty's work, and re-establishes this paper's standpoint on the topic: By analyzing ways in which each selected work maneuvers language as a tool, and categorizing them under the same system, this paper attempts to reconcile the analytic-continental split addressed by Richard Rorty through Smid and Webers' principle of comparative methodology, showing that continental and analytic philosophies are not utterly incompatible.

Part I: Language Usage in Heideggerian Metaphysics and Semantics-Related Works

Heidegger

In *Introduction to Metaphysics*, Martin Heidegger writes that the fundamental question of metaphysics is to examine the issue of "Being." The first chapter, "The Fundamental Question of Metaphysics", invites the question of "Why are there beings at all?" and the grounds for

[11] Richard Rorty, 224–25.

essential existence.[12] Establishing the ontological importance of "Being," Martin Heidegger calls this shift in philosophical concentration across the history of philosophy the "originary leap (*Ur-sprung*)."[13] In the chapter "On the Grammar and Etymology of the Word 'Being'" he constantly brings about language references from Greek philosophy works, to contrast the antique interpretations of existential issues with his own.[14]

Phusis is the Greek word for *beings-as-such*, the pre-socratic word for *Being*. Heidegger uses *phusis* as the word that defines the process of self-revealing, the emerging-abiding sway.[15] *Phusis* carries the meaning of *Being* that explores the process of coming into existence, a dynamic of disclosure, an unconcealment, and the process of becoming that is essential in Heideggerian metaphysics on existence.[16] The stress of a process rather than a state is fully demonstrated in the use of *phusis* not only in *Introduction to Metaphysics* but also in Heidegger's later works such as "The Question Concerning Technology."[17] Heidegger's use of Greek etymology is primarily attributable to his consideration of ancient Greek philosophical focus on *phusis* (or *physis*) as the *right* way of metaphysics and his disappointment at later works going astray on this focus.[18]

Onoma is the name for "noun" but comes from "name," also signified by *dēlōma pragmatos,* "a manifestation of things." ***Rhēma*** is the name for "verb" but comes from "spoken utterance," also signified as *dēlōma praxeōs*, "a manifestation of a doing." Aristotle distinguishes *onoma* and *rhēma* as *sēmantikon aneu chronou* (signifying without reference to time) and *prossēmmainon chronon* (indicating time), respectively.[19] To address changes ("inflections") of the verb and the noun – *rhēma* and *onoma* – Heidegger mentions the concept of ***enklisis*** (*declinatio* in Latin) and ***ptosis*** (*casus* in Latin). The former literally means "an inclining to the side."[20]

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[12] Gregory Fried and Richard Polt, trans., "Chapter One: The Fundamental Question of Metaphysics," in *Introduction to Metaphysics*, by Martin Heidegger (Yale University Press, 2000), 1–3.
[13] Fried and Polt, 7.
[14] Gregory Fried and Richard Polt, trans., "Chapter Two: On the Grammar and Etymology of the Word 'Being,'" in *Introduction to Metaphysics*, by Martin Heidegger (Yale University Press, 2000), 55–78.
[15] Fried and Polt, "Chapter One: The Fundamental Question of Metaphysics," 15.
[16] Fried and Polt, 16.
[17] Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in *Martin Heidegger: Basic Writings*, ed. David Farell Krell (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 3–4.
[18] Fried and Polt, "Chapter One: The Fundamental Question of Metaphysics," 19.
[19] Fried and Polt, "Chapter Two: On the Grammar and Etymology of the Word 'Being,'" 61.
[20] Fried and Polt, 62.

Peras stands for the self-constraining limit that brings beings to a stand, and ***telos*** signifies the coming-to-fulfillment of a being.[21] ***Morphē*** is the shape of the things achieving *telos*; ***eidos*** is the relation of the *morphē* to an observer (e.g. Consider the fittingness of a thing that has reached fulfillment in a limit). ***Ousia*** stands for Being, which Heidegger points out has been misinterpreted as "substance"; he calls it a "thoughtless" translation. He points out that *Ousia* is more ***Parousia***, which stands for "coming-to-presence." Heidegger uses such a correction of meanings to establish his definition of Being as an emerging-abiding sway, which stresses the process of coming-into-presence.[22]

Saussure, Wittgenstein, Putnam, and Smart

Analytic philosophies of the 20th century, on various topics including the brain, language, epistemology, gender, and the government, incorporate uses of language different from Heidegger's. While a group of linguistic philosophers explore the function of language to provide models of language and utterances, other philosophers take on these conclusions and incorporate them into their various studies.

Wittgenstein and Saussure, for example, conclude on the disconnection between the language and its referents. In *Course in General Linguistics*, Saussure writes:

> The bond between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary. Since I mean by sign the whole that results from the associating of the signifier with the signified, I can simply say: *the linguistic sign is arbitrary*.[23]

The "signifier" is the language or the sign that is used to communicate an idea, and the "signified" is what is referred to behind the sign. The concept of the arbitrariness of language and its referents, as discussed in Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, is similarly examined through what he refers to as a "language-game."

> Are you conscious of its consisting of four words *while* you are uttering it?… And I have conceded that the foreigner, who conceives the sentence differently, will probably also

[21] Fried and Polt, 63.
[22] Fried and Polt, 63–64.
[23] Perry Meisel and Haun Saussy, eds., "Part One: General Principles," in *Course in General Linguistics*, by Ferdinand de Saussure, trans. Wade Baskin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), 67.

> pronounce it differently; but what we call his wrong conception does not *have* to lie in anything that accompanies the utterance of the command.[24]

> But how many kinds of sentences are there? Say assertion, question and command? – There are *countless* kinds; countless different kinds of use of all the things we call "signs", "words", "sentences". And this diversity is not something fixed, given once for all; but new types of language, new language-games, as we may say, come into existence, and others become obsolete and get forgotten. (We can get a *rough picture* of this from the changes in mathematics.) The word "language-*game*" is used here to emphasize the fact that the *speaking* of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life.[25]

Such conclusions of the inconsistency between language and its referents are used by Hilary Putnam and J.J.C. Smart on brains and epistemic issues.

Putnam, in "Brains in a Vat" of *Reason, Truth and History*, uses the language property of Saussure and Wittgenstein to analyze scenarios like someone randomly making an utterance that happens to be Japanese, and a monkey typing out a copy of *Hamlet*.

> In short, everything passing before the person's mind might be qualitatively identical with what was passing through the mind of a Japanese speaker who was *really* thinking about trees – but none of it would refer to trees.[26]

> All of this is really impossible, of course, in the way that it is really impossible that monkeys should by chance type out a copy of *Hamlet*. …If it did happen, it would be a striking demonstration of an important conceptual truth; that even a large and complex system of representations, both verbal and visual, still does not have an *intrinsic,* built-in, magical connection with what it represents – a connection independent of how it was caused and what the dispositions of the speaker or thinker are.[27]

[24] Wittgenstein et al., *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, 13.
[25] Wittgenstein et al., 14–15.
[26] Hilary Putnam, *Reason, Truth and History* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 5.
[27] Putnam, 5.

Putnam proceeds to answer the "Brain in a vat" issue with this disconnection between representations and referents. If a brain is placed in a vat and "evil scientists" connect nerve endings to a computer that simulates the sensations of the real world, such that the brain can experience all sensations like reality, how do you know that you are not in this predicament? To answer "Am I a brain in a vat?" Putnam argues that a real brain in a vat when uttering the words "I am a brain in a vat," doesn't really comprehend the meaning of its words, while we obviously do know what a brain in a vat refers to, thus we are NOT brains in vats. In other words, if the statement "I am a brain in a vat" is true, then it is NOT true.[28]

A more functional use of language theories is in J.J.C. Smart's "Sensations and Brain Processes." In trying to prove that sensations *are* brain processes, Smart gives eight objections to the claim and refutes each one. In objection five, he writes:

> *Objection 5*. It would make sense to say of a molecular movement in the brain that it is swift or slow, straight or circular, but it makes no sense to say this of the experience of seeing something yellow.
>
> *Reply*. … "Somebody" and "the doctor" do not have the same logic, but this does not lead us to suppose that talking about somebody telephoning is talking about someone over and above, say, the doctor. The ordinary man when he reports an experience is reporting that something is going on, but he leaves it open as to what sort of thing is going on,…All that I am saying is that "experience" and "brain-process" may in fact refer to the same thing, and if so we may easily adopt a convention (which is not a change in our present rules for the use of experience words but an addition to them) whereby it would make sense to talk of an experience in terms appropriate to physical processes.[29]

Smart uses the linguistic method of references to prove that experience and brain-process **can** mean the same thing although the latter is *over and above* the former, thus making the two words interchangeable and rendering the objection useless.[30]

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[28] Putnam, 13.
[29] J. J. C. Smart, "Sensations and Brain Processes," *The Philosophical Review* 68 (April 1959): 151–52.
[30] Smart, 152.

Austin, Derrida, and Butler

On the other hand, J.L. Austin's works on the rules of language emphasize semantics not epistemically but rather functionally. To draw a parallel with Saussure's semiotics and Wittgenstein's theory of the language game which give rise to the deductions in Putnam's and Smart's analytic philosophies, Austin's discussions on different types of utterances lay the foundations for social theories. For instance, in "Lecture I," *How to Do Things with Words,* he defines performative utterance as sentences that are actions when being stated:

> Utterances can be found, satisfying these conditions, yet such that
> A. they do not 'describe' or 'report' or constate anything at all, are not 'true or false'; and
> B. the uttering of the sentence is, or is a part of, the doing of an action, which again would not *normally* be described as saying something.[31]
>
> Austin gives some examples:
>
> (E. *a*) 'I do (sc. take this woman to be my lawful wedded wife)' – as uttered in the course of the marriage ceremony.
> (E. *b*) 'I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*' – as uttered when smashing the bottle against the stem.
> (E. *c*) 'I give and bequeath my watch to my brother' – as occurring in a will.
> (E. *d*) 'I bet you sixpence it will rain tomorrow.'[32]

Jacques Derrida in his article "Declarations of Independence" explores the performative utterance in the US Declaration of Independence. Signing the document, as a performative act, gives birth to concepts that are seemingly the premise of the document yet only come into existence through the act of signing:

> Here then is the "good people" who engage themselves and engage only themselves in signing, in having their own declaration signed. The "we" of the declaration speaks "in the name of the people."

[31] J. L. Austin, *HOW TO DO THINGS WITH WORDS* (OXFORD AT THE CLARENDON PRESS, 1962), 5.
[32] J. L. Austin, 5.

> But this people does not exist. They do *not* exist as an entity, it does *not* exist, *before* this declaration, not *as such*. If it gives birth to itself, as free and independent subject, as possible signer, this can hold only in the act of the signature. The signature invents the signer. This signer can only authorize him- or herself to sign once he or she has come to the end [*parvenu au vout*], if one can say this, of his or her own signature, in a sort of fabulous retroactivity. That first signature authorizes him or her to sign.[33]

Judith Butler, in "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," takes on performative acts to explain the construction of gender identities in a social context. Behaviors don't inform others of a gender identity, it *is* gender identity:

> As performance which is performative, gender is an 'act,' broadly construed, which constructs the social fiction of its own psychological interiority.[34]

> As anthropologist Victor Turner suggests in his studies of ritual social drama, social action requires a performance which is *repeated*. This repetition is at once a reenactment and reexperiencing of a set of meanings already socially established; …[35]

Butler and Derrida expand Austin's performative utterance into gender theories and the philosophy of political innovation. Similarly, Putnam and Smart's journals on the epistemic components of language and the non-functionalist process of the brain (though of different fields) expand on the language theory of Saussure and Wittgenstein. Nevertheless, how each of them exploits language theories, either as their focus or for other purposes, is to be comparatively analyzed. Heidegger, Wittgenstein, Saussure, Putnam, Smart, Austin, Derrida, and Butler's works each utilize language for their unique purposes; this paper explores a way to universally categorize these uses despite the works' differences in the analytic-continental split.

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[33] Jacques Derrida, "Declarations of Independence," *New Political Science* 7, no. 1 (June 1986): 10, https://doi.org/10.1080/07393148608429608.
[34] Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," *Theatre Journal* 40, no. 4 (December 1988): 528, https://doi.org/10.2307/3207893.
[35] Butler, 526.

Part II: Analyses of Semantic Usage

Works of Heidegger, Wittgenstein, Saussure, Putnam, Smart, Austin, Derrida, and Butler encompass a variety of semantic uses. In other words, language plays different roles in their works. We can, however, find a way to put their diverse use of language into three categories: "using language for its meaning"; "using language to establish language theories"; and "using language theory for fields outside semantics."

Using Language to Establish Meaning: Heidegger

Heidegger's use of semantics differs from that of other philosophers examined in that he uses semantics to draw an emphasis on the Greek terminologies of existential philosophy. For instance, *phusis* presents the definition of Being as the emerging-abiding sway, or the process of a being revealing itself.[36] *Rhēma* and *onoma* bring about the ancient concept of nouns and verbs, as well as the notion of time. Not to neglect words like *peras and telos* that define the state of Being in relation to its emergence, *morphē* and *eidos* which signify the material shape of the *telos* and its epistemic relation to observers, or *ousia* and *parousia* which semantically separates the Being and the being – one meaning the state of being and the other the substance.[37]

The first few chapters of the *Introduction to Metaphysics* – "The Fundamental Question of Metaphysics" and "On the Grammar and Etymology of the Word 'Being'" – use the meaning of language, or lexical semantics.[38] Heidegger, however, doesn't delve into the rules of words to reach some profound conclusions of lexical semantics, thus this chapter cannot be called representative of lexical semantics. Rather, he introduces language only for its meanings. Upon introducing the meanings of the Greek words on existence and ontological metaphysics, he drew connections with modern claims on the topic. The use of language, therefore, is only in its basic form; namely that using language is to introduce its meaning.

Such use is evident in the dictionary-styled introduction of terminologies:

[36] Fried and Polt, "Chapter One: The Fundamental Question of Metaphysics," 15–19.
[37] Fried and Polt, "Chapter Two: On the Grammar and Etymology of the Word 'Being,'" 61–64.
[38] Dirk Geeraerts, "Lexical Semantics" (Oxford University Press, January 2017), https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199384655.013.29.

> *Onoma* **means** the linguistic name as distinguished from the named person or thing, and it also **means** the speaking of a word, which was later conceived grammatically as *rhēma*. And *rhēma* in turn **means** the spoken word, speech…[39]

Language in Heidegger's work serves the most basic function of carrying its definition, rather than some higher metalogical theories or even further using the theory for other studies like what Derrida, Butler, Smart, and Putnam have done.

Using Language to Establish Language Theories: Wittgenstein, Saussure, and Austin

Wittgenstein's use of semantics in his theory of the language-game, as shown in *Philosophical Investigations,* is the same as that of Saussure in *Course in General Linguistics*: to demonstrate a language theory. Although also focusing on the meaning of words, the purpose goes beyond simply using its meaning but rather to illustrate some theory, pattern, or language rules epistemically and performatively. Saussure's signifier and the signified demonstrate the essential disconnection between the symbol and the referents;[40] Wittgenstein's language-game also proves such an arbitrariness between the two.[41] The function of language diverges greatly from that of Heidegger, as what a scholar in meta-philosophy might call the incompatibility between continental philosophy and analytic philosophy.[42]

Take J. L. Austin as another example of such use of language. In "Lecture 1," *How to Do Things with Words*, Austin introduces the concept of performative utterance, which renders the introduction of a semantic theory its purpose.[43] In other words, his work uses language for a language theory. Wittgenstein, Saussure, and Austin each exploit language in their works for such purposes.

Linguistic philosophers like Wittgenstein, Saussure, and Austin give examples in their proof of language theories, yet it is important to recognize that these examples do not constitute "using language theory for fields outside semantics" For instance, Austin gives examples upon

[39] Fried and Polt, "Chapter Two: On the Grammar and Etymology of the Word 'Being,'" 60.
[40] Perry Meisel and Haun Saussy, "Part One: General Principles," 67.
[41] Wittgenstein et al., *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, 13–15.
[42] Richard Rorty, *Consequences of Pragmatism*, 223.
[43] J. L. Austin, *HOW TO DO THINGS WITH WORDS*, 5.

stating the definition of performative utterance to demonstrate its meaning:

> …
> (E. *c*) 'I give and bequeath my watch to my brother' – as occurring in a will.
> (E. *d*) 'I bet you sixpence it will rain tomorrow.'[44]

So does Wittgenstein, in an example of a language-game:

> Imagine a language-game in which A asks, and B reports, the number of slabs or blocks in a pile, or the colours and shapes of the building stones that are stacked in such-and-such a place. – Such a report might run: "Five slabs." Now what is the difference between the report or assertion "Five slabs" and the order "Five slabs!"?[45]

Comparatively examining, however, leads to the conclusion that *giving examples* like the two philosophers do is different from "using language theory for fields outside semantics." Unlike authors like Putnam and Smart who clearly use language theories as a medium for further arguments, Wittgenstein, Saussure, and Austin explore examples only to strengthen their language theory. Evidently, "five slabs" is not the focus of *Philosophical Investigations*, neither is discussing "betting sixpence it will rain tomorrow" the intention of "Lecture I," *How to Do Things with Words*.

Using Language Theory for Applications Beyond Semantics: Putnam, Smart, Derrida, and Butler

In "Brain in a Vat" of the book *Reason, Truth and History,* Putnam discusses multiple scenarios that involve using Saussure's theory of the signifier and the signified – what Putnam calls the "representation" and the "mental image."[46] As shown in Part I of this paper, Putnam's examples include a person randomly saying words that happen to be Japanese, a monkey typing out a copy of *Hamlet*, aliens seeing a picture of a tree, etc.[47] Using Saussure and Wittgenstein's theory, Putnam brings them further to examine the validity of each scenario, ultimately to answer "Am I a brain in a vat?"[48] In the process of his argument, he ties

[44] J. L. Austin, 5.
[45] Wittgenstein et al., *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, 13.
[46] Putnam, *Reason, Truth and History*, 2–3.
[47] Putnam, 5.
[48] Putnam, 6.

his thoughts to that of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*. To lead to his argument, Putnam also introduces the concept of a self-refuting claim, quoting Descartes as he provides the example of being able to assure one's existence when one's thinking about existence.[49] Putnam attributes his approach to the Brain in a Vat issue to Wittgenstein as follows:

> What makes it [the argument] seem so strange is that it is connected with some of the very deepest issues in philosophy. (It first occurred to me when I was thinking about a theorem in modern logic, the 'Skolem-Löwenheim Theorem', and I suddenly saw a connection between this theorem and some arguments in Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*.)[50]

The influence of Wittgenstein's language theory on Putnam's work is evident, while Putnam is not interested in deriving a language theory like Wittgenstein's. Therefore, Putnam's use of language is "using language theory for fields outside semantics," this "field" being unresolved dilemmas in consciousness and epistemology like "Am I a brain in a vat?" Notably, Putnam also refers to the *Turing Test* to support his argument, incorporating reference into the test to become the *Turing Test for Reference*.[51] Similar to philosophers proposing theories of language, Alan Turing's "Computing Machinery and Intelligence" presents a theory later modified by Putnam in his own studies.[52] In *Brains in a Vat*, Putnam uses the *Turing Test for Reference* to show the case of a conversation with indefinite mental images.[53]

Another instance of "using language theory for fields outside semantics" is in Smart's "Sensations and Brain Processes." The essay aims to prove that sensations *are* brain processes, yet it involves language theories as a methodology.[54] Smart mentions the linguistic property of "over and above" in *Objection 5* and *Reply*, which is not the only time he mentions such in this work:

> Nor does it claim that the logic of a sensation statement is the same as that of a brain-process statement. All it claims is that in so far as a sensation statement is a report of

[49] Putnam, 7–8.
[50] Putnam, 7.
[51] Putnam, 9.
[52] Alan Turing, "COMPUTING MACHINERY AND INTELLIGENCE," *Thomas Nelson & Sons* 59 (October 1950): 433–60.
[53] Putnam, *Reason, Truth and History*, 9–10.
[54] Smart, "Sensations and Brain Processes," 144.

> something, that something is in fact a brain process. Sensations are nothing over and above brain processes.[55]

Although Smart intends to prove that sensations are brain processes, he repeatedly delves into the semantics and the structure of the statement "sensations *are* brain processes," making the argument not entirely neuro-philosophical but rather related to the philosophy of utterances. In *Objection 5* and *Reply*, an ordinary man "reports an experience."[56] The inclusion of a subject making the claim is 1) an essential component in the philosophy of mind on whether sensational experiences like "a yellowish-orange after-image" are a brain process,[57] and 2) a method that allows Smart to devote part of the neuro-philosophical discussion to the philosophy of language. In short, what Smart is analyzing is not whether sensations are brain processes but rather the process of making the statement "sensations are brain processes." This analysis is based on a semantic ground, yet it also involves some subject doing the act of speaking, like in "…That these should be correlated with brain processes does not help, for to **say** that they are *correlated* is to **say** that they are something 'over and above.'"[58] This is different from expressions like "that these (states of consciousness) are *correlated* with brain processes mean that they are something 'over and above'" which involves no subject or action.

Smart's entire argument is based on the context of an utterance, or a "report." Therefore, the theory of reference is also present in Smart's essay, specifically in the reply to *Objection 5*: "All that I am saying is that "experience" and "brain-process" may in fact refer to the same thing…"[59] Such uses of the "reference" property of utterances originates from linguistic philosophers like Saussure. "Sensations and Brain Processes" is thus "using language theory for fields outside semantics."

Finally, Derrida and Butler. The excerpt from Derrida's "Declarations of Independence" shown in Part I of this paper shows the incorporation of the performative utterance theory into the historical and social context. "If it [people] gives birth to itself, as free and independent subject, as possible signer, this can hold only in the act of the signature."[60] Taking the definition of performative utterance in Austin's *How to Do Things with Words*, Derrida points out the baseless

[55] Smart, 144–45.
[56] Smart, 151.
[57] Smart, 144.
[58] Smart, 142.
[59] Smart, 151.
[60] Derrida, "Declarations of Independence," 10.

nature of the US Declaration of Independence as based on statements that only come to existence in doing the performative act of signing the declaration itself.[61] Derrida's work, from a comparative perspective, is the same as Putnam and Smart in that he also uses some theory of language – in this case performative utterance – to make a claim in other fields (in this case the philosophy of politics and the creation of institutions.)

Butler's "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay on Phenomenology and Feminist Theory" is also a case of "using language theory for fields outside semantics." Butler puts gender performatives in the social context, using the concept of performative utterance to explore the nature of presenting one's gender. As they repeatedly draw a parallel between acts and theater, they claim that genders **are** performative and only exist to the extent they are performed. It is in the performative action that gender is made real.[62] This theory takes Austin's performative utterance into gender studies, specifically in the phenomenology of gender performatives.

Conclusion: Comparative Philosophy in the Analytic-Continental Split

The analytic-continental split has long been addressed by scholars of meta-philosophy, including Richard Rorty, the American philosopher and philosophy historian. This meta-philosophical discussion attempts to categorize historical philosophies in a new dichotomy, yet it undoubtedly generates division and incompatibility theories in philosophical discussions and is not a universally applicable model.

As neo-pragmatist figures continue the wave of pragmatist philosophy from William James and John Dewey, philosophies of the late 20th century dive into the analytics, the logic, and the less Platonian reasoning, not to neglect figures like Rorty who focuses extensively on the history of philosophy as a professor in philosophy, the humanities, and comparative literature.[63] The analytic-continental dichotomy is stressed repeatedly in his work *Consequences of Pragmatism*, while this paper attempts to respond to this split by showcasing the viability of putting these works into one system of categorization.[64] This attempt to

[61] Derrida, 8–10.
[62] Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution," 527.
[63] Bjørn Ramberg and Susan Dieleman, "Richard Rorty," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2023 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman, https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2023/entries/rorty/.
[64] Richard Rorty, *Consequences of Pragmatism*, 224–27.

reconcile the incompatible dichotomy between the two philosophies exemplifies the purpose of comparative philosophy: comparing ideas that are **otherwise** considered completely unrelated to each other.[65]

Richard Rorty, in "4. The 'Analytic'-'Continental' Split" of *Consequences of Pragmatism*, claims that the analytic-continental split is "permanent and harmless."[66] To this, Rorty addresses in this section the divide between analytic and continental philosophy – especially the growing popularity of the latter – in academia, specifically in the departments of politics, history, philosophy, and comparative literature.[67] Rorty attempts to reconcile the two approaches to philosophy after he addresses the drastic difference between Hegel, Locke, Leibniz, Hume, and later continental philosophers like Heidegger and Marx, as they do not fit in with the standards of "what qualifies as philosophy" for analytic philosophers.[68] The *logic* in Hegel, Rorty claims, is not the focus of continental philosophers of the nineteenth century:

> It also makes sense if one emphasizes the Logic and Hegel's rhetoric about "system" and "Wissenschaft." But these are not the parts of Hegel's work that mattered to Marx or, more generally, to the historical and political thought of the nineteenth century. What mattered were precisely those parts which turned away from the knowledge of nature, from the phenomenon of the New Science to the historicist self-understanding and self-determination of human beings: the *Phenomenology*, the *Philosophy of Right*, and the *Philosophy of History*.[69]

But should they be categorized as non-philosophers or ones who failed to be philosophers? To this Rorty describes it to be "as silly as saying that Plato was an incompetent sophist, or that a hedgehog is an incompetent fox."[70] In this book, Rorty attempts to reconcile the division between analytic philosophy and continental philosophy. He mentions hearing instances when analytic philosophers condemn comparative literature departments for teaching Derrida and Nietzsche, and those when continental philosophers felt obnoxious about the "mere logic-chopping" of analytic philosophy traditions.[71]

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[65] Weber, "How to Compare?," 599.
[66] Richard Rorty, *Consequences of Pragmatism*, 226.
[67] Richard Rorty, 219.
[68] Richard Rorty, 224–25.
[69] Richard Rorty, 224.
[70] Richard Rorty, 224–25.
[71] Richard Rorty, 225.

Rorty claims that analytic philosophy starts with moving away from speculation to scientific reasoning, and is known for its extensive and exclusive focus on "logical analysis."[72] However, he points out that analytic philosophy is committing a slow suicide as Wittgenstein, "ordinary language," Kuhn, Quine, and Sellars criticize the "purportedly 'scientific' vocabulary" of Reichenbach. Rorty claims that analytic philosophy is left without a genealogy or a metaphilosophy. In the last point of his summary in "5. The Hidden Agenda," he claims that the growing dominance of analytic philosophy studies in university departments is leading to the hardened split between analytic and continental philosophy; actions include moving Hegel, Nietzsche, Heidegger, etc., out of philosophy and related departments.[73]

This split, addressed by Rorty to be much hardened today, renders analytic and continental philosophies vastly incompatible. However, just as Weber notes, the purpose of comparative philosophy is to draw otherwise distinct philosophies into comparison.[74]

This paper attempts to reconcile the incompatibility mentioned by Rorty with Weber's comparative philosophy methodology, showing that the works analyzed can be categorized under one universal system based on their use of language, and thus, that the two philosophies are not utterly incompatible. Among Heidegger, Wittgenstein, Saussure, Putnam, Smart, Austin, Derrida, and Butler, it is undeniable that Heidegger, Butler, and Derrida's works show strong indications of continental philosophy, while others remain debatable in the realm of analytic philosophy. As Rorty points out, it is challenging to categorize philosophical works exactly as such, which disregards the neutrality and incompatibility that renowned philosophers like Plato show in fitting into this dichotomy.[75] Nevertheless, when it comes to a specific methodology used in their works, it is viable to categorize them into a system that disregards the analytic-continental split:

1. Using language for its meaning (Heidegger)
2. Using language to establish language theories (Wittgenstein, Saussure, and Austin)
3. Using language theory for fields outside semantics (Putnam, Smart, Derrida, and Butler)

[72] Richard Rorty, 227.
[73] Richard Rorty, 227–28.
[74] Weber, "How to Compare?," 599.
[75] Richard Rorty, *Consequences of Pragmatism*, 224.

Hence the topic of language use can lead to such categorization of works in the 20th-century era, despite the facilitated split between analytic philosophy and continental philosophy. Comparative philosophy attempts to reconcile such a divide, not through rejecting their incompatibility but through accepting it, recognizing the innate differences yet still pointing out a way to bring them under the same conversation – namely, to compare. The three uses of language apply to both analytic philosophy and continental philosophy: "1) Using language for its meaning," "2) Using language to establish language theories," and "3) Using language theory for fields outside semantics" categorize a specific feature in selected modern philosophers works on various topics, an attempt in comparative philosophy to reconcile the broadening alienation that incompatibility between the two philosophies brings about.

Comparative philosophy disregards cultural differences, conflicts, or dichotomies as barriers to comparison.[76] Exemplified by the process of introducing a universal categorical system to reconcile the analytic-continental split, viewing philosophy from a comparative perspective contributes to the mitigation of cultural, academic, and ideological estrangements.

[76] Weber, "How to Compare?," 599–601.

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