Methodological Foundations of the Language of Metaphysics

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The present paper concerns the methodological foundations of the language of metaphysics developed by M. A. Krąpiec and S. Kamiński. The specific character of the language of metaphysics rests, primarily, on analogy conceived ontically, the basis of which is being apprehended by existential judgements. This language uses a specific kind of terminology, i.e. analogous/transcendental. It does not seek to disambiguate the concepts but to develop such expressions which are characterized by an analogous and unlimited scope of predication which apprehends everything that exists. By virtue of these expressions the language of metaphysics is capable of presenting the general existential aspect of reality, which constitutes the proper dimension for metaphysical studies.

Keywords: the language of metaphysics, existential judgement, transcendentals, analogy of being

INTRODUCTION

In modern philosophical studies, the issues relating to the language of metaphysics may have a diverse character. Modern philosophical language theories are most commonly oriented towards the language analysis itself which focuses, first of all, on specifying the terms functioning in metaphysics (Plėšnys 2017: 174–175). Such a stance has become a subject of discussion, which induced academics to take up research into the language of classical metaphysics. They were undertaken in line with the conception of existential Thomism by the so-called Lublin Philosophical School (Krąpiec, Maryniarczyk 2010: 8–9; Duma 2014). The system constructed by the school – drawing upon the philosophy of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas – presents a methodologically coherent programme of justifying philosophical problems.

One of the crucial issues was the issue of the language relevant to the specificity of metaphysical cognition. The present study will concentrate primarily on the works of M. A. Krąpiec and S. Kamiński. The effect of their scientific and research cooperation was the creation of the methodology of metaphysics strongly emphasizing the specific character of the language of metaphysics, which provides an essential tool for explicating reality in its existential aspect (Krąpiec, Maryniarczyk 2010: 32–33). This conception highlights the need to construct a language which will be able to adequately express all the determinants of the reality under study.

The language fulfilling such conditions has been called the analogous/transcendental one by Krąpiec and Kamiński. For it plays the function of an instrument of cognizing and

communicating cognized contents and thus it concerns reality, that is the analogous being. While the dimension of being represented by the word 'is' constitutes the primary key for interpreting the existential Thomism of the Lublin School. This course of reflections was to a significant degree inspired by the neo-Thomistic conception of É. Gilson, who emphasized the act of existence, discerning in it an important factor of interpreting reality and constructing a philosophical system (Gilson 1952).

The specific character of the language of metaphysics will be made explicit in the processes of discovering and elucidating the existence of being and the resulting analogous structure of the language. Attention will be called to the functional possibility and the cognitive value of such a stance.

THE LANGUAGE OF METAPHYSICS AND THE COGNITION OF EXISTENCE [BEING]

The cognition of existence is not, at the point of departure, reflected cognition. Before we achieve philosophically justified cognitive results, we take advantage of spontaneous cognition (common sense). This is significant for preserving cognitive realism since, in such a type of cognition, the attitude of the cognizing subject is a passive reaction to what is cognizable. The acquired cognitive content relates to some reality which exists independently from the cognizing subject. With thus conceived reality, reflected cognition begins to develop. However, already at the stage of spontaneous cognition, the first cognitive act is the act of the existence of something. That is why the cognition of the existence of individual beings is, first of all, accomplished in existential judgements, which are the original and fundamental act of direct apprehension of reality. The conception put forward by Krąpiec and Kamiński highlights the significant role of existential judgements not only in metaphysical cognition but also in laying the foundations of the language of metaphysics.

Gilson, in his work 'Being and Some Philosophers', called attention to two types of judgements: predicative judgements, in the classical tradition defined as *de tertio adiacente*, and existential judgements named *de secundo adiacente* (Gilson 1952: 191). A predicative judgement is expressed in the form of subject-predicative sentences: 'S is P'. This judgement is made up of three elements: subject (S), predicate (P) and the linking verb 'is'. In this context, an important role is played by the predicate whose function is to characterize the subject more precisely. As a result, we acquire more information, enriching our knowledge of the subject. Whereas existential judgements are oriented only towards asserting that something exists, without the necessity of providing specified knowledge on the subject. Acts of existential judgements are articulated in existential sentences with a subject-predicative structure. In the structure of such a sentence, the subject conveys the content aspect of the thing, while the predicate, the moment of affirmation, and, namely, the act of existence (Gilson 1952: 197–203). Formulating the language of metaphysics must, first of all, be grounded in reality, and the primary reference for cognizing reality is the assertion of the existence of something. It is accomplished in a direct contact with the thing that exists and this is why it requires considering the cognitive content resulting from existential judgements (Knasas 1990: 71–89). Existential judgements are, thus, an expression of the original apprehension of reality and they provide grounds for the ontic value of predicative judgements.[1]

An appropriate verbal formulation of acts of judgement requires a precise definition of basic terms crucial for the language of metaphysics. The principal term in this context becomes 'is' which can play a triple function in the language of metaphysics: cohesive, assertive and affirmative. In logical analyses, an essential role is ascribed to the cohesive function,

which reflects the adjunction of the predicate to the subject (Krąpiec 1991a: 13). The cohesive function of 'is' is directly linked with the assertive function in a judgement. Krąpiec indicates that a characteristic property of this function is not only the adjunction of the predicate to the subject, but primarily, a reference to the actual state of things. The assertive function points not only to the aspective identity of the meanings of the terms used, but it also highlights the moment of the value of the judgement. The relation of the accordance of the judgement with the thing is accomplished by means of the word 'is' used in the assertive order.

The affirmative function of 'is', defined by the philosophical tradition as the existential function, is made clear in existential judgements (Krąpiec 1986: 131–133). Such a judgement asserts the really existing being, concentrating on the very fact of the existence of something. In this way, one accomplishes a subjective response to the cognized reality, in which the existence of being is the fundament of all subsequent cognitive acts. The judgement-sentence linking verb 'is' very clearly unveils the analogy of the language of metaphysics. In particular, the affirmative function of the word 'is' requires that it should be oriented towards the cognized reality. The affirmation of the existence of a being which is accomplished in an existential judgement requires a cognitive contact with a concrete thing. What develops against this backdrop is the role of an existential judgement in which the cognitive relation between the cognizing agent and the cognized reality is accomplished. 'Is' in the affirmative function constitutes the crucial foundation of the truth of man's judgemental cognition.

The affirmative function may be present in judgements in two manners: directly and formally as well as indirectly and virtually. The former way is accomplished only in existential judgements, whereas the latter one is present in metaphysical statements, based on the analogous understanding of being as being.[1] Metaphysical cognition of reality cannot be based on disambiguated abstracts, but must develop tools to decipher the complexity and analogy of beings. Such must also be the language of metaphysics, which does not only seek to disambiguate notions but uses a specific kind of analogous/transcendental terminology. Such terms as 'being', 'thing' 'the good', etc. cannot be univocal contents abstracted by the intellect, but cognitive apprehensions, which must not be detached from things. These expressions signify a certain class of judgemental acts conceived in an analogous/transcendental manner (Krąpiec 1991a: 17–18).

The use of analogous/transcendental terms in realistic metaphysics constitutes a reference to fundamental cognitive acts. That is why transcendental expressions are formed utilizing, first and foremost, existential judgements, which affirm the existence of things. An existential judgement becomes an adequate assertion of a basic way of being of things, in which a given thing constitutes the subject, while 'existence' is the predicate (Kenny 2002: 107–112; Geach 1969: 41–48). In this original apprehension of being the subject itself, in terms of content, is of secondary significance; it may be indefinite. A judgement is being-oriented – as something which exists and which will be recognized in subsequent cognitive acts. Without existence, we cannot talk of real being (Owens 1976: 673–674; Krąpiec 1991b: 196–197). Hence, also the basis of the language of metaphysics must be subjective-predicative, rooted in the existential structure of reality.

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[1] The concept of existential judgments emerged in the context of Thomas Aquina's interpretation of the being, in his commentary to Boethius's tractate 'De Trinitate', he noticed the close connection between the judgement and the being's existence (S. Thomae de Aquino 1992: q. 5, a. 3).

[2] The difference between an existential judgement and a metaphysical statement is made explicit at the moment of affirmation. Existential judgements affirm the existence of something, whereas metaphysical statements are based on existential judgements.

At this juncture, it needs to be highlighted that existential judgements differ from predicative ones both in their structure and in the object of their affirmation. The predicative judgement has a three-term structure (*de tertio adiacente*), it has a predicate, the linking verb 'is' and a subject. Predicative judgements, in juxtaposition to existential ones, enrich the knowledge of the world in terms of content, and hence they may provide a foundation for scientific cognition. Whereas existential judgements as two-term judgements (*de secundo adiacente*) do not have a predicate, only a verb and therefore, they refer to specific beings in a non-content but existential aspect. The moment of the affirmation of existence can neither be conceptualized nor expressed in the form of a sign or a general predicate. That is why it is impossible, in formal terms, to express existential judgements as predicative judgements, for their structure is 'predicate-less', and even in juxtaposition to predicative judgements, they express a cognitive experience of affirming the existence of a real being (Krąpiec 1991a: 88–90). For that reason, the existential judgement is the manifestation of the most original and direct cognitive act which, in contrast to the predicative judgement, is not subject to the qualification of truth or falsehood. The existential judgement is 'super-intelligible' (*surintelligibile*). Affirming a being in an existential judgement, a subject may be mistaken as to its material content, however, they may not be mistaken as to the fact of its existence.

The nature of the existential judgement is revealed in the apprehension of the existence of a specific, individual thing. The apprehension of a concrete may assume a clear form 'John exists' or an unclear one 'something exists'. These are not, in any of the cases, general apprehensions, since each content in an existential judgement is contingent on a concrete and individual act of existence. In this context, there seems to be an important distinction between affirming the existence of something conceived as a cognitive act and a judgement as a result of cognition which may be expressed in the form of the following sentence: 'something exists'. In the sentence 'something exists', 'something' needs to be understood as the undetermined content of the being, whereas 'exists' asserts the fact that there is a given being (Krąpiec 1991a: 86–87). As a result, we acquire a necessary relation of the content of being to its existence, expressed in an existential judgement. That is why the cognitive effect of the verbalized form of this act is showing the analogous and transcendental nature of being. For this reason, an existential judgement as a reflected cognitive act may be verbalized in transcendental expressions as well as in other metaphysical expressions.

A particular property of thus constructed language of metaphysics is its proportional objectivity (Kamiński 1961: 77). Metaphorical expressions are based on recognizing in being appropriate ontic proportions which become the foundation for formulating analogous expressions. This is why the subontic elements of being in the form of its material content and existence, which are unveiled in an existential judgement, provide the fundamental reference for the language of metaphysics. Consequently, the analogous character of the language of metaphysics does not enable one to transform it into a symbolic language, which is determined by univocal expressions, constructed meta objectively. The language of metaphysics is an objective one. The objectivity of the language of metaphysics is defined as 'towards things' (Maryniarczyk 2010: 32). This is a specific nature of the first degree language, in which by analogous predication we refer to things themselves and we formulate analogous expressions. Thus, the language of metaphysics must constantly refer to specific states of being, apprehending them in an analogous order.

THE ANALOGOUS STRUCTURE OF THE LANGUAGE OF METAPHYSICS

In realistic metaphysics, the specific character of the cognitive apprehension of reality in its existential aspect constitutes the basis for the appropriate formulation of the language of metaphysics. This is why the language of metaphysics uses an analogous interpretation of states of being (Krąpiec 1980b: 31–106). The basis for the analogy are cognitive apprehensions of the relational structure of being. In each being existence and essence (content), which are non-identical elements, are proportionally linked with one another in a necessary way. This is why in a specific being, one discerns a relational identity of essence and existence. Essence and existence, as unique elements, are identical in a relational sense for existence plays the same role with regard to essence, while essence with regard to existence. Considering such a relationship, Kamiński professes that the entire reality constitutes an integrated system of analogous necessary relations, based ultimately on the identical function of essence and existence in each concrete being.

A relationship distinguished within the boundaries of a being compound constitutes the fundament for understanding reality in an analogous manner (McInerny 1961). This relationship determines the pluralism of beings by virtue of which an appropriate cognitive apprehension of reality in its existential aspect is developed. Displaying intra-being relations constitutes a reflection of the analogous unity of being and also provides the basis for inter-being relations, which are a manifestation of the analogous unity of reality. Thus conceived analogy of being determines relations of a transcendental character, i.e. concerning everything that exists, and hence each being. This is why in order to formulate judgements on entire reality, one needs to refer to the analogy of being. Thus conceived analogous cognition becomes a reflection of the real analogy of being and may form the grounds for adequate 'analogous information' (Kamiński 2018a: 237).

Against the background of thus conceived analogy, philosophers formulate the language of metaphysics, whose expressions must be a reflection of cognitive apprehensions of the relational structure of being. For this reason, systemic cognitive contents are formulated by means of expressions which specify the understanding of the analogous manner of the beingness of things. The language of metaphysics does not seek to disambiguate terms but to develop such expressions which are characterized by an analogous and unlimited scope of predication, apprehending everything that exists. Such terms are named transcendental expressions (Kamiński 2018b: 120–125). In realistic metaphysics, by transcendentals philosophers understand universal and necessary properties of beings, which reveal fundamental ways of their existence. Also in this case, there is no concentration on the content of beings, but on their fundamental existential relations. Therefore, transcendental expressions formulated on this basis must also be analogous and characterized by an unlimited scope of predication. The methodological foundation of the language of metaphysics is an analogous way of the existence of things. Thereby, the analogy of the language of metaphysics, beside its transcendental character, is the principal requirement for formulating metaphysical expressions.

The specific nature of transcendental expressions is made explicit by highlighting the moment of existence of a concrete being content. Due to the existential factor, they must be similar in their structure to existential judgements. As Kamiński accentuates, in a semiotic context, transcendentals may contain, from a pragmatic perspective – not only the presented apprehension, from the syntactic perspective – a prepositional operator, while from the semiotic perspective – manners of existing. Therefore, existence cannot be related to a concept since it does not constitute the subject of conceptualization but of a judgement (Kamiński 2018b: 123). This

is why transcendentals are defined in metaphysics as epitomes of existential judgements which depict various ways of the existence of being, e.g. this existence is interpreted as intelligible existence (transcendentale *verum*) or as desirable one (transcendentale *bonum*). Based on transcendentals, philosophers formulate the necessary knowledge of reality from the standpoint of its existence. This is why a transcendental apprehension of reality in the general existential aspect may constitute an adequate reflection of the metaphysical understanding of reality.

The above-mentioned remarks refer to the understanding of the language of metaphysics which, in its structure, is characterized by specific analogous/transcendental terminology. The scope of all the fundamental terms of metaphysics encompasses all beings apprehended in necessary existential relationships (inter-being and intra-being ones). Apart from transcendental terms, also universal terms, in a sense, assume an analogous/transcendental character since they refer to concrete beings with their entire being qualification (Maryniarczyk 2017: 281). At this juncture Kamiński calls attention to three domains of designates: elements of being, individual beings and the relationship among these designates. He asserts that 'the way the terms refer to that second domain is by analogous apprehension of the relationships between the elements of the first domain, and the way the terms refer to inter-being relationships is based on the analogous apprehension of the designates of the first two domains' (Kamiński 2018a: 238). The designates of the language of metaphysics make up a peculiar two-level structure of analogously ordered pairs. Hence, constructing terminological tools consists in developing or even enriching the content of concepts in various areas. Such operations result not only from the analysis of concepts, but first of all, from metaphysical experience. Consequently, in the domain of metaphysics, definitions cannot fulfill the condition of translatability since they are fragmentary statements and rely on comparing the meanings of metaphysical terms to scientific or colloquial language ones (Kamiński 2018a: 238–239).

It needs to be highlighted that there are many theses of the theory of being which can be reduced to strictly analytic clauses within the boundaries of definition substitution. Kamiński indicates that the fundamental propositions of the theory of being actually assume the nature of analytic clauses, as well as of objective clauses. For all the expressions of the language of metaphysics are distinguished by a peculiar analytic character (in a metaphysical sense), which consists in discerning the objective factor of being. The analytic character conceived as the obviousness of the object is not rooted merely in language rules but it is, first of all, grounded in the object and in the contingency of cognizing and expressing it. The fundamental procedure of arriving at statements of the theory of being is intuitive-reductive reasoning. This type of explanation is characterized by an act of intellectual intuition which plays an essential function in capturing states of things in the general existential aspect. In contrast to the other types of explanation, the intuitive-reductive procedure is objective cognition, characterized by capturing states of things and finding their objective ontic reasons (Kamiński 2018c: 198). This means that one seeks ultimate reasons in the structure of reality itself (being as being) for the analysed states of things. This unfailing character relies on the necessary intra-being relationships and on the highly analytic language of metaphysics, which should be used to formulate statements of metaphysics.

Such a manner of formulating the language of metaphysics focuses on constructing statements referring to states of things which, as Kamiński indicates, …either make explicit the content of the transcendentals, or indicate the only ontic reason for an existential state given in experience and apprehended in an analytical-intuitive manner' (Kamiński 2018b: 132). Consequently, the language of metaphysics should be understood as a language of making

explicit real states of things within the framework of the method of constructing the entire system of metaphysics. An increasing complexity of operations in formulating the system simultaneously raises the level of complexity of the language itself. In the context of the expansion of metaphysical terms, the greatest difficulty is their disambiguated understanding characterized by accentuating only the content aspect of the explicated reality. This is why the terms of the language of metaphysics must remain an expression of cognitive apprehensions of the relational structure of the language in its existential dimension. Such a stance is postulated by the theory of the analogy of beings, which departing from deciphering real states of things in an existential judgement, arrives at constructing the structure of the language of metaphysics ordered in an analogous way. Without reference to the real states of things the language of metaphysics loses its sense. Against this backdrop, the significance of the analogy of the language of metaphysics is particularly enhanced. The specificity of this analogy is expressing the real properties of things and of states of existence which are individual and concrete.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Metaphysics, in its investigations, seeks to construct such a type of language which will enable one to capture comprehensively all the existential determinants of the system of metaphysics. The language of metaphysics cannot be subject to conceptual speculation detached from the states of things; that is why it plays the function of a tool in communicating cognitive results. Its specificity relies, primarily, on ontically conceived analogy, the foundation of which is being apprehended by means of an existential judgement. The analogy of the language of metaphysics is a direct consequence of the existential dimension of the studies. Hence, there is no place for a univocal manner of predicating in the metaphysical system. The analogy of the language becomes comprehensible when language is bound with the reality which it expresses. This provides the foundation for constructing analogous/transcendental expressions. By virtue of these expressions the language of metaphysics is able to convey the general existential aspect of reality, which constitutes the proper dimension for metaphysical studies. The language of metaphysics does not cease to be an objective language, since it is characterized by a highly theoretical analytic nature and an intuitively apprehended objective obviousness. Analogous/transcendental concepts in metaphysics have an objective character and they cannot be only the result of the conceptual generalization of the content aspect of being. This is why employing transcendental concepts implies, at every level, existential judgements which constitute the cognitive basis for references to real states of things. It is them that ensure the objective character of these concepts and enable one to formulate analytic statements on reality.

Since it needs to be highlighted that in order to use the language of metaphysics with an adequate and proper understanding, one must put a lot of effort into studying the genesis of metaphysical expressions. For they originate from the level of colloquial language against the background of which their meanings are specified. Arriving at the moment of formulating analogous/transcendental expressions requires operations based on historical and systemic analysis so as to derive adequate technical terms of metaphysics from colloquial language.

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Metafizikos kalbos metodologiniai pagrindai

Santrauka

Straipsnyje aptariami M. A. Krąpieco ir S. Kamińskio suformuluoti metafizikos kalbos metodologiniai pagrindai. Kalbos specifiškumas pirmiausia priklauso nuo ontiškai suprantamos analogijos, kurios pagrindas yra suvokiamas egzistenciniais sprendiniais. Ši kalba naudoja specifinę, t. y. analoginę / transcendentalinę, terminologiją. Ji siekia ne pašalinti sąvokų daugiaprasmiškumą, o suformuluoti analogines ir neaprribotas predikavimo, suvokiančio viską, kas egzistuoja, išraiškas. Dėl šių išraiškų metafizikos kalba geba pateikti bendrąjį tikrovės egzistencinį apibrėžimą, kuris ir yra tikrasis metafizinių studijų matmuo.

Raktažodžiai: būties analogija, egzistencinis sprendinys, metafizikos kalba, transcendentalijos