

# A NOTE ON LINSKY'S *REFERRING*

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The "paradox of analysis"—a proposed analysis (of a phrase, word, concept, etc.) is either trivial (analytic, tautologous, uninformative, etc.) or it is incorrect—has its reverse side, what we might call the "fallacy of analysis." The fallacy occurs when we assume that an analysis must have as its data the word, phrase or concept removed from actual use. That is, it is an assumption that the data of such analysis is the word (phrase, etc.) along with its synonymous or logically equivalent words (phrases, etc.). This assumption is, in fact, the acceptance of the first horn of the dilemma above. It is the acceptance of the "paradox of analysis" as true.

An example of this is in Leonard Linsky's *Referring* (New York, Humanities Press, 1967). Russell argued that definite descriptions are "incomplete symbols," that they have no meaning in isolation. For Russell to have meaning was to name. Thus definite descriptions are not names. I wish to look at Linsky's discussion of one of Russell's arguments for this claim. Russell had other arguments for the claim, and Linsky discusses these as well. But I shall concentrate on one. Russell argues that in

(1) Scott is the author of *Waverly*

'the author of *Waverly*' cannot be a name. If it were, (1) would have the same meaning as

(2) Scott is Scott

and it does not.

Linsky states that this argument is unsound. His argument is as follows:

Another way to bring out the circularity of Russell's argument is this. At a certain point in that argument he rejects an assumption that has the consequence that (1) means the same as 'Scott is Scott'. But how can Russell know that the proposition expressed by (1) is not this trivial one unless he is assuming that in (1) 'the author of *Waverly*' is not functioning as a proper name in his sense? And if he is assuming this, what is the point of proving it? (p. 54).