

Frege's Radical Anti-Psychologism

Abstract

I discuss Frege's main argument against psychologism, and how it might be defended against an formidable objection from Husserl. I also point out that the anti-psychologism motivated by this argument is quite radical, and has potentially major implications for mainstream logic.

1 Frege's Anti-Psychologism

Frege famously claims that we must “separate sharply the psychological from the logical” and that logic must “refuse any assistance” from psychology, so that “all psychological considerations, which now swell our logic texts...prove to be pointless.”¹ At least part of what he has in mind here is the denial of an epistemological thesis: the *logical psychologist* claim that the discoveries of psychology can help to establish the truths that constitute a correct logical theory.² Frege thinks they cannot. But what counts as “psychology”? And why exactly can't it contribute to logic?

Frege discusses psychologism in many different places, and offers many different arguments against it. Some of these arguments, however, depend on features of soon-to-be superseded psychological theories of his day, and others even more narrowly target idiosyncratic views held by particular, largely forgotten theorists. Even if convincing, such arguments can be of little direct significance for

¹Frege 1884, xi, xxii; Frege 1893, xxiii.

²The term “psychologism” seems to have been coined by Johannes Erdmann to refer to a closely related but stronger epistemological thesis: that “Not only must we recognize...psychology, as the starting point, central point, or foundation of all other philosophical knowledge: rather, all other philosophical knowledge can only be obtained through this knowledge.” (Beneke 1833; see Kusch 1995, Chapter 5 for discussion of the history of the term.) The term is sometimes used to name other theses, some of which Frege also rejects, including the *metaphysical* idealist or anti-realist claim that the things studied by a discipline are themselves mental. (The kinds of psychologism surveyed in Pelletier, Elio, and Hanson 2008, for example, are all versions of the idea that “some important aspect of the realm of study [i.e. what is being studied] relies upon, or is constituted by, facts and issues of human cognition.”)

our philosophical thinking today.³ Only if Frege also has some argument with a broader range of targets—applying at *least* to the sorts of psychological claims and theories offered in our own day—will these discussions be useful for our current attempts to think about the relationship between logic and psychology.

I think he has such an argument. In the following section, I identify this argument. In section 3, I consider an objection to it. In section 4, I consider some of Frege’s remarks that help us see how he would respond to the objection and why he accepts the key premise of the anti-psychological argument. I conclude by discussing the implications of this argument for mainstream thinking about logic today.

2 Frege’s Anti-Psychologist Argument

The argument of Frege’s with the broadest range of targets emerges when we solve an interpretive puzzle. Frege claims that a clear grasp of logic’s task prevents the “ruinous incursion of psychology into logic.” But he also identifies “the task of logic as the investigation of the laws of thought,” and claims that “the task we assign logic is...that of saying what holds...for all thinking, whatever its subject matter.”⁴ But isn’t thought a mental phenomenon, and doesn’t psychology discover the laws of mental phenomena? Doesn’t this actually imply psychologism? How could it rule out psychologism?

1. Perhaps in these passages, Frege uses “thought” and “thinking” in technical, non-mental senses?⁵ No: these passages employ not his technical term, “*Gedanke*”, but the ordinary term “*Denken*.” He talks of “our *Denken*” and claims explicitly that “*Denken* is a mental process.”
2. Perhaps Frege holds that psychology cannot discover real *laws*: objective

³Finding only arguments that “are, in a sense, *ad homines*, not *contra mundum*,” Baker and Hacker 1989 reasonably conclude that “Frege’s anti-psychologism is not a seam of pure gold” since the “ambitions and the scope of his arguments were strictly limited.” (118-120.) Similarly, Aach 1990 holds that: “It was not psychology per se which, when applied to logic, led to the errors [Frege] attacked, but rather a specific tradition of psychology derived from British empiricism that was commonly accepted”; soon enough, “psychology rejected the same tradition,” and thereby “began moving out of reach” of these arguments. (315, 332)

⁴Quotes in this section are from three key passages in which Frege explains what he thinks logic is: Frege 1879–1891, 4; Frege 1897, 128; and Frege 1893, xv.

⁵Baker and Hacker 1989: “The general nature of logic was taken to depend on the nature of [thoughts]...[Psychological logicians] held that these entities are...mental...Frege...thought [them] to be...real entities in a logical realm.” (75, 77, 90)

truths that hold of *all* thinking?⁶ Perhaps he does; but in these passages Frege grants, if only for the sake of argument, that psychology can discover “psychological laws” which “govern thinking in the same way that the laws of nature govern events in the external world.”

Frege himself resolves the puzzle this way: “in one sense [a law] says what is; in the other it prescribes what ought to be”. Frege identifies psychology as having the task of establishing laws about thinking in the first, *descriptive* sense; but his formulations of the task of logic use the second, *prescriptive* sense. Though logical laws, in the first place, state “what is”, they also prescribe what ought to be, because since “thinking” has the goal of *truth*, “any law asserting what is...prescrib[es] that one ought to think in conformity with it.” The laws of every discipline, then, including psychology, prescribe in this same way. But only logical laws prescribe “how to think wherever there is thinking at all”; only *they* fulfil logic’s task of telling us what holds *in this sense* “for all thinking, whatever its subject matter”; so only they merit the title “laws of thought.”⁷

This clarifies how a proper grasp of logic’s task could rule out psychologism. It could do so along the following lines:

- P1: All logical truths can help us establish ought-claims that apply to all thinking. (Because this is the task of logic.)
- P2: No non-normative truth about the mental can help us establish ought-claims that apply to all thinking.
- C1: No non-normative truth about the mental can help us establish any logical truths. [P1 and P2, because helping to establish is transitive.]
- P3: Psychological truths are non-normative truths about the mental. (Because establishing non-normative laws about the mind is the task of logic.)
- C2: Psychological truths cannot help us establish logical truths. [C1 and P3]

Let me make three observations about this argument.

First: despite Frege’s emphasis on the normativity of logic in ruling out psychologism in this passage, some have claimed that logic’s normativity cannot be central to his anti-psychologism, because as Frege sees it, logic is not “essentially normative”: the relevant norms are derived only when logic’s non-normative

⁶Anderson 2005: “[Frege’s] attacks against psychologism...rest ultimately on...objectivity...Logic treats objective...laws...not facts about the subjective psychology of reasoners.” (295)); Cohen 1998: “[Frege’s] anti-psychologis[m]...come[s] from the thought that logic...should be concerned with the maximally general features of thought, rather than...the mental life of this or that cognizer.”

⁷For readings of Frege’s view of logic that fit with this account of his anti-psychologist argument, see MacFarlane 2002, Taschek 2008, Steinberger 2017, and Hutchinson 2020.

claims combine with explicit norms connected with the goal of thinking the truth.⁸ It is a good idea to reserve the term “norm” or “normative claim” for something which explicitly tells us what to do, using a term like “ought”—and if we do, logic’s claims are not themselves normative. This is all correct—but the above formulation of the argument makes clear why it does not preclude an appeal to the normativity of logic to rule out psychologism. The key point of the argument is only that there is something about the norms that logical truths help establish that is special in the way described by P2. And, as Gila Sher has pointed out, “although the source of logic’s normativity [i.e. in other norms connected with the fact that truth is the goal of thinking]...is the same as that of other disciplines, this does not mean that logic’s normativity is the same as theirs in other respects as well. [For example,] the normativity of logic has a broader scope than that of physics.”⁹

Second: it is far from clear exactly what Frege has in mind with the picture of logic that underlies this argument. He does not give any examples of prescriptions that result when the goal of truth combines with logic’s descriptive claims, nor does he make it clear how the goal of truth leads to the relevant prescriptions or even what it means for a prescription to hold “of all thinking.”¹⁰ Nonetheless, the basic shape of the argument is clear enough: P1 identifies a special kind of ought-claim about thinking which all logical truths help to establish; P2 claims that non-normative truths about the mind cannot help establish ought-claims of *that* kind; and P3 identifies psychological truths with non-normative truths about the mind. This basic shape puts us in a position to consider, in the following section, a formidable objection that threatens to apply to the argument on a wide range of ways of filling in the details. By thinking about what it takes to avoid this objection, we can get some guidance on how the details of logic’s normativity would have to be filled in, in order to defend the argument.

Finally: The broad characterization of psychological truths in P3 gives this argument a broad range of targets; it is certainly not limited to the state of psychology in Frege’s day. I will consider its significance for us in the final section.

⁸Consider, e.g., Philipse 1987 (14); “Neither Husserl nor Frege conceived of logic as an essentially normative discipline. As a consequence they would have considered the idea that psychologism is incorrect because it commits the naturalistic fallacy as fundamentally mistaken.” This point about the naturalistic fallacy in particular may be correct, but the normativity of logic can be central to the anti-psychological argument anyway. More recently, Russell 2017 takes this point to rule out any potential anti-*pluralist* arguments based on the normativity of logic—but as I understand them, those arguments do not depend on logic being *essentially* normative either.

⁹Sher 2013, 192.

¹⁰Hutchinson 2020 takes up some aspects of these issues.

3 Husserl's Objection

Here is a form of the objection offered to this sort of argument by Edmund Husserl.¹¹ Suppose that logic has established that we ought to think in way G in all our thinking (however “ought” and “in all our thinking” is to be understood.) Further, suppose it is a (non-normative) truth that thinking in way F is necessary for thinking in way G. But if we ought to think in way G, and thinking in way F is necessary for thinking in way G, then it seems to follow that we ought to think in way F, too. Given a norm for thinking of the sort logic discovers, then, this sort of reasoning seems to establish another norm of the very same kind. P2 of the argument, then, is false, since non-normative truths about the mental can help establish norms of the relevant kind. And what is more, if one were to add that *psychology* discovers non-normative truths about the mental and that the task of logic is the investigation of that sort of norm, it follows that psychology can help establish norms of that kind, and therefore that psychologism is true.

This objection is a direct argument against P2, resting on two claims.¹²

1. **First Meta-Psychological Claim (MPC₁):** for any norm that calls for thinking in a certain way G, there is a non-normative truth for psychology to discover stating that thinking in some other way F is a *necessary condition for thinking in way G*.

¹¹Husserl need not have had Frege in mind in particular, since versions of the above argument were offered by many philosophers at the time. In Husserl's words: “Psychology considers thinking as it is,” which includes different sub-categories—“special cases”—of thinking: “judging, inferring, knowing, proving...the courses followed by the understanding in the pursuit of truth...the evaluation of grounds of proof, etc.” But “thinking as it should be is just a special case of thinking as it is.” So, just as psychology discovers “special laws” that are “without exception and necessary” applying various sub-categories, it will discover “special laws” governing whatever way we are supposed to think; for example, “laws of correct judgement.” Such laws will identify necessary conditions—Husserl talks of *constitutive* conditions—on whatever sort of judgement satisfies the relevant norm. This is MPC₁. But “every constitutive property *B* of the ‘good’ *A* yields...a proposition of the form ‘An *A* should be *B*’, every property incompatible with *B*, a proposition ‘An *A* should not be *B*’ etc.” This is, given Husserl's understanding of “good,” TP₁. It follows that we cannot “base a sharp separation of the two disciplines on...the normative character of logic.” On the contrary: if we understand logic's task in terms of the investigation of the relevant norms, this reasoning “proves...that psychology helps in the foundation of logic.” (The discussion is in Husserl 1900; these quotes are from §14, §19, and §20.)

¹²With these abbreviations, the argument goes like this. Suppose logic establishes that we ought, in all our thinking, to think in way G. By MPC₁, there is some non-normative truth to the effect that thinking in way F is necessary for thinking in way G. But by TP₁, it follows that we ought, in all our thinking, to think in way F, too. Knowing the non-normative truth, then, can help us establish an ought-claim that applies to all thinking, contradicting P2 of the argument.

2. **First Transmission Principle (TP₁):** if A ought to Φ , and A's Φ -ing implies A's Ψ -ing, it follows that A ought to Ψ .

There seem to be two basic ways to avoid this objection: deny MPC₁, or deny TP₁.

Can we deny MPC₁? Frege, at least, cannot, since he grants the possibility that there are genuine (non-normative) laws of all thinking for psychology to discover: exceptionless laws which “govern thinking in the same way that the laws of nature govern events in the external world.” Such exceptionless laws would establish non-normative necessary conditions on thinking in whatever way logic calls for, since necessary conditions on *all* thinking are also necessary conditions on any given *kind* of thinking. Moreover, Frege is surely right to grant this possibility, because—what does he know about which non-normative truths about the mental are there to be discovered by psychology? Establishing such things would seem to be the proper business of a discipline other than logic: plausibly, psychology itself. One ought not rest the irrelevance of psychology to logic on a psychological point about what sorts of non-normative truths about the mental there are.

Denying TP₁ is more promising. TP₁ is a somewhat naïve principle about how normative statuses are transmitted, notorious in discussions of deontic logic for the highly counterintuitive claims that it implies. Since our Φ -ing implies our either Φ -ing or Ψ -ing, for example, TP₁ seems to take “You ought to help this person” to imply “You ought either to help this person or kill them.”¹³ Though some philosophers uphold such transmission principles in the face of such apparently absurd consequences,¹⁴ most reject them.

But though the naïve transmission principle is needed for the objection as formulated, a very similar objection can succeed without it. Philosophers who reject the naïve principle typically themselves endorse a more stringent principle in its place. For example, the most widely-accepted principle, which avoids the most obvious counterexamples, involves only a small change to TP₁: rather than requiring that our Ψ -ing be merely necessary for our Φ -ing, the revised principle requires that Ψ -ing be a *necessary means* to Φ -ing: something that actually *helps to bring our Φ -ing about*.¹⁵ The argument could proceed as before if we altered

¹³Such a principle is closely related to the principle of deontic logic called “necessitation”: that if p implies q, then ought-p implies ought-q. As Hansson 2004 puts it, following von Wright 1981 (7), “To avoid the paradoxes, [i.e. “Ross’s paradox, the paradox of commitment, the Good Samaritan, and the Knower”] the necessitation property must...be avoided.” (141)

¹⁴Wedgwood 2006 affirms the truth of these counter-intuitive implications, arguing that because they are conversationally inappropriate, they would “seem false...even if [they are] actually true.” (150)

¹⁵Kiesewetter 2015, for example, glosses “means” in terms of helping to bring about, notes that restricting transmission to necessary means rules out the noted counterintuitive implications, and

TP₁ in this way, and made a corresponding alteration to MPC₁:

1. **TP₂**: if A ought to Φ , and A's Ψ -ing is a necessary means to A's Φ -ing, then A ought to Ψ .
2. **MPC₂**: for any norm that calls for thinking in a certain way W, psychology can discover non-normative truths to the effect that thinking in some other way is a necessary means to thinking in way W.

Of course, one might think that there are counterexamples to MPC₂ as well. But those who do simply offer yet more stringent principles; nobody denies that *some* form of transmission principle is correct.¹⁶ And as long as *any* such principle holds, it will remain plausible that some non-normative truths about the mind meet the required conditions and thereby establish norms of the relevant kind.

An anti-psychologist might try to *combine* both replies: to reject the more permissive TPs and then denying the relevant MPCs for whichever TPs are left. But the denials of TPs would have to be motivated, and to the extent that this involves denying MPCs, it seems to inherit the problems of the first strategy.

Husserl's objection, then, is a formidable one. And again, it is not just an objection to an *anti-psychological* argument: for those who follow Frege in understanding the task of logic in terms of the establishment of the relevant norms, these points constitute an argument *for* psychologism.

4 Frege's Defence of P2

Our question now is: why does Frege think P2 is true? And how would he avoid Husserl's argument that it is false, and that its falsity, together with Frege's other assumptions, implies that psychologism is true?

offers the principle: "If A ought to Φ , and Ψ -ing is a necessary means for A to Φ , then A ought to Ψ ". (922-925) As Kolodny and Brunero 2020 observe in their survey of the transmission principles that philosophers offer, "most commonly, principles describe transmission to necessary means." (§2)

¹⁶Potential counterexamples to MPC* include the case of "Professor Procrastinate", described in Jackson and Pargetter 1986. Procrastinate is asked to review an article. Since he is the best person to review the article, it seems he ought to accept and review it. But as a matter of fact, he is such a procrastinator that if he accepts, he will not review the article—so, it seems, he ought not accept. Accordingly, it seems true that he ought to accept and review; true that accepting is a necessary means to doing so; but not true that he ought to accept. The principle offered by Kolodny 2018 avoids this problem: "If there is reason for one to E, and there is positive probability, conditional on one's M-ing, that one's M-ing, or some part of one's M-ing, helps to bring it about that one E's nonsuperfluously, then that is a reason for one to M, whose strength depends on the reason for one to E and the probability, so long as the reason for one to E is not explained by an application of [this principle] to reason for one to achieve some distinct E."

While Frege never clearly and explicitly considers this sort of point,¹⁷ some of his remarks about the irrelevance of psychology to logic, with particular reference to logic's normativity, suggest a line of defence of P2. Consider, for example, his claim that the processes and connections described by those mental laws that psychology discovers "can just as well lead to error as to truth; they have no inner relation to truth whatsoever, they are indifferent toward the opposition of true and false."¹⁸ For better or worse, to make such remarks is to deny some relevant MPCs. Let us see how these denials allow for two versions of the combined strategy, and then consider how the denials might be justified.

1. Most straightforwardly: Frege denies that there are any non-normative laws for psychology to discover which state necessary conditions on true thinking *except* for those which state *merely* necessary conditions, which hold also of some untrue thinking. The more general idea here is that there are no non-normative laws that state both *necessary and sufficient* conditions on thinking in the way logic calls for. Of course, this will support P2 only if the relevant TPs are rejected too. Frege must, then, deny any TPs except those so stringent as to require conditions that are both necessary and sufficient. Though radical, such a denial is not unheard of, and could be motivated as follows. Suppose we agree that I ought to Φ , and you tell me I ought to Ψ , since Ψ -ing is necessary for my Φ -ing. I might respond that since Ψ -ing is *merely* necessary for Φ -ing, I might Ψ and still fail to Φ , in which case my Ψ -ing will have accomplished nothing at all worth doing. I might claim, then, that it does not follow that I *ought* to Ψ , but only that it *might be* that I ought to Ψ , depending on how things would turn out if I actually Ψ -ed.¹⁹ I can reply this way as long as Ψ -ing bears any relation to Φ -ing short of sufficiency. If this sort of reasoning is correct, the only true transmission principles require both necessary and sufficient conditions.
2. A somewhat straightforward way to take the significance of Frege's remarks is suggested by his talk of an "inner connection" to truth. The TPs we have considered concern general transmission conditions for norms. But

¹⁷It may be what one T. Achelis has in mind, whom Frege 1897 claims not quite to understand. (158-159).

¹⁸Frege 1879–1891, 2.

¹⁹This is closely related to a point made by Jackson and Pargetter 1986 about Professor Procrastinate (see fn 16 above) in response to the idea that someone ought to meet necessary conditions on doing what they ought to do: "It is true that saying yes is an essential part of the best extended course of action open to Procrastinate, namely, saying yes and later writing...But it is equally true that saying yes is an essential part of the worst extended course of action open to him, namely, saying yes but failing to write the review." Saying yes, as Frege would put it, can just as well lead to a bad result as to a good one.

there is a certain *kind* of norm with very stringent transmission-conditions: *non-instrumental* norms cannot be transmitted by any of the principles that we have been discussing, which are for that reason often referred to as “instrumental transmission principles.”²⁰ If logic established norms concerning ways we ought to think *for its own sake*, then to establish other norms of this same kind, it is not enough even to find necessary and sufficient conditions on thinking that way. To my knowledge, non-instrumental statuses are only transmitted to the contributing components of what G.E. Moore calls “organic unities”, from the unities itself.²¹ If logic’s norms are non-instrumental, then establishing an “inner relation” of the sort that makes up such a unity would be required for transmission.

If Frege is right in the limitations he claims for psychology, then there are plausible reasons to deny the relevant transmission principles to avoid Husserl’s argument. Note that both versions of the above strategy, however, place heavy constraints on how *logic* can establish the relevant norms, since it must do so in a way that is not ruled out by these defences of P2. To make use of the first version, for example, his account must not depend on any but an especially stringent transmission principle involving necessary and sufficient conditions; to make use of the second, it must ensure that logic establishes non-instrumental norms.

But how can Frege justify his claims about which non-normative truths there are for psychology to discover? Isn’t that just to dabble in psychology itself? Perhaps not. With respect to the most straightforward way to take his remarks: one might deny that there *are* any non-normative necessary and sufficient conditions for satisfying the prescriptions for all thinking on the grounds of a general anti-reductionism about the normative, since this is to deny the sort of extensional equivalence that implies or at least motivates such reductionism. such anti-reductionism, in turn, may be justifiable by the sort of general reflections that lead Hermann Lotze, for example, to see “a chasm that cannot be filled...[between] the *world of values* and the *world of forms*”—i.e., “Nature”.²²

²⁰Kolodny 2018 refers to them that way. To see why the above transmission principles establish only instrumental norms, suppose that one ought to engage in international travel *for its own sake*. Plausibly, this causally requires having money, and constitutively requires moving a significant distance through space: both are necessary conditions. Plausibly, then, it follows that one *ought* to have money and move such distances through space. But it does not follow that one ought to do these things *for their own sakes*, but only for the sake of international travel.

²¹I depend here on the “conditionality” model for thinking about organic unities, on which the components gain non-instrumental value when they are combined in such a unity. See Hurka 1998 for a description of this approach, which builds on the conditional view of non-instrumental value developed in Korsgaard 1983 and elsewhere.

²²Lotze 1858, conclusion to Volume 3.

5 Frege's Radical Anti-Psychologism

The interest of the anti-psychological argument we are considering is its broad scope: it plausibly applies to all sorts of psychology. But one might worry that it is still of limited interest, since only a few revisionary figures²³ hold any form of psychologism today, even about contemporary psychology. (Eva Picardi, for example, claims that “logic has become an established discipline, and if it runs any risks, psychologism is not among them.”²⁴)

I think, however, this argument may have very significant implications today. To see this, note that the objection above was pressed by Edmund Husserl, in a work which “has long been regarded as the pre-eminent statement of logical anti-psychologism.”²⁵ Why does Husserl pause to defend psychologism against the argument before presenting his own anti-psychologistic arguments? One reason, I think, is that in assuming so little about psychology, Frege's argument has a wider range of targets than Husserl's: wide enough to rule out Husserl's *own* approach to logic. Husserl's anti-psychologism centers on the claim that *empirical* psychology makes no contribution to logic. But he thinks that there is a contribution to be made by a “phenomenology of logical experiences...a descriptive (though not genetic-psychological) understanding of these mental states,” because even though such “phenomenological analysis does not belong to the proper domain of pure logic, the latter nonetheless cannot make progress without the former.”²⁶ Husserl thinks, then, that logic relies on a descriptive (i.e. non-normative) claims about the mind, while our anti-psychological argument implies that it cannot.

One might think that this serves only to class Husserl as one more revisionary figure against whom this argument defends our ordinary way of proceeding. But Husserl's description of the “phenomenology” he has in mind makes this less clear. The goal of such phenomenology is to “bring to pure expression...the essences which directly make themselves known in intuition.” To discover the essence of, say, logical validity, we are to start by imagining an instance of a logically valid argument, and then “generate arbitrary, free variants...[until] it then becomes apparent...that in such free variants...an invariant remains...without which a thing, as an example of its kind, would be wholly unthinkable...The general essence...emerges as that without which an object of this kind cannot be

²³See, e.g., Jacquette 2001.

²⁴Picardi 1987, 174.

²⁵Hanna 1993, 252. Hanna goes on to make the point of this paragraph: “while this work begins with the general rejection of logical psychologism, it ends with phenomenology...a special sort of philosophical psychology.” (253-254.) See footnote 10 for Husserl's way of making the objection.

²⁶§§1-2 of the *Einleitung* to Husserl 1901.

thought.”²⁷ We come to understand “logical experiences” by considering various cases in which we experience things as logically valid arguments, looking for what all those things we can imagine have in common. This method strongly resembles the methods of 20th-century analytic philosophy.²⁸ J.L. Austin, for example, recommends a very similar method of imaginative variation to “examine what we should say when, what words we should use in what situations.” The similarity is not lost on him: he notes that a suitable name “for [this] way of doing philosophy...[might be] ‘linguistic phenomenology’.”²⁹ And under names like “the appeal to intuition” or “the method of cases”, the same basic method is pursued today in all branches of philosophy, including logic.³⁰

The important point is that Husserl and Austin thought that when we pursue this method, we are, in the first place, describing our minds—our experiences or linguistic inclinations. They thought that this was an appropriate basis on which to establish truths about other things. As Husserl saw, our anti-psychological argument implies that it is not an appropriate method for use in logic.³¹ But since

²⁷Husserl 1939, §87. Note that though it is our *experiences* of things as valid that we are, in the first instance, describing, we *thereby* learn about validity itself. (§IV of Hintikka 1995, warns against confusing Husserl’s phenomenology with the *phenomenalist* idea that we have access only to phenomena: “The overall phenomenological project would make little sense unless [it] led us closer to actual realities.” This is why Husserl can claim in §2 of the *Einleitung* to Husserl 1901 that this method lets us “go back to the ‘things themselves.’”)

²⁸The general point of this section is indebted to Thomasson 2007: “Both phenomenology and early to mid twentieth-century analytic philosophy...offered the same sort of alternative [to empirical psychologism]. Husserlian phenomenology...shared with early analytic philosophy up through ordinary language philosophy a general conception of philosophy’s proper goals and methods[:]...the analysis of meanings or concepts...based largely in determining the application (and reappliation) conditions for our concepts, where these are considered *a priori*.”

²⁹Austin 1956, 8. Again, Austin thinks that by understanding our minds—our linguistic tendencies—we learn about the thing itself: “we are looking...not merely at words...but also at the realities we use the words to talk about.” Lest one think that the centrality of language is a major difference between Austin and Husserl, note that language has a central role in Husserl’s procedure: “Linguistic discussions are certainly among the philosophically indispensable preparations...only by their aid can the true objects...be refined to a clarity that excludes all misunderstanding.” One could also find a similar account in Grice 1958.

³⁰These terms appear in Williamson 2007, (2) and Machery 2017 (Chapter 1), respectively. Bealer 2002 notes that “The use of intuitions as evidence (reasons) is ubiquitous in our standard justificatory practices in the a priori disciplines...By intuitions here, we mean *seemings*: for you to have an intuition that A is just for it to *seem* to you that A.” (73-75) As MacFarlane [unpublished], (2) reports, “The dominant methodology for addressing [hard questions about logical validity] involves frequent appeals to our ‘intuitions’ about logical validity.” An example is Priest 2006, who recommends the method: “We have intuitions about the validity of particular inferences...These act like the data in an empirical science: if the theory gives the wrong results about them, this is a black mark against it.” (182)

³¹Of course, they might be wrong about what it is: Williamson 2007 argues against this picture of what we are doing when we use this method. The anti-psychological argument, then, may not force

this method is still in use, if it is ruled out by the anti-psychological argument, then rather than *defending* standard practice against a few revisionary theorists, our argument may well pose a problem for it, calling for an “anti-psychologism” in logic more radical than we have ever had.

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a change of logical methodology, but provide one reason not to conceive of it as these philosophers did.

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