

1.1 Introductory_Evans

- Frege: first to formulate a theory of meaning that provide an explanation of how the significance of complex expressions depends upon the significance of their parts (*systematic* theory of meaning)
- Built around an account of the functioning of *atomic sentences*
 - "Sentences in which one or more singular terms are concatenated with a 'concept-expression' or predicate of corresponding degree"
- Two phases of theorizing about language: the phases before and after the discovery of the distinction between sense and meaning

1.2 Meaning (Bedeutung)_Evans

[1]

Singular terms

- The starting point of Frege's thesis: the significance of a complete sentence consists in its being true or false (8)
- Each significant expression of a language has *semantic power*: "the power to affect the truth-value of the sentences in which it occurs" (8)
 - Associated with some extra-linguistic entity (the expression's *Meaning*)
 - Evans call this entity *semantic value* rather than meaning to avoid the ambiguity of 'meaning'
- Laying aside non-extensional^[2] contexts as special or abnormal; then identifies Meaning of *a singular term* with the term's referent (9)
 - Evans: the consideration that non-extensional contexts are abnormal however doesn't force the identification of the semantic value of a singular term with its referent
 - Additionally, the consequence of this identification is not obviously acceptable
 - e.g., all empty singular terms have no semantic values and thus no semantic power
 - Semantic values should not be identified with semantic power, since empty terms seem to have semantic power despite lacking semantic values

Complete sentence

- The Meaning of a *complete sentence* as its truth value (9)
- Made inevitable by: (9)
 1. the starting point of Frege's theory: the thesis that the significance of a complete sentence amounts to possession of a truth-value
 2. semantic power as always consisting in an association with an extra-linguistic entity
 3. laying aside non-extensional context for special treatment

Once these two anchors - the assignment of truth-values to sentences, and the assignment of objects to singular terms - have been lowered, the kind of entity that constitutes the semantic value of an expression of any of the various other kinds is more or less determined by its *grammatical category* (9).

Categorical grammar

The description of a given categorical grammar

Either primitive or derived (9)

- Two primitive notions of a Fregean *categorical grammar*: 1) a sentence (S); 2) Proper Name or singular term (N) (9)
- Categorical descriptions for derived categories take the form of a description of a grammatical category (9)
 - Formulation: product/the materials that the expression needs to combine with (YY)
 - i.e., an expression of the form S/N (the category of monadic concept-expressions): "an expression which, when concatenated with a Proper Name, yields a sentence" (10)

The semantic value of the derived categories

The semantic value of any derived category in this grammar, with a description of the form $\alpha/\beta_1, \dots, \beta_n$ ($n \geq 1$), will be a function from n ($n \geq 1$) semantic values of the sort appropriate to a β to a semantic value of the sort appropriate to an α (10).

- e.g., the semantic value of a monadic concept expression (S/N) is a function from N-values to S-values (10)

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1. Frege focuses on how language allows us to communicate and to share knowledge ↔
 2. non-referring ↔

1.3 Empty singular terms_preliminary remarks_Evans

[1]

[2]

The account

- A proper name introduces an object; the concept-expression serves as the function to map objects to truth values (example: X is wise; 10).
- Only thereby is the sentence determined as having truth values (10)

Two parallel defects to which Proper Names and concept expressions are liable

1) Empty names (11)

- A proper name might not have an object as its Meaning
- For this reason, no argument is presented to the function associated with the concept expression
- --> the sentence that contains this kind of proper names is not determined to have a truth-value

2) Partial functions

- A concept-expression may fail to introduce a function which yields a truth-value for each object of the domain (11)

- "Concept-expressions whose functions are partial - i.e., not everywhere defined - simply do not have a Meaning of a kind that fits them to serve generally in a language used for making serious assertions about the world" (11)
- "If such concept-expressions are allowed, some singular sentences will fail to have a truth-value, as will many quantified sentences, especially universally quantified sentence" (11)^[3]

Defect 1) embraced

Embraced a Russellian view before introducing the distinction between sense and referent:

- "someone who uttered a sentence containing an empty singular term would fail to say anything, in the sense that he would fail to express a thought" (12).
- *Russellian singular term*: a singular term whose significance depends upon its having a referent (12; RG 28)
 - Here the significance is the term's semantic power (RG 28)
 - After introducing senses, more tolerant things can be said of empty singular names

The motivation of developing a theory of sense

- The Theory of Meaning: relations between expressions of the language and entities in the world (13)
- But, recognizes "the need to take account of the cognitive aspects of language use": sentences with the same semantic value (Meaning/referent) can express different thoughts (13-4)^[4]
- --> The theory of Sense: relations between expressions of the language and entities in the world (13)
 - Ascribes sense to empty terms to support that they indeed express a thought despite having no referent (14).
 - Transition: However, "it is far from clear that Frege's new notion, the notion of sense, allowed him consistently to ascribe sense to empty singular terms while the basic theory of Meaning remained unaltered" (14).

1. bare knowledge: knowledge of the name is restricted to its referent; the point: we cannot have a bare knowledge without thinking about it in some way; will be rejected by some theories which think some names don't have a sense ↔
2. Descriptions: there is something essential to indexicals that is not captured by descriptions ↔
3. predicate is a function that relates the name to a truth value - two defects: 1) might have a name that does not have any object; 2) might have a function that is only partially defined - does not output a truth value - i.e., the function does not apply to everything (i.e., 'the prime number is red' is neither true nor false) ↔
4. cognitive value: a placeholder for the difference between terms of the same referent ↔

1.6 Empty singular terms_Sense without Meaning?_Evans

Raising the problems

- Unclear how there can be a mode of presentation when there is no object to be presented (22)
 - The problem didn't go away with Evans' reformulation because it is unclear how there can be a way of thinking of the object when there is no object
- Within the theory of Meaning: A sentence can be accepted as intelligible (prompts the hearer to form a belief about the world) yet has no truth value (and is therefore insignificant - unable to be

used to make an assertion) (23)

- Yet an entity being an appropriate semantic value of expressions of a given category, means that the functioning of any member of the category depends on being associated with such an entity (22)
- YY: so if there is a sentence that has no truth value yet can still function, this sentence serves as a problem for Frege's view
Not sure what is going on in pp.24-30

i) Cast doubt on the suggestion that a sentence can express a thought but lack a truth value

- Don't understand the stuff in pp.24-5
- The incomprehensibility of the idea that the thought that p and the thought that it is not true that p, can both fail to be true when the thoughts are both about the world (25)
- A thought that has no truth values follows from nothing nor has any logical consequences

ii) Rejects the sense of a sentence as a function of the sense of its components

The objection to respond to

Suppose a singular term can have a sense without referent; then though the sentence will have no referent as a result, the sense of the sentence can possibly be derived from the sense of the singular terms. Then, the sentence can still express a thought because of its sense.

Reply: sentence's referent determines sentence's sense

Quite apart from what Frege says about the sense of this or that expression, he seems to have envisaged a systematic theory of sense - a theory which shows how the sense of complex expressions is dependent upon the sense of their parts - as being built on, or derived from, the theory of Meaning.

This is in contrast to Aye and Searle who thinks "the possession of a referent by a singular term is simply irrelevant to the question whether or not it has a sense".

How meaningless singular terms lead to thought-conveying sentences

Frege assimilated all cases of apparently significant sentences containing an empty SDNP to discourse about fiction.

- A sentence containing empty terms may have a sense (30)
- But, the sense is a mock sense that differs from the sense of the kind possessed by ordinary atomic sentences (30)
- Evans thinks that one needs to keep distinct two cases:
 - 1. apparent thoughts: two scenarios of thoughts

- 1.1 thoughts that are had by interlocutors who know the referent does not exist
 - 1.2 Thoughts that are had by interlocutors who wrongly believe the referent does
 - 2. Mock/pretend thoughts: only the scenario where the interlocutors know the referent does not exist
- [1]

1. attributes mock senses to give the sentences cognitive values ↩

1.7 Empty singular terms_Sense without referent_Evans

- Frege departed very little from the Russellian model of the functioning of singular sentences. The main differences are just two (30): [1]
 - 1. the notion of sense is added
 - 2. understanding empty singular terms involves some kind of pretence or appearance of thought expressions
- However, this model of the functioning of singular sentences cannot be accepted, because Frege is dealing with intuitive category of singular terms (31)
- Some empty singular terms only show the illusion of thought-expression, but not all empty singular terms do (31). Examples:
 - 1. definite descriptions
 - 2. descriptive names (names whose reference is fixed by a description).
- Summary:

I have not argued that the entire structure of a Fregean semantic theory would break down if one insisted upon ascribing a Fregean sense to an empty singular term.

What I have claimed is that dire consequences follow from the ascription of a Fregean sense to any expression that has no Meaning or semantic value... But the equation between semantic value and referent is by no means mandatory. In fact it has to be given up if empty singular terms are to be ascribed a sense.

- An alternative proposal: singular terms as set - empty sets for empty terms, singleton sets for referring terms (32)
- Transition (33)
 - Will elaborate the relationship between High Fregean semantic theories and neo-Fregean theories
 - Will then discuss Russellian and descriptive singular terms

1. what is Russell's theory? ↩

1.4 Sense_Preliminary remarks_Evans

Frege's example of sense: letter to Jourdain (14-5)

- Ateb and Aphla example

- Explorer 1 sees the mountain, names it as Aphla, and records that 'Aphla is at least 5000 meters high'.
- Explorer 2 sees the same mountain, names it as Ateb.
- 'Ateb is Aphla' is not 'Ateb is Ateb'
- Analysis
 - Meaning of Aphla and Ateb is the same, but sense different
 - The sense of the proposition 'Ateb is at least 5,000 meters high' differs from the sense of the proposition 'Aphla is at least 5,000 meters high'
- Due to the possibility of communication and of a common science, Frege concludes that "the sense of a name is not something subjective, that it does not therefore belong to psychology, and that it is indispensable" (15)

Delineating Frege's theory

- Several ways of defining 'sense' (15)
 - different ways of determining the object
 - 'mode of presentation' of Meaning
 - different senses as illuminating the Meaning from different sides
 - Evans suggests to dispense all these (15)
 - Evans' way of defining 'sense': *a way of thinking about something* (16)
- Sense as an objective property of singular terms: to understand the utterances containing a singular term, one must grasp the object referred to by the singular term and also think of it in a particular way (16) ^[1] ^[2]
- Sense is applied to all Meaningful expressions of the language (including but not limited to singular terms) (16)

Summary

To summarize, then, I suggest that we take Frege's ascription of a sense to a Proper Name to mean that not only must one think of *an object - the referent of the term* - in order to understand a sentence containing it, but also anyone who is to understand the sentence must think of the referent *in the same particular way* (17).

1. Not sure what is going on in 16-7) ↔
2. Q: how this way of explaining senses differs from Frege's own way of doing so? ↔

1.5 Sense and thought_Evans

Sense and description

- The way we think about many objects is by description (18)
- Yet, sense cannot be identical to description, because each of us thinks of ourselves in a primitive way and a way available to no one else (18)

Set-ups for the proposal of Sense

Link Sense to ordinary propositional-attitude psychology

- Thought (according to Frege): the sense of a sentence (18)
- the notion of thought should conform to *the Intuitive Criterion of Difference* (18)

...the thought associated with one sentence S as its sense must be different from the thought associated with another sentence S' as its sense, if it is possible for someone *to understand both sentences at a given time while coherently taking different attitudes towards them*, i.e., accepting (rejecting) one while rejecting (accepting), or being agnostic about, the other (18-9).

- Cognitive value defined in terms of propositional-attitude psychology: "a sentence S has a different cognitive value from a sentence S' just in case it is possible to understand S and S' while taking different attitudes towards them" (19)

Ways of explaining 'a way of thinking about something' must allow for one to take different epistemic attitudes to sentences with different senses

We must not discriminate ways of thinking if things so *finely* that no difference of epistemic attitude can rest upon the discrimination (20).

Equally, we must not make our discrimination of ways of thinking of objects so *coarse* that we reckon a subject to be thinking about an object in the same way in two episodes of thinking about it, when it would be perfectly possible for the subject coherently to take different attitudes the thoughts thus entertained (20).

Evans' proposal about Senses

Notion of 'a way of thinking about an object'

I suggest that the desired notion can be explained *in terms of the notion of an account of what makes it the case that a subject's thought is a thought about the object in question* (20).

Evans' account: ^[1]

S is thinking about the object a in virtue of the fact that ...S... (20)

- What follows 'that' is an account in which references to the subject and the object thought about appear (20)
- Another subject S' can be said to be thinking about the same object in the same way, iff we get a true statement when replacing S with S' (20-1)

Objection to Evans' proposal

The objection: same sense, different referent

1. Sense determines referent. (Meanings correspond one-many with senses) (21; footnote 24)
2. On Evans' account, two ppl at different locations think of their surroundings in the same way ('here') would be grasping the same sense (21).
3. But then sense would not determine referent, because we have the same sense but different referent (21)

Evans' reply: deny 2

- Without thinking of the same object, one cannot be thinking of the object in the same way (21)
- A new formulation of a way of thinking, suggested by Rick: S is thinking about a in virtue of the fact that ...S...a...; thinking in the same way means the S can be replaced by S', but a cannot be replaced by a'
- Evans' proposal can tell whether different subjects or a single subject at different times are entertaining the same thought, whereas the Intuitive Criterion can only discern if the same subject is entertaining the same thoughts at a given time (21) [2]

Fregean model of successful communication

- Speaker: the content of thought is determined by the object thought about and the way the speaking is thinking about the object; utters "a (a proper name whose sense is α) is F"
- Hearer: when hearing "a is F", grasps α ; then think of the object a in the way α ; in understanding that a is F, formulates the thought α as F [3] [4]

1. can't think of anything concrete ↔
2. ? ↔
3. sometimes the object needs not be thought of in the same way in order for the communication about the object to work ↔
4. senses matter for knowledge communication when they are necessary to consciously determine the same object (the correct object): sometimes thinking of the thing in the same way is required for thinking of that thing, and is what allows you to know that you are thinking about the right object ↔

1.9 Conclusions_Evans

- Summary
 - 1. Frege held a highly Russellian view of singular terms^[1], which is dubiously consistent with his willingness to ascribe sense to empty singular terms (38)
 - 2. Even if 1 is false, Frege can still recognize all Russellian singular terms as having a Fregean sense and a referent (38).
 - 3. Frege can also recognize non-Russellian terms.
- A distinction to be made in Chapter 2: referring expressions v.s. definite descriptions
- Needs to discuss:
 - 1. in virtue of what is a type of singular terms a type of referring expressions
 - 2. in virtue of what is a type of singular terms Russellian
 - 3. What does it mean to have a sense?
- Two distinctions
 - 1. Russellian or non-Russellian: whether the atomic sentence would fail to express a thought if there is no referent
 - 2. Fregean or nor Fregean: singular terms either do or do not operate in accordance with the Fregean model of communication
 - Fregean model of communication: "communication was a matter of a speaker framing a thought in language and a hearer who, upon understanding the sentence, grasps the same thought, ultimately because both grasp the same Sense according to the singular term that the speaker used".

1. when having no referent, then fails to express a thought ↵