

For Frege ready: what is he assuming about the categorical role that language is supposed to play?

Superman vs. Clark Kent

Words & their role in language/communication

2 kinds of significance

Language is compositional

Larger things assembled from other things - "complex syntactic structures" assembled

Sentences

↳ also in a sense relevant to meaning

sentence-meaning = "thought/significance"

is about the world, has "worldly import"

truth/falsity have significance - what's required of world for sentence to be true?

Observation abt language: productivity

English has infinite # of sentences

"something deeply right about that" - or has to be right!

We can tell what's syntactically well-formed → distinguishing infinite class of things

recursion

Combination of small achievements

Going straight from sentence → world & naming the person?

People understand sentences

"Superman can fly" seems to get at some "thinkable"

Can say the same thing in another language

Can think this, hear this, believe this etc.

Is there relevant metaphysical/epistemological literature at the time of Frege that helps us better understand him?

Frege's phil. language caulked in his larger project about mathematical language & truth

Not a lot of patience for natural language - ambiguity etc.

there exists

"Meaning arises from use" → meanings determined by what words are intended for, "no authority to decide this"

Rescues: "predicament of the engineer"

there is person, mind, facts about mind, world, relations b/w them

mental "aboutness" - thoughts are about the world → capacity to talk about the world & characterize it seems central

intentionality seems to apply to language

what distinguishes us from the beasts?

language - "the big arm of thought" - seems to be unique in the natural world

consciousness also plays this role

"the horse raced past the barn fell"

"garden path sentences" - competent language users say at first that this is ungrammatical

↳ a resource for understanding language

3rd area of interest: methodology of philosophy

"this was an injustice/was wrong/was a bad thing" - evaluative language

"stepping back" behavior: "is wrong" is just a predicate?

context sensitivity: meaning of sentence allows for some sensitivity to contextual conditions

"Dutch Goose is nearly" - true/false?