

Chapter Three

Frege's Concept of Thought and its Philosophical Implication

In the previous sequel, I deeply engaged myself with Frege's view about sense (*Sinn*) and reference (*Bedeutung*). It was revealed that Frege developed a sense as the mode of presentation. But it was equally revealed that sense is deeply embedded with thought. In this sequel, we will fully explicate Frege's concept of thought and its philosophical implication. We come to know that the notion of sense applies to a proper name. When we say that sense is the mode of presentation, the pertinent question at the very outset comes to our mind that mode of presentation of what? It is the mode of presentation of proper names. We have already explicated the concept of proper name after Frege and later developed in what sense a proper name is deeply associated with sense or mode of presentation. Unlike Mill and Russell, Frege emphasizes the sense of a proper name. Thus to Frege, to determine the sense of a proper name is primary and reference is, to me, secondary. When I claim that reference of a proper name to Frege is secondary, I actually intend to say that Frege attempts to conceive reference in various senses. For Frege, the reference of a proper name that would be determined through the sense or mode of presentation of the proper name may be direct, may be indirect, may be acquainted, may not be acquainted, and even may be based on presupposition rather than assertion. So to me, the whole semantic problem of Frege is essentially based on cognizing the sense or mode of presentation of a proper name.

Now the point here is that we cannot get the sense or mode of presentation of a proper name without the concept of thought. That means the sense or mode of presentation can

be comprehended through thought. Thus, to me, the concept of thought is the key issue of Fregean semantics. That is why, Wolfgang Carl at the beginning of his paper, 'The Thought' remarked, "It is only by the discovery of the distinction between sense and reference that the notion of thought gets a more clear-cut form"⁴⁶. Frege uses the term thought more or less in the same way as the term *judgeable content*⁴⁷ before the discovery of the notion of thought. What then is thought according to Frege? Frege says that the sense of every sentence is a thought. Thought is neither physical nor mental, it is the *third realm* or third eye to get the sense of the sentence. A sentence is comprehensible to us because of thought. A thought in itself is immaterial. Only a complete sentence expresses a thought. Frege says, "The thought is the sense of the sentence without wishing to say as well that the sense of every sentence is a thought"⁴⁸.

The above remark of Frege is significant. Frege here asserts that the thought is the sense of the sentence. That means thought is manifested through the senses of the sentence. But at the same time, Frege clearly denies that the sense of every sentence is a thought. Why does Frege deny that the sense of every sentence is a thought? Does it lead us to assume that Frege has a different perception of the term sense? Does it lead us to assume that Frege understands the concept of sense only from the semantic perspective? Does it lead us to assume that apart from indicative sentences or descriptive sentences or assertive sentences, every other sentences that we use in language have senses but lacks thought? If we think, after Frege, that the sense of every sentence is thought then it

⁴⁶ Carl, Wolfgang, *Frege's Theory of Sense and Reference: Its Scope and Limits*, Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 76.

⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 76.

⁴⁸ Frege, Gottlob, "The Thought: A Logical Enquiry", *Mind*, Vol. 65, No. 259 (Jul., 1956), p. 292.

would be difficult for us to retain the distinction between thought and idea. Frege was extremely conscious of the distinction between thought and idea. His interpretation of thought is exclusively relevant to his semantics and nothing else. In this regard, it can be said that if we assert that the sense of every sentence is thought then we find the sense of the sentence lacking truth-value, lacking reference, and lacking semantic meaning. So this is the problem for which Frege consciously remarks that the thought is the sense of the sentence but not the sense of every sentence is a thought.

It thus seems to me that thought plays the central role in understanding the sense of a proper name that will eventually help us to determine the reference of the proper name and thereby would help us to solve the problem of meaning. Frege thus distinguishes various kinds of sentences and he certainly would not call the sense of an imperative sentence a thought. According to Frege, sentences expressing desires or requests are ruled out in the same way. For Frege, only those sentences in which we communicate or state something come into question. However, feeling, groaning, shying, and laughing fail to communicate anything, and therefore such sort of communication is no longer associated with thought. Now the question naturally arises: How does a thought can become a part of the language? How does it enter into language? I have already mentioned after Frege that thought is the third realm. As it belongs to the third realm, it cannot be possessed by a man just like an idea is possessed by a man. But at the same time, the sense of a sentence is thought and a sentence is being uttered by a man. Thus it entails that there is a certain point of time when thought being the third realm can enter into language. Otherwise, we cannot say, after Frege, that the sense of a sentence

is thought. This is where the question actually arises: what is the point of introducing thought into language?

3.1: Word-Question or Sentence-Question is the Beginning of Thought:

To reply to this question, Frege unlike others asserts that through word-question or sentence-question thought is being injected into language. Now in our part of speech, word-question or sentence-question belongs to interrogative sentences. So according to Frege, interrogative sentences can be the bearer of thought at the initial stages. This does not make us to say that interrogative sentences as the bearer of thought can be interpreted in the form of 'to be the case' or 'not to be the case'. Even no semanticists would accept the truth-value of interrogative sentences. Does it lead us to say that the sense of an interrogative sentence bears the same thought as the sense of a descriptive sentence that bears the thought? Frege was very much aware of the distinction. Frege here affirms interrogative sentences as the receiver of thought which is then completely manifested through the sense of a descriptive sentence. Otherwise, it would not be possible for Frege to apprehend the injection of thought into language. Frege then says that to give a reply to any interrogative sentence whatsoever, we get a descriptive sentence. What is your name? What it is? Who is he? Any reply to any of these sentences helps us to get a descriptive sentence, such as, my name is Jones; it is a mobile phone; he is Socrates respectively.

Frege further contends that a *word question* is not complete like a descriptive sentence. Frege says, "In a word-question, we utter an incomplete sentence which only obtains a true sense through the completion for which we ask. Word-questions are accordingly

left out of consideration here”⁴⁹. Thus for Frege, sentence questions are a different matter. In the case of sentence-question, we always expect to get a response either in the form of ‘yes’ or in the form of ‘no’. Frege then says that the answer ‘yes’ means the same as an indicative sentence, for it is the thought that was already completely contained in the interrogative sentence. Thus for Frege, “So a sentence-question can be formed from every indicative sentence”⁵⁰. This is unlikely in the case of an exclamation as it cannot be regarded as a communication since no corresponding sentence question can be formed. However, it can be said after Frege that an interrogative sentence and an indicative sentence contain the same thought. But the indicative sentence contains something else as well, namely, the *assertion*. On the other hand, in the case of an interrogative sentence, it contains a request. Thus, while considering indicative and interrogative sentences, two things need to be taken care of, namely, the sentence question and the assertion. But at this juncture, we intend to say that word-question or sentence-question invites or injects thought content in the sentence composed by proper names to refer to something. Thus Fregean thought is intrinsically linked with sense. Here Frege says about the way in which “we think of ourselves”.⁵¹ When we think of ourselves and express it through sense or mode of presentation, we think *self-consciously*. However, neither of these things would be true in a generalized descriptive theory of thought. Frege here undertakes a detailed investigation of different particular ways of thinking of objects to make it clear what kind of sense they have. Here I ponder that every grammatically correct sentence has a definite sense. In this regard, every

⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 293.

⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 293.

⁵¹ Evans, Gareth, *The Varieties of Reference*, Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1982, p. 18.

sentence irrespective of descriptive one has a sense. But when Frege deals with the concept of sense or mode of presentation of a proper name he had a different perception altogether. Here he is primarily concerned only with the semantic interpretation of language where the mode of presentation of a sentence is predominantly concerned with reference. His main concern is not to determine the sense of any sentence whatsoever, rather he is primarily and precisely concerned to determine the sense of only those sentences having reference. His main objective is to solve the problem of meaning by way of determining the reference of the sentence under consideration. The sense of the sentence, which is of course a function of the sense of its parts, *is a thought* in which Frege is mainly interested. The single constraint Frege imposed upon his notion of thought was that he should conform to what we might call, Evans opines, “Intuitive Criterion of Difference”⁵².

What then is the “Intuitive Criterion of Difference”? In this regard, Evans goes on to say after Frege that “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 someone can understand both sentences at a given time while coherently taking different attitudes towards them”⁵³. This leads us to assume that it may perhaps be the case that one while rejecting (accepting), or being associated with, the other. This is perfectly clear in the passage from the letter written by Frege to Jourdain. The letter states, “Accordingly the sense of the proposition, ‘Ateb is at least 5000 meters high’ is also different from the sense of the proposition, ‘Alpha is at least 5000 meters high’. Someone who takes the

⁵² Ibid, p. 18.

⁵³ Ibid, p. 19.

latter to be true need not, therefore, take the former to be true”⁵⁴. Moreover, Frege equally employed this criterion in a letter to Russell in 1902 where Frege wrote: “The thought that *all thoughts belonging to class M are true* is different from the thought that *all thoughts belonging to class N are true*; for someone who did not know that M coincided with N could hold one of these thoughts to be true and other to be false”⁵⁵.

The above remarks made by Frege clearly reflect the Intuitive Criterion of Difference. According to Evans, Frege needed this connection between the theoretical notion of sense and ordinary propositional attitude psychology if that theoretical notion was to help him solve the original puzzle about how sentences composed out of expression with the same meaning can have different cognitive values. A sentence S has a different cognitive value from the cognitive value of the sentence S’ just in case it is possible to understand S and S’ while taking different attitudes towards them. I do subscribe to Evans that if the notion of a way of thinking about something is to be elucidatory of Frege’s notion of sense, then in such a case ways of thinking about things must be identified and distinguished in harmony with the Intuitive Criterion of Difference for thought. Here a critic might have a point in saying that the Intuitive Criterion of Difference for thought cannot by itself fully determine the identity and distinctness of thought.

3.2: How does Thought Link with Sense?

We have already mentioned that thought is linked with sense. The question is: how does thought link with sense? In this regard, Frege says the sense of a sentence is determined

⁵⁴ Frege, Gottlob, *Philosophical and Mathematical Correspondence*, ed. by B. McGuinness, Oxford, 1980, p. 80.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p. 153. See also *Posthumous Writings*, tr. by P. Long, R. White and R. Hargraves, Oxford, 1979, p. 197.

by the senses of its component parts. Again he further asserts that the truth value of a sentence is determined by its sense. At times to determine the sense of the component expression, the context of utterance plays a vital role. The sense of the sentence “I ate plum pudding today” is capable of determining a truth value via the truth value of a sentence based on context. Even some contemporary thinkers intuit Frege’s sense as ‘input sense’ and ‘output sense’. These are two different levels of sense expressed with the help of thought. The output sense has been grounded in the following thesis:

- a) Output sense is essentially sentential, whereas input sense is not.
- b) Output sense is sensitive to failure of reference, whereas input sense is not.
- c) The notion of indeterminacy does not apply to input sense in the same way in which it applies to output sense.
- d) In a sense, the input sense is not ambiguous, whereas the output sense is equivalent to ambiguity.
- e) Input sense is not contextually dependent, whereas output sense is *contextually dependent*.

On the basis of the above specification of input and output sense, it may appear that Frege attempts to assimilate output sense with thought. If it would be the case then the output sense is deeply associated with the truth value. Because in such a case one may claim that mere input sense is incapable of either possessing or determining a truth value. In this regard, David Bell remarked, “In short, there is no univocal sense of ‘sense’ which will satisfy both Frege’s principles”⁵⁶. Frege’s thought is also associated

⁵⁶ Bell, David, *Frege’s Theory of Judgement*, Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1979, p. 119.

with his theory of judgment. For Frege, the objects of thought and the primary bearers of truth-value are *Gedanken* (thought). And *Gedanken* is the sense of indicative sentences. But we have to specify what *the objects of thought* are? The objects of thought are *possible bearers of truth-value*. Otherwise, according to Bell, we could not talk, as we wish to, of ‘true-belief’, ‘false judgment’, ‘the confirmation of suspicion’, etc. Secondly, they are essentially expressible and communicable in language. They do not have input sense as the notion of input sense fails to fulfill the aforesaid requirements. In ‘Der Gedanke’ (‘The Thought’), in fact, Frege denies any special sign making the presence of assertive force necessary in ordinary language. That means one can get the sense or the apprehension of truth in the form of a declarative sentence. Assertive force is present only in a declarative sentence.

3.3: Various Levels of Thought:

Even though Frege has asserted that thought exists independently of humans and it is a third realm that is neither physical nor mental, he acknowledges different levels of thought. Different levels of thought are not different thoughts but different levels of the same thought. These different levels of thought differ the truth-value of the assertion even in the same person making in different times about the same object. Accordingly, Frege distinguishes the following levels of thought, such as,

- a) The apprehension of thought – thinking.
- b) The recognition of the truth of a thought – judgment.
- c) The manifestation of the judgment – is an assertion.

It thus seems that thought is a thinking process, it begins with the process of thinking, leads to a judgemental level, and ends with assertion. For Frege, when we first act, we begin with a sentence question. It is the level when thought is apprehended. The sentence question, such as, ‘what it is?’ creates a force, of course, an assertive force that forms the act of the thinker to engage with making an apprehension about what is being asserted by the sentence question. After an appropriate investigation, the thought, Frege affirms, is finally recognized to be true. Of course, we declare the recognition of truth in the form of an indicative sentence. However, it remains a matter of philosophical question whether all indicative sentences would be the bearers of truth. In this regard, Frege inclines to say that when we deal with the indicative sentence we do not have to use the word ‘true’ for this. Even when we use it in the indicative sentence it may lack the assertive force and the force of becoming true. What Frege inclines to say here is that only assertive sentences do have the indicative force and may have the valid claim of becoming true. It may perhaps be the case that in some indicative sentences, the question of truth-value would remain a far cry if “we do not speak seriously”.⁵⁷ Here I am wondering about the term ‘we do not speak seriously’ as expounded by Frege. To me, it seems a bit ridiculous. Does it lead us to assume that Frege makes himself casual about the language that we use in doing semantics? Certainly, I do not think so. But Frege does not rule out the possibility of non-serious speaking even in the realm of descriptive or assertive interactions. Frege in this regard, mentions cases that we frequently perceive in drama, cinema, and poetic writings. Frege, for example, quips: Is stage-thunder a real thunder or an apparent thunder? Certainly, according to Frege

⁵⁷Frege, Gottlob, “The Thought: A Logical Enquiry”, op. cit., p. 294.

and every other, it is true to say that any stage thunder is only an apparent thunder, and a stage fight is only an apparent fight. So for Frege, stage assertion is the only apparent assertion. This is equally true in the case of poetic writings. When a poet characterizes a character in his poetic writings, the concerned character as characterized by the poet is only an apparent character but not a real character. The king in the dark chamber is a case in point. We very often see serials and cinemas in our life where it is clearly stated by the media proprietor that if any character or any event is luckily assimilated to any person that might have been impacted the lifestyle of that person, is not responsible for that because the characters or the act of playing are all apparent characters or act of playing played by different person. So according to Frege, some descriptive assertions describe or assert only apparent descriptions or apparent assertions for which his theory is not applicable. Frege's theory is applicable only in the case of real assertion, i.e. when an indicative sentence is uttered, it really contains an assertion if we deny the requisite lacking of seriousness.

Frege further contends that even an indicative sentence often contains a thought component over which the assertion does not extend. The act on the feelings, the mood of the hearer or to arouse his imagination through indicative sentences are cases in point. Words like 'alas' and 'thank God' are cases in point. Many of the poetic utterances expressed in indicative sentences are also lacking real assertion. Even what is portrayed by cadence and rhythm, mood, fragrance, illumination in a point, etc. do not belong to the thought. Accordingly, it cannot be ruled out that the contents of a sentence often go beyond the thought expressed by it. According to Frege, time also plays an important role to apprehend the thought correctly. Therefore, the time of utterance is part of the

expression of the thought. For example, if someone wants to say the same today as he expressed yesterday by using the word ‘today’, he ipso facto must replace this word with ‘yesterday’. Here Frege asserts that even though the thought is the same, its verbal expression must be different so that the sense is re-adjusted.

3.4: The Objectivity of Thought:

It thus seems to us that Frege’s concept of thought has only semantic relevance. It is in no way associated with individual feelings, emotions, passions, poetic imagination, apparent assertions, and many more. So he takes thought as the sense of only the indicative sentences having real assertive force which eventually helps to determine the referent of the sentence and helps him to solve the problem of meaning. Here we examine the objectivity of thought after Frege. The objectivity of thought, I do presume, plays a significant role in his semantics. While talking about the objectivity of thought, Frege remarks, “I acknowledge a domain of what is objective, which is distinct from that of what is real, whereas the psychological logicians without ado take what is not real to be subjective”⁵⁸. Frege uses the term ‘objective’ in his various writings without deviating their meaning or sense. There is a close connection between the distinction drawn in *The Foundations* between “what is objective and what is handleable or spatial or real”⁵⁹, the claim made in 1893 that there is “a domain of what is objective, but not real” and the assumption of a ‘third realm’ in the first *Logical Investigations*. Frege then gives an adequate explanation of the term ‘objective’. He says, “It is something that is

⁵⁸ Frege, Gottlob, *The Basic Laws of Arithmetic*, ed. by M. Furth, Berkeley, 1964, p. 15-16.

⁵⁹ Frege, Gottlob, *The Foundations of Arithmetic*, ed. by J. L. Austin, Oxford, 1953, p. 26.

exactly the same for all rational beings, for all who are capable of grasping it”⁶⁰. If we carefully go through his landmark article ‘On Sense and Meaning’, we can get the sense of objectivity as the *content of thinking* as explained by means of ‘what is capable of being the common property of several thinkers’. The content of thinking needs to be grasped and something can be grasped by different people by the *use of reason*, i.e. by the use of our faculty of thinking. That is why, Frege aptly claims that “objectivity... can only be based, so far as I can see, on reason”⁶¹. This definition suggests an explanation of why something can be grasped by different people. However, Frege does not show that our faculty of thinking or reason explain the possibility of being intersubjectively accessible. Commenting on this remark of Frege, Bell says, “Frege’s paradigm of objectivity is an independently existing object or thing. It is natural, therefore, that to guarantee the objectivity of thought he should have identified them with autonomous objects”⁶². However, Carl does not agree with Bell. He finds mistakes in Bell’s observation of Frege. According to Carl, Bell is wrong for two reasons. First, it is not true that objects are a paradigm case of what is objective, and Frege does not attempt to explain objectivity by reference to the assumption of the independent existence of objects. Secondly, what is objective is explained by reference to intersubjective accessibility based on reason. Frege’s notion of objectivity has epistemological, but not ontological presupposition. According to Carl (1995), Frege uses the notion of objectivity in two different ways. First, what is objective must be separated from subjective representation, and secondly, what is objective is subdivided into what is real

⁶⁰ Frege, Gottlob, *Nachgelassene Schriften*, ed. by H. Hermes, F. Kambartel, F. Kaulbach, Hamburg, 1969, p. 7.

⁶¹ Frege, Gottlob, *The Foundations of Arithmetic*, op. cit., p. 27.

⁶² Bell, David, 1979, op. cit., p. 122.

and what is non-real. Accordingly, the objectivity of thought involves two distinctions: first, they have to be separated from representations on the one side, and second, they have to be distinguished from whatever is real on the other side. While distinguishing between different kinds of what is objective, Frege is making ontological distinctions. By explaining the distinction between what is real and what is unreal, we shall get an idea of what is peculiar to the objectivity of thoughts. This part of Frege's theory is determined by epistemological, not ontological concerns. We think that the first principle of *The Foundations* requires this sharp separation of the subjective from the objective. In fact, Frege explains this point more extensively about what he means by subjective. The subjectivity of representations may belong to the perception of an external object. For example, the visual impression of green may be a representation. However, representations are not themselves perceived, rather they are something we have when we perceive an object. As a result of that, they belong to us. Thus it is necessary to indicate the relation of a representation to somebody "who has it, to its owner"⁶³. Further, it can be said that one has representation in the sense that they belong to the *content of the consciousness* of the person who has them, and whatever belongs to such content cannot itself be perceived. It has its own kind of accessibility. One cannot get acquainted with them except by having them. As representations belong to the content of consciousness and there can be no consciousness without being the consciousness of somebody, therefore, there can be no representation without the existence of somebody whose consciousness contains them. In this regard, Frege opines, "It seems absurd to us that a pain, a mood, a wish should go around the world

⁶³ Frege, Gottlob, *Kleine Schriften*, ed. by I. Agnelli, Darmstadt, 1967, p. 124. See also G. Frege's *Collected Papers on Mathematics, Logic, and Philosophy*, ed. by B. McGuinness, Oxford, 1984, p. 135.

without an owner, independently. A sensation is impossible without a sentient being”⁶⁴. Precisely speaking that any sort of representation needs to be an owner without whom it cannot exist. Frege confronts this dependence with the independent existence of things in the outer world.

Finally, we can say, after Frege, that representations belong essentially to the content of consciousness. It is so much of the essence of any one of my ideas to be content with my consciousness, that any idea someone else has is different from mine. Thus Frege concludes by saying that representations are different if their owners are different. This is justified by saying that in every representation there can be one and only one owner. Every representation has only one owner and no two men have the same representation. As representations belong to the content of consciousness and are accessible only by having them, one can know only those representations one is the owner of. They are private in an epistemic sense of the world. Thus here we sense the force of dependence in the process of representation which Frege called *a kind of causal dependence*.

Based on the aforesaid observation, Frege makes the following assertions:

- a) Everybody has his own representations that belong to him and only to him.
- b) Representations are epistemologically private and not intersubjectively accessible.
- c) Representations depend for their existence on the existence of the person whose representations they are.

⁶⁴ Frege, Gottlob, *Logical Investigations*, ed. by P. T. Geach and R. H. Stoothoff, Oxford, 1977, p. 14.

- d) Representations are not accessible by outer sense-perception or by thinking but only by having them.

We think that Frege was not interested in the analysis of the notion of representations for its own sake, rather he was interested to clarify the notion of thought by means of the analysis of representation. As only representations are subjective and they are, like thoughts, not accessible by outer sense-perception, he was in a position to explain what is peculiar to thought by distinguishing them from representation. In this way, the relevance of the objectivity of thought is explained by means of the distinction between representation and thought.

3.5: Thought and Idea:

Many commentators and critics were sceptical about the functional aspect of thoughts within the realm of Fregean semantics. They assumed that Frege indeed suffered from confusion about the distinction between thought and idea. So far I have seen that the concept of thought plays a significant role in Fregean semantics. Because without thought the sense of the sentence cannot be comprehended and without the comprehension of the sense of the sentence, the reference of the sentence cannot be known. Further, if the reference of the sentence cannot be known, then we cannot come to know the truth-value of the sentence and also fail to understand the meaning of the sentence. Thus the problem of meaning remains obscure in Fregean semantics without accepting the concept of thought as the third realm.

Now the question that has been raised by the commentators that Frege was confused about the distinction between thought and idea, needs to be evaluated deeply. I think

that Frege was very much conscious of the thought-idea distinction. Let me go back to the earlier view I mentioned in the beginning that Frege initially developed a kind of artificial language with the help of Concept-Notation to develop his semantics. In this regard, Frege initially takes help from logic and elementary mathematics. It is known to all of us that the language of logic and elementary mathematics cannot be part of an idea. They are thought processes, a certain sort of abstraction that can never be expressed and comprehended through the idea. It thus seems to me that Frege was very conscious of the closeness of thought and idea. His concept of thought in any standard of imagination can be a part of an idea and Frege was aware of that. Thus Frege begins with the question and says, "I now return to the question: Is a thought an idea? If other people can ascend to the thought I expressed in the Pythagorean Theorem just as I do, then it does not belong to the content of my consciousness, I am not its owner, yet I can, nevertheless, acknowledge it as true"⁶⁵. These aforesaid remarks give a clear indication that Frege himself was not when he was thinking, the owner of thought. Instead of non-owner of thought, Frege affirms that he acknowledges about Pythagorean Theorem that what he consciously thought is true.

Frege here brings the concept of intersubjectivity while elucidating the concept of thought. According to Frege, the intersubjectivity of a judgment essentially means that different people can grasp the same judgment or thought. This is quite different from the case of representation, i.e. idea for which claim we hold. According to Frege, intersubjectivity of a judgment entails what is acknowledged as true is *intersubjectively accessible*. Thus thoughts differ from ideas (representations). Moreover, thoughts do

⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 16.

not causally depend on the person, i.e. thought is not owned by the person whereas the idea is owned by the person who thinks them. According to Frege, what we think cannot be understood as a “production of thought”⁶⁶. Therefore, thoughts differ from ideas. Frege further ponders that what is accessible in an intersubjective way cannot depend on the existence of a sentient being who acts as its owner. Many things are accessible to different people. That means, the causal dependence essentially entailed by the owner-relation has to be understood in a peculiar way. For Frege, it is a sort of dependence on something mental, on a private ‘inner world’ and whatever has this kind of dependence is private as well.

On the basis of the aforesaid observation, I can spell out the distinction between thought and idea after Frege in the following:

- a) Ideas cannot be seen or touched, cannot be smelt, tasted, not heard. For example, when I go for a walk with a companion, I may see a green field and I have a visual impression of the green as well. I have it but I do not see it. This is unlikely in the case of thought.
- b) Ideas are had. One owns ideas. One has sensations, feelings, moods, inclinations, wishes, etc. An idea that has been owned by a person has belonged to that person and it belongs to the content of his consciousness. But this is unlikely in the case of thought. A thought cannot be owned, it cannot be the content of consciousness, rather it is the third realm having contentless. Frege explains this point by saying that pain, a mood and a wish should rove about the world without

⁶⁶ Frege, Gottlob, 1979, op. cit., p. 137. See also G. Frege’s *Nachgelassene Schriften*, ed. by H. Hermes, F. Kambartel, F. Kaulbach, Hamburg, 1969, p. 148.

a bearer independently. However, an experience is impossible without experience. The inner world presupposes the person whose inner world it is. Thus for Frege, unlike thought, in the case of ideas, the owner of it is specified and the locus of it in some inner sense is also specified. As thought is ownerless it cannot be specified in the inner world of the person. It can also be grasped just by way of knowing the sense of the sentence.

- c) Ideas need a bearer. Things of the outer world, however, are independent. But things of the inner world need an owner. This is unlikely in the case of thought. But does Frege think that things of the outer world are independent? For Frege, when we see the same green field, each of us has a particular sense-impression of green. It may perhaps be the case that one notices a strawberry among the green strawberry leaves and the other perhaps is colour-blind. The colour impression that the other receives from the strawberry is not noticeably different from the one he receives from the leaf. Now the point is, does my companion see the green leaf or green leaf as red, or does he see the red berry as green, or does he see both as of one colour with which I am not acquainted at all? Thus, we cannot rule out some unanswerable, and indeed really nonsensical questions. For Frege, the word 'red' does not state the property of things rather it characterizes sense-impressions belonging to my consciousness. That means, it is only applicable within the sphere of my consciousness. Thus Frege subscribes that it is impossible to compare my *sense-impressions* with that of someone else's. For "it would be necessary to bring together in one consciousness a sense-impression, belonging to one consciousness, with a sense-impression belonging

to another consciousness”⁶⁷. Even in this regard, Frege brings the concept of divine consciousness and puts questions about it. For Frege, it is so much of the essence of each of my ideas to be the content of my consciousness, that every idea of another person is distinct from mine. However, it is a problem related to the problem of the other mind. Thus it is impossible for us as men to compare another person’s ideas with our own. For example, I pick the strawberry and hold it between my fingers. My companion observes the very same strawberry that I am holding between my fingers. But each of us has our own idea. No other person has my idea even though many people can see what I am holding between my fingers at this point in time. The same is equally true in the case of own pain. Someone can have sympathy for me, but still, my pain always belongs to me, and the sympathy other shows to me belong to him.

- d) Every idea has only one bearer. No two men have the same idea. Otherwise, the object would exist independently of the person which is not really the case. Objects cannot exist independently. Frege then quips: Is that lime tree my idea? Here the expression ‘that lime tree’ essentially refers to what I see and to what other people can also look at and touch. If my intention is realized here, then the thought expressed in the sentence ‘that lime tree is my idea’ must obviously be negative. But instead of that if my intention is not realized in an aforesaid way then the designation of the expression ‘that lime tree’ is empty. In such a case, it enters into the sphere of fiction. In such a case, neither the content of the sentence

⁶⁷ Frege, Gottlob, “The Thought: A Logical Enquiry”, op. cit., p. 300.

‘that lime tree is my idea’ is not the content of the sentence ‘that lime tree is not my idea’ because in both cases my statement lacks an object. Therefore, one can only refuse to answer the question for the reason that the content of the sentence ‘that lime tree is my idea’ is a piece of fiction. Here, we have an idea without referring to this with the words ‘that lime tree’.

3.6: Is a Thought an Idea?

After illuminating the distinction between thought and idea or more specifically after expounding the nature of both thought and idea, Frege raises the question: Is a thought an idea? Let me get a sense of the question raised by Frege in the light of Frege. In this regard, Frege quips: Does the Pythagorean Theorem belongs to the content of my consciousness? Am I possessing the content of the Pythagorean Theorem in my consciousness? Frege then says that the thought that I express in the Pythagorean Theorem can be recognized by others very similar to me. This leads us to assume that the Pythagorean thought does not belong to the content of my consciousness. Here, I am not its bearer. However, I can recognize it to be true. Frege further contends that if the Pythagorean Theorem is not the same thought which is taken to be the content of the Pythagorean Theorem by me and by another person, then in such a case we should not really say ‘the Pythagorean Theorem’, but ‘my Pythagorean theorem’, ‘his Pythagorean Theorem’⁶⁸. Then in such a case, it may be asserted that my thought can be the content of my consciousness and his thought can be the content of his consciousness. The question arises: Could the sense

⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 301.

of my Pythagorean Theorem be true while that of his false? According to Frege, the words ‘true’ and ‘false’ could also be applicable only in the sphere of my consciousness, if they were not supposed to be concerned with something of which I was not the bearer. In such a case, the truth would be restricted to the content of my consciousness, and “it would remain doubtful whether anything at all comparably occurred in the consciousness of others”⁶⁹.

The feasible problem that Frege anticipates at this juncture is that if every thought requires a bearer then it would be thought of as *this* bearer. If it would be the case then there would be no science, common to many on which many could work. Then Frege asserts that “perhaps I have my science, namely, a whole of thought whose bearer I am and another person has his”⁷⁰. Here each of us occupies the content of his own consciousness without involving contradictions. Therefore, it would really be idle to dispute truths. Frege here takes as an example a note of a hundred rupee. He says that it would be for two people to dispute whether a hundred mark note was genuine or not, where each meant the one he himself thought in his pocket and understood the word ‘genuine’ in his own particular senses. Now if someone takes thought to be ideas, what he then recognizes to be true is the content of his consciousness. Here he is no longer concerned about other people at all. According to Frege, even if he were to hear me the opinion that thought is not an idea, he could not dispute it. Therefore, Frege concludes by saying, “So the result seems to be: thoughts are neither things of the outer world, nor ideas”⁷¹.

⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 301.

⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 301.

⁷¹ Ibid, p. 302.

Now it is justified in what sense Frege has asserted that thought is neither physical nor mental but it is the third realm. If thought is physical, it would be associated with things and if thought is mental, then again it would be associated with ideas. But the thought is neither associated with things nor with ideas. Therefore, *a third realm must be recognized*. Even ideas cannot be perceived by the senses, but they can be perceived with things. Hence, an idea needs a bearer to the content of whose consciousness it belongs. Thoughts are *timelessly true*, but ideas are not. For example, the thought that he expressed in the Pythagorean Theorem is timelessly true. It is true independently of whether anyone takes it to be true. It thus needs no bearer. Thus thought is objective. What is timelessly true is objective. What is independent of the mind is objective. Thought is both timelessly true and independent of the mind. It is not true for the first time when it is discovered. For Frege, it is just like a planet that already exists before anyone has seen it. One sees a thing, one has an idea. But one apprehends or thinks a thought. One has to know the distinction between *seeing and thinking*. When one apprehends or thinks a thought, one does not create it but only comes to stand in a certain relation, which is different from seeing a thing or having an idea, of what already exists beforehand.

Thus according to Frege, we are not the bearer of thoughts, but we are the bearer of our ideas. We do not have thought, as we have a sense-impression. We do not see a thought as we see a star as a thing or object. So it is advisable, Frege opines, to choose a special expression and that is the word 'apprehend'. Frege says, "A

particular mental capacity, the power of thought, must correspond to the apprehension of thought”⁷².

3.7: Is Thought Real?

According to Frege, thought is not something to call real. For him, the world of the real is a world in which thought acts. All this is a process in time. However, we hardly recognize what is timeless and unchangeable as real. So the question arises: Is thought changeable? Is thought timeless? Referring Pythagorean Theorem, Frege inclines to say that thought is timeless, eternal, and unchangeable. Frege again raises the question: Are there not thoughts that are true today but false in six months’ time? It seems that the thought, for example, that the tree is covered with green leaves, will surely be false in six months’ time. Does it make sense to say that the thought remains the same? According to Frege, here we are not asserting the same thought because with the duration of six months it is not the same thought at all. When we say that ‘this tree is covered with green leaves’, it is not sufficient by itself. Without the time indication, we have no complete thought, i.e., no thought at all. Thus for Frege, thought is timely related. Time indication is integral to thought. Time indication expresses a complete thought. But if this position is taken into account, then it leads us to assume, after Frege, that a thought is true not only today or tomorrow but timelessly. Thus for Frege, the present tense in ‘is true’ does not refer to the speaker’s presence, but is a tense of timelessness. Frege further contends that if we use the mere form of an indicative sentence, just by avoiding the word ‘true’,

⁷² Ibid, p. 307.

we have to distinguish two things, viz., the expression of the thought and the assertion of the thought. He then goes on to say that time indication may be contained in the sentence belongs to the *expression of the thought*, whereas the truth, whose recognition lies in the form of an indicative sentence, is timeless. However, the same words express another thought that would be concerned only with the linguistic aspect of the matter. However, one has to distinguish between essential and inessential properties and regard something as timeless if the changes it undergoes only its inessential properties. According to Frege, a property of thought will be called inessential that consists in, or follows from the fact that it is apprehended by a thinker.

Frege then raises the question: how does a thought act? This is a process in the inner world of a thinker that can have further consequences and can also make itself noticeable in the outer world. For example, when we grasp the thought that we express by the theorem of Pythagorean, we recognize it to be true. Thus our actions are usually prepared by *thinking and judging*. Accordingly, it can be assumed after Frege that thought can have an indirect influence, and the influence of one person on another is brought about for the most part by thoughts. In this sense, we may think that one communicates a thought. How does this happen? According to Frege, this actually happens when one brings about changes in the common outside world perceived by another person. In this process, one can apprehend a thought and thereby make it true. Frege then raises the further question by saying what could we think of the great events of world history. Could the great events of world history come about without the communication of thoughts? Still, we cannot “regard

thought as unreal because they appear to be without influence on events, while thinking, judging, stating, understanding and the like are facts of human life”⁷³. Frege further contends that when a thought is apprehended, it brings about changes in the inner world of the apprehender. But it remains untouched in its true essence because the so-called changes it undergoes involve only inessential properties. Frege then remarks, “Thoughts are by no means unreal but their reality is of a quite different kind from that of things”⁷⁴. The effect of thought is brought about by an act of the thinker. However, the thinker does not create them but must take them as they (thoughts) really are. Thoughts can be true without being apprehended by a thinker and in this sense thoughts are not wholly unreal in the sense that at least they could be apprehended and through apprehension thought can be brought into operation. That is why Frege justifies by saying that thought belongs to the third realm.

However, one may claim that Frege’s general notion of objectivity of thought lacks ontological connotations. One might suppose that Frege’s sub-division of what is objective into what is real and what is non-real is not devoid of ontological connotations. It might be a *peculiar kind of objectivity* that Frege attributes to thought. One may criticize Frege by saying that “whatever else may belong to the ‘third realm’ entails that they are some kind of ‘Platonic entities’”.⁷⁵ Frege remarks, “I distinguish what I call objective from what is handleable or spatial or real”.⁷⁶ It

⁷³ Ibid, p. 311.

⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 311.

⁷⁵ Carl, Wolfgang, 1994, op. cit., p. 85.

⁷⁶ Frege, Gottlob, *The Foundations of Arithmetic*, ed. by J. L. Austin, Oxford, 1953, p. 26.

actually means not that what is real is not objective, but the converse may not be true, i.e., it is not true that only what is real is objective. According to Carl, what is real does not coincide with what is objective. What is real is defined as something “capable of acting directly or indirectly on the senses”.⁷⁷ It seems that by calling what is real ‘objective’, he sticks to the notion of objectivity.

But the question: What about what is objective, but not real? What about the kind of objectivity thoughts have? In this regard, Frege says that “thoughts are independent of our thinking”. He justifies this in ‘Logic’ in three steps. He starts with the independence of the truth of thought from our acknowledgment of its truth. It may perhaps be the case as we know that something can be true although we may think it false. This sort of independence is constitutive of our notion of judgment and assertion. It excludes a “magical” conception of a judgment which is very close to the insight of the popular metaphor “Brains in a Vat” as mentioned by Hilary Putnam. Now the point is that anyone who rejected this independence would not be able to assert anything in the normal sense of the world. Frege further extends by saying “we can go a step further. In order to be true thoughts, for instance, loss of nature, not only do thoughts need to be recognized by us as true: they do not have to have been thought by us at all”. In this second step, the possibility is left open that there could be a truth that not have been thought of yet; truths never thought of can be discovered. Frege compares this kind of discovery with the discovery that there is a desolate island in the Ocean. Of course, he does not compare thoughts with such

⁷⁷ Frege, Gottlob, *The Basic Laws of Arithmetic*, ed. by M. Furth, Berkeley, 1964, p. 16.

an island, rather he compares *the truth of thought with the existence of an island*. As far as the third step is concerned, Frege offers a stronger kind of independence of thought. So far we claim that some thoughts which are really true, we may know them as false. In the third step, Frege extends further. Here he claims that not only are some thoughts true that we think false, but also there may have some thoughts true that we may not have thought of yet, but thoughts “are independent of our thinking as such”⁷⁸. The point that needs to be addressed here is how to understand this kind of independence of thought which remains true irrespective of our thinking.

Elsewhere Frege even sometimes compares the independence of thought from thinking with the independence of physical bodies. In this regard, Frege remarked, “Physical bodies and thoughts resemble one another in being independent of my inner life”.⁷⁹ However, it would be wrong to conclude that Frege here was committed to a form of Platonism that ascribes to thoughts an ontological status to be compared with that of physical objects. In this regard, Burge has argued that Frege’s Platonism shows itself because he compares the objectivity of thoughts with the existence and objectivity of physical objects. Such a comparison is based on what Wolfgang Carl calls the *generic use of objective*. According to Carl, this view does not seem to express a particular ontological view of what Burge claims, rather there is a lack of qualification in the claim of independence.

Frege was well aware that the independence of thought has to be taken carefully. For Frege, what is independent of our mental process, i.e., what is objective does

⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 144.

⁷⁹ Ibid, p. 149.

not have to be spatial or material, or real. If it were to disregard this, then in such a case we slip into a *kind of mythology*. Frege quips: how can one give some content to the third kind of independence of thought? Thoughts differ from physical objects in our mode of access to them. We see or hear physical objects depending on the affection of our visual or auditory nerves, i.e., sense-impression. This leads us to assume that our knowledge of what is real essentially requires that there is a causal connection between ourselves and physical objects. That we have certain representations, sense-impression of it. What is real acts upon us in a certain way and it is accessible only by means of representations? Frege then points out, “But do I not then see that this flower has five petals?” We can see this and what is meant by it is bound up with thinking and judging. Newton did not discover the law of gravitation because his senses were especially acquitted. Thus, for Frege, any knowledge of what is real involves *thinking a thought*. But it also requires sense-impression. Even though what is real is quite independent of our inner life but our knowledge of what is real is not independent of our real life. Frege here draws a subtle distinction between thinking and representing and thereby criticizes any attempt to smuggle thinking in through a back door in having representations. Frege’s favoured explanation of thinking as ‘grasping a thought’ remains obscure. Frege realizes it and to that extent, he inclines to say that the expression ‘grasping’ has to be taken in a metaphorical way. By calling thinking the grasping of thought, it seems to me, that Frege did not want to describe the *process of thinking*, rather his aim was to give a *conceptual explanation* of the relation between thinking and thought from the point of view of the objectivity of thought.

It thus seems that Frege offers two proposals for an analysis of thinking both of which are unsatisfactory. Critics would say that we cannot regard thinking as a process that generates thoughts Frege has anticipated. For them, it would be just as wrong to identify thought with an act of thinking. Therefore, they criticize Frege by saying that to assume that a thought is related to thinking as a leap is leaping. Secondly, how is a leap related to leaping? A leap takes place if and only if somebody leaps, i.e., somebody has leaped. Now if one applies this to the relation of thinking and thought, then it may be contended that referring to thought would be equivalent to referring to the fact that somebody is thinking something. Two different people could not think the same thought just like they could not make the same leap. Instead, perhaps they could think the same kind of thought but not the same numerically identical thought. This certainly goes against the objectivity of thought that one and the same thought can be grasped by different people. There is another objection that can be raised against Frege's view that thought is "an act of thinking". If this view is taken into account then there would be no thoughts that were not thought. But this is contrary to the view of Frege that thoughts are independent of our thinking. Thus the view that a thought is an act of thinking is incompatible with the intersubjectivity and the causal independence of thought.

Frege rejected the view that thinking is generating thoughts and that thoughts come into existence as a result of thinking.⁸⁰ This view of Frege again has been criticized by saying that the notion of grasping a thought is directed to the assumption that the existence of thought is causally dependent on the thinking of someone or another.

⁸⁰ Ibid, p. 149.

In this way, the distinction between thoughts and representation gets lost. Frege remarks, “We are not owners of thoughts as we are owners of our ideas. We do not have thought as we have, say, a sense-impression, but we also do not *see* a thought as we see, say, a star. So it is advisable to choose a special expression: the word ‘grasp’ suggests itself for the purpose”.⁸¹ Thus Frege, at last, brings the word ‘grasping’ that means only negatively by means of the remark that ‘we do not produce thoughts’.⁸² Thus it may be concluded by saying that the notion of grasping a thought accounts for the distinction between thinking and having representations. However, he does not give any satisfactory explanation of the kind of access to what is objective but not real.

One may claim by saying that Frege’s analysis of grasping a thought does not reveal the nature of our access to what is objective. As a result of that, it remains obscure how thinking a thought differs from perceiving an object. Bell claims that Frege here identifies thinking with some kind of material related to an object. Bell says, “Thinking is grasping or apprehending a thought, and a thought is an object. Although Frege himself nowhere explicitly asserts that thoughts are objects, this follows immediately from his identification of thought as the reference of a singular term of the form: ‘the sense of the sentence “S” ’ ”.

In this regard, I think, Dummett’s position is praiseworthy. Dummett has correctly pointed out the distinction between expressing thought and referring to it. For Dummett, we can refer to thought by using a name for it, and in this way, we refer

⁸¹ Frege, Gottlob, *Logical Investigations*, ed. by P. T. Geach and R. H. Stoothoff, Oxford, 1977, p. 24.

⁸² *Ibid*, p. 25.

to the thought as an object. This does not, however, make sense to say that to express a thought by using a sentence is to refer to that thought. Fregean metaphor ‘grasping a thought’ was meant to describe what is done by expressing a thought, by using a sentence for asking a question (sentence-question), or by making an assertion. Thus we can regard thoughts as objects by referring to them without implying that grasping a thought is to be considered a way of referring to it. Bell’s criticism has to be distinguished from Dummett’s apprehension of the same. Bell claims that “Frege was wrong to conceive of thoughts as eternal immutable objects” and thereby the notion of thought is embodied by Frege’s “philosophical mythology” of a ‘third realm’. It has to be replaced by the view, Bell opines, that ‘senses are intrinsic of expressions’. Bell further contends that thoughts are ‘immanent objects’, like dance steps or the power of a chess piece. Dummett writes, “The step did not exist and could not have existed antecedently to or independently of anyone dancing it: it is this which distinguishes it as an immanent object from a transcendent one like a shoe”. Here, Carl agrees with Dummett by saying that the distinction between ‘transcendent’ and ‘immanent’ objects is important. Indeed Frege did not draw this distinction, rather he conceived them as transcendental objects, and as inhabitants of a realm altogether independent of us and our activities. We think that Frege apprehended the idea of independence of thought in a very restricted sense. He intends to say that thoughts are independent of our private inner life.

I have mentioned previously that according to Frege, the expression in language for thought is a sentence. Later on, he states, “The proper means of expression for a thought is a sentence”. Critics may say why does the linguistic expression of a

thought matters for thinking? Why do we need such an expression? While responding to these questions, Frege goes on to say that “we know we can have various expressions for the same thought. The connection of thought with one particular sentence is not a necessary one, but that a thought of which we are conscious is concerned with some sentence or other is for us men necessary”. It is true to say that conscious thoughts are thoughts expressed by sentences. But what are conscious thoughts? Thinking is grasping a thought and with regard to thought grasped by someone or other, Frege brings the rhetorical question: “What would a thought be for me if it were never grasped by me?” It seems after Frege that thought is something for me if it is grasped by me sometimes. Now, if we identify conscious thoughts with thoughts being something for me, it seems reasonable to suppose that the only way of grasping a thought essentially consists in expressing it by a sentence in a language that we apprehend. As a result, we can think only by using a language. Frege then points out that this fact concerns our capacity to grasp a thought, but not the thought itself. There is no contradiction in presupposing that there too exist beings that can grasp the same thought as we do without needing to clad to it. It thus seems that we can only grasp a thought by expressing it by means of a sentence in a language, either spoken language or formal language. Frege’s concern for language is a concern for thinking that we as human beings can perform only by using sentences. Frege here develops the semantic theory of language as he explicitly claims that the relevance of thought persists only in the case of the semantic theory of language that accounts for the relation between thinking and judgment, between thought and truth. Here Frege is concerned about only those sentences that express

something for which the question of truth can arise at all, and the use of which can be taken as a linguistic manifestation of thinking. Frege had in mind that the fundamental characteristic of semantic theory is: “To free thinking from the fetters of language”.

3.8: Sense and Thought:

It seems from the aforesaid observation that Frege took the sense of an assertive sentence to be a thought. That looks like a claim that Frege starting from the general notion of the sense of a sentence arrives at the notion of thought by considering the class of assertive sentences. Thus we have to understand the notion of thought in terms of the notion of sense. Thus one has to start from the notion of thought in order to understand Frege’s thesis that the thought expressed by an assertoric sentence is its sense. In this regard, Frege assumes that “such a sentence contains a thought” and he then further continues by saying, “By a thought, I understand not the subjective performance of thinking but its objective content, which is capable of being the common property of several thinkers”. As the thought ‘contained’ or expressed by a sentence is identified with its sense, the notion of sense as applied to an assertoric sentence is much more restrictive to Frege than others. Frege remarks, “In order to bring out more precisely what I mean by ‘a thought’, I shall distinguish various kinds of sentences. We should not wish to deny sense to be the command, but this sense is not such that the question of truth could arise for it. Therefore I shall not call the sense of a command a thought. Sentences expressing wishes or requests are ruled out in the same way”. Thus it seems to me that Frege does not consider the sense of any sentence that is called ‘thought’, but only the sense of those sentences

‘in which we communicate or assert something’. Thus Frege clearly denies the sense of non-assertoric sentences to be thought. An imperative has no reference, but only a sense; a command, and a request are indeed no thoughts, here they stand on the same level of thoughts. The distinction between sense and reference cannot be applied to all sentences. Thus for Frege, the sense of a sentence that is considered to be thought is a *special case of sense*. It is special in the sense that it concerns only those sentences with regard to which the distinction can be drawn and moreover they are just sentences that would serve to make an assertion. According to Frege, as assertions involve a claim to truth, the delineation of the sentences the sense of which is a thought. More importantly, Frege’s preliminary explanation of thought is something for which the question of truth can arise at all. Thus it is not the sense of sentences in general but only the sense of a particular class of sentences that is at issue in the claim that the sense of a sentence is the thought expressed by it. However, this position of Frege again creates some doubt in the mind of contemporary thinkers.

3.9: Church’s Apprehension of Frege:

In this regard, Church offers further explanation of his own understanding of Frege. According to Church, Frege’s notion of sense: “Briefly the sense of an expression is its linguistic meaning, the meaning which is known to anyone familiar with the language and for which no knowledge of an extra-linguistic fact is required; the sense is what we have grasped when we are said to understand an expression”. According to Church, it is impossible to realize that the sense of a sentence identified by Frege with a thought cannot be taken as its *linguistic meaning*, because otherwise,

one could not explain why he attributed a special kind of sense to declarative sentences. To respond to Church we may refer to Dummett. Dummett claimed, “For Frege, the sense is the content of understanding, or, rather, the principle ingredient of that content: it is that which one who knows the language apprehends as objectively associated with the expression”. Now as applied to sentences, it is again said by Dummett that “to grasp the thought expressed by a particular sentence is to understand the sentence”. Thus for Dummett, just by understanding a sentence one can grasp the thought expressed by it. Thus he identifies the notion of thought with the general notion of a sentence. Dummett asserts that in *Über Sinn und Bedeutung* Frege explicitly repudiates the view that any sentences other than assertoric express thought. Here he makes the difference between assertoric, interrogative, imperative, and optative sentences as a difference in their *sense* rather than in the force attached to them. He then concludes that just as assertoric sentences express thoughts, so interrogative express questions, imperative commands, and optative wishes. However, Carl thinks that this position of Dummett opens up the possibility of further misinterpretation to Frege. Frege distinguishes between sense and force of assertoric sentences which is not reflected in Dummett’s reading about Frege. Carl thus claims that it was not Frege but Dummett who was wrong in his interpretation of Frege’s doctrine as well as its explanation. Dummett, of course, picks up Wittgenstein’s idea of a proposition radical that had been clarified by Searle by making a distinction between ‘illocutionary acts’ and ‘propositional content’. In this regard, an assertion and an imperative do not differ from each other in the sense of linguistic meaning. The sense of a sentence is given by an expression of the form

‘that P’ and we get an assertion from it by adding the operator ‘It is the case’, whereas we get a command from the same by adding the operator ‘Let it be the case’. Dummett shares these views and thereby asserts that assertoric sentences, imperatives, sentential interrogatives and optative would all express thoughts. However, they would differ only in the *force* attached to them. Following Frege, we can say that “We can do various things with an expression of a thought: assert that it is true, ask whether it is true, command that it is made true, wish it were true”. However, we think Frege had good reason to repudiate this view. If an imperative and an assertion share the same content and are identified with a thought, then one has to suppose that with regard to one and the same thought one might either command that it be made true or acknowledge that it is true. We cannot generate or produce the truth of thought; rather we can act and command others to act. *Based on this it is concluded that the notion of truth and also that of thought is intimately related to the descriptive or assertive use of sentences. Thus the sense of an imperative or an optative cannot be thought.* This is confirmed after Frege as he elsewhere remarked that different grammatical categories might have the same sense. Frege asserts, I have already mentioned, that an interrogative sentence and an assertive one contain the same thought. But the level of thought of course is different. The assertoric sentence contains something else as an assertion that is unlikely in the case of an interrogative sentence. The interrogative sentence contains a request. Thus it is judicious for us to claim after Frege that the sense of different kinds of sentences may be taken as a thought and is explained by the fact that they are related to each other. The assertion is “an answer to a question”, as a question is

“a request for an assertion”. This strict correlation between question and assertion requires that their sense be thought, because both involve the notion of truth, and therefore, that of thought.

Why does Frege insist that a sentence having a sense must be translatable? Is it necessary for Frege? Frege replies by saying that the translatability of a sentence increases in so far as *it is an expression of thought and of nothing else*. We can grasp a thought only by forming a sentence that expresses it. The linguistic expression of thought may not be a pure expression of what we think, rather it reflects the given connection between thinking and having representation. Thought is given by a sentence in a ‘clothed way’ surrounded by ‘psychological trappings’. What varies are the sentences in some natural languages and the psychological trappings of our thought. Frege acknowledges that the same thought can be expressed in many different ways. And that it is not only invariant concerning different signs but concerning different forms of psychological clothing as well. That means, thought is objective and remains objective within psychological trappings. The translation of language does not take away these clothes, but shows that “for all the multiplicity of languages, mankind has a common stock of thoughts”. This is how one can grasp the same thought in different languages and in various ‘clothing’. Frege says, “The distinction between what is part of the thought expressed in a sentence and what only gets attached to the thought is of the greatest importance for logic”. For Frege, what goes beyond thought belongs to the realm of representation. For Frege, the content of a sentence often goes beyond the thought expressed by it. Alternatively, it can be said that the thought is not encompassed in

the content of the sentence; and understanding the sentence is not sufficient to grasp the thought. Of course, Frege here understands sentences containing only demonstratives. The general framework of his discussion of sentences containing demonstratives is given by his quest for the necessary and sufficient condition for grasping a thought. He points out that it is not necessary to take account of the whole 'content' of a sentence for grasping the thought expressed by it. Secondly, grasping the thought may not be sufficient to take account of what a sentence says. Thus we can distinguish between sentences that express thought and sentences that do not express a thought. We can also distinguish between an understanding of a sentence that provides a grasping of thought and an understanding of a sentence that does not. Sentences containing demonstratives are of the second kind. They are incomplete expressions of thought. As they are incomplete, understanding them does not provide a full grasp of the thought they express.

For example, the sentence 'I am cold' is a well-formed and complete sentence that has a definite meaning. Why is it an incomplete expression of thought? Frege mentions that 'the sentence expresses a different thought in the mouth of one person from what it expresses in the mouth of another person'. Because of this lack, a sentence like 'I am cold' is an incomplete expression of a thought.

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