

## ABSTRACT

The famous German mathematician and philosopher Gottlob Frege is widely known as the father of modern analytic philosophy. He was the first to offer us a thoroughly systematic approach to meaning. His early work *Begriffsschrift* (Concept-Notation) was characterized by elementary formal logic. Thus the language Frege initially anticipated was logical in nature. Keeping this in view psychologism was completely foreign to Frege's philosophy of language. He launched a strong attack on psychologism through his first principle in the preface of *The Foundations* by pointing out the distinction between the subjective and the objective. Frege was in favour of constructing a well-organized systematic form of language to deal with the problem of meaning because, like other revisionists, he believed that ordinary language is vague and ambiguous. Frege's celebrated article 'On Sense and Meaning' (1892) appeared in the domain of analytic philosophy owing to address two philosophical burdens of which one is associated with the *problem of identity* and the other is associated with the *problem of empty proper name*. By introducing informative identity of the form  $a=b$ , Frege shows that how can two expressions having same reference may have different senses or modes of presentation. 'Morning Star' and 'Evening Star' both have the same reference Venus, but their way of referring the referent or modes of presentation are different. Informative identity symbol flanks between two expressions having different senses or mode of presentation but same reference. By bringing this distinction between sense and reference, Frege also solves the age-old philosophical puzzle, the problem of empty proper name. Frege conceives proper name from a broader perspective. A proper name (word, sign, sign combination, expression) expresses its sense, stands for or designates

its reference. Thus for Frege, sense of proper name is important besides having reference. From this perspective, Frege asserted that empty proper names are meaningful because they bear sense or mode of presentation. It is only that nothing ever corresponds to the way in which they are presented and thus they are lacking of reference in the usual sense. However, being a leading campaigner of ideal language philosophy which is obviously a scientific language, Frege later on stipulated an identical reference for all empty proper names.

Besides sense and reference, the role of thought is important to Frege. In his paper 'The Thought', Frege illuminated his conception of thought. Thoughts, for Frege, belong to the *third realm*. Thoughts are true facts. Thoughts are timelessly true, objective and independent. Thoughts are neither physical nor mental. Thoughts are independent of human beings and it is for the humans to grasp the thoughts. A thought is something expressed by sentences. But thoughts are not ideas. The thesis contains a detailed discussion of the distinction between thoughts and ideas. Frege takes thought as *the possessor of truth-value* and sense as the *possessor of reference*. This is how Frege maintained the sanctity of his semantics by keeping intact the position of truth-value while at the same time making his theory comprehensive by bringing the conception of thought and empty proper name. Here lies the gravity of Fregean semantics.

Frege also introduced both Context Principle (CP) and Principle of Compositionality (PC). Apparently, they seem contrary in nature because CP assumes the priority of sentence-meaning and PC assumes the priority of word-meaning. Frege introduces CP to avoid the problem associated with ideas. Frege contended that the sentence is basic in our understanding of the relation between language and what is outside language,

i.e., world. But the word is basic in our understanding of the relation between each sentence and the rest of the language in which it belongs. Apart from various criticisms, I stand with Frege and the research is deeply involved to find out how Frege maintained overall consistency while developing his referential semantics within the horizon of the problem of meaning. Hence, I think, Frege's philosophy of semantics adequately justifies the position of being the father of modern analytic philosophy.

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