

Proper Names as Quantifiers: A Neo-Fregean Account of the Sense of Names*

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Abstract

The main burden of this paper is to present a quantificational treatment of names, by construing the sense of a name in a sentence as indicating a special type of quantification (in fact, a *constant quantification*) in character, which is supposed to impinge upon the scope of application of the associated predicate(s). In brief, a name occurring in a sentence will be treated as a constant quantifier. That is, to treat the standard formula of the form “ Fa ” (where “ F ” is a predicate and “ a ” a proper name) as “ a_xFx ” (where a is a constant quantifier, to which an object a in the given domain will be assigned as its reference, if there is any), and the variable x always takes the object a , if there is any, as its semantic value whenever it is bounded by the constant quantifier a . This account substantially follows Frege’s guidelines for his semantic theory in general, which he lays out at the very beginning of *The Foundations of Arithmetic*. I shall start with a brief analysis of how his guidelines would carry greater weight with an adequate account of the sense

Received April 11, 2006; accepted March 16, 2007; last revised December 11, 2006

Proofreaders: Jeffrey Cuvilier, Yu-ting Lin, Hsin wen Fan, Waan-Rur Lu
* Part of the research for this paper is sponsored by National Science Council, Taiwan, NSC 93-2411-H-002-029.

of names. Then I propose that the sense of a name in a sentence should be construed as a special type of quantification (in fact, a constant quantification) in character. I shall further justify the formal adequacy of this quantificational treatment of names by constructing a first order language, in which the symbols ordinarily used as name letters or individual constants will be treated as constant quantifiers, together with appropriate semantic rules for these constant quantifiers. Finally, I show how this treatment could help us to deal with some persisting problems that the use of names may give rise to.

Key Words: proper names, quantification, the Context Principle, the sense of names