

Re: A theorem for agnostics

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From: Paul Holbach (paulholbachSPAMBAN_at_freenet.de)

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> "Acme Diagnostics" <LFinezapthis@partpostmark.net> wrote in message
> news:<[4104ab47\\$0\\$72106\\$45beb828@newscene.com](mailto:4104ab47$0$72106$45beb828@newscene.com)>...
> > paulholbachSPAMBAN@freenet.de (Paul Holbach) wrote:

> > "Die Sprachen sind in logischen Fragen unzuverlässig. Ist es doch
> > nicht eine der geringsten Aufgaben des Logikers, auf die Fallstricke
> > hinzuweisen, die von der Sprache dem Denkenden gelegt werden."

> >

> > (Frege: "Die Verneinung", 1918)

> >

> > "As regards logical issues, the languages are unreliable. It is not
> > one of the logician's minor tasks to point to the snares which
> > language has set for the thinker."

> I object to the word "unreliable."

This is my own translation, but I'm absolutely sure it's correct.

> [...]

> Pragmatically, language is certainly not unreliable and that is so easy
> to demonstrate that I won't bore readers with it. Briefly, people would
> stop using it. The world would stop. Language is self-correcting
> specifically to the point of reliability, and there are thousands of
> professional linguists working night and day to assure that very thing.

"I believe that I can best make the relation of [the logic language] to ordinary language clear if I compare it to that which the microscope has to the eye. Because of the range of its possible uses and the versatility with which it can adapt to the most diverse circumstances, the eye is far superior to the microscope. Considered as an optical instrument, to be sure, it exhibits many imperfections, which ordinarily remain unnoticed only on account of its intimate connection with our mental life. But, as soon as scientific goals demand great sharpness of resolution, the eye proves to be insufficient. The microscope, on the other hand, is perfectly suited to precisely such goals, but that is just why it is useless for all others."

sci.logic: Re: A theorem for agnostics

([Gottlob Frege: "Begriffsschrift"] , quoted from [Jean van Heijenoort: "From Frege to Gödel – A Source Book in Mathematical Logic", p.6f])

Excerpt:

"Because of the range of its possible uses and the versatility with which it can adapt to the most diverse circumstances, the eye [= ORDINARY LANGUAGE] is far superior to the microscope [= FORMAL LANGUAGE OF LOGIC]."

Regards

PH