

Re: "Friendly Premises"

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.logic/2005-08/msg00109.html>

- *From:* "George Dance" <georgedance04@xxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* 4 Aug 2005 08:02:08 -0700
-

H. J. Sander Bruggink wrote:

> George Dance wrote:

>> H. J. Sander Bruggink wrote:

>>

>>>George Dance wrote:

>>>

>>>>I am pointing out that, if Mr. Shobe is correct that the

>>>>concepts of 'self-proving procedure' and 'proof' refer to the same

>>>>things, then asserting (as you did) "There is no concept of

>>>>'self-proving procedure' in logic" is equivalent to asserting "There is

>>>>no concept of 'proof' in logic."

>>>

>>>Let's do a little word game:

>>>

>>> I am pointing that, if the words 'bloem' and 'flower'

>>> refer to the same things, then asserting "there is no

>>> word 'bloem' in English" is equivalent to asserting

>>> "there is no word 'flower' in English."

>>>

>>>Do you agree with this? :-)

>>>

>> Well, [no], but we weren't talking about words but concepts.

[edited as per my posted correction]

>

> The problem in your argument is the referring to; what is being referred

> to by what it not important. I changed "concept" into "word" because

> concepts do not refer to anything, but words do.

More precisely, (a) concepts "refer to" objects, (b) words "symbolize" concepts, and ergo (c) words "stand for" objects:

<http://originresearch.com/sd/sd4.cfm>

I realize that we're on sci.logic, not alt.philosophy; but I'd like you to understand that those distinctions aren't merely pedantic:

1) Just before I sat down to write this, I made myself some coffee. To do so, I had to find coffee, filters, machine, water tap, cup, and spoon. How could I have done any of that – identified any of those

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objects – except by using concepts which referred to them? Not by words, as the entire process was non-verbal.

2) Say you're reading an English book and come across the sentence, "Some tulips are pink." You know that's synthetically true, because you know the Dutch equivalent is synthetically true; you don't have to suspend belief until you can go out and observe some tulips. Why do you know that the two sentences are equivalent? Because they're talking about the same things – <tulips> and <pink>.

What kind of things are <tulips> and <pink>? They can't be merely the physical objects, pink tulips; for (I'll stipulate) at the time you were reading, there were no such objects in the room for you to observe. And what if the sentence you'd read had been: "Some unicorns are gold." You'd know that one was false (in both English and Dutch equivalents), but not by reference to certain objects – there are no such objects as unicorns for you to observe, period.

3) Finally, consider a case in which humans simply could not conceptualize; they could still make sounds and write strings of characters, but none of those sounds or characters symbolized any concepts (there being none). In that case, what objects could the sounds and strings possibly stand for or 'refer to'?

>> The fact

>> that an English-speaker doesn't use the word 'bloem' does not show that

>> English-speakers have no such concept. In fact they do, even though

>> they use a different word ('flower') for it.

>

> True. But that doesn't mean that anyone will understand you when you say

> "bloem" in an English-speaking country (except, perhaps, for a few Dutch

> tourists :-).

Actually, I suspect that most of us would: as a reflection of our mongrel heritage, we use the word "bloom" as well as "flower" in our language (and most of us understand that both words symbolize the same concept, and therefore stand for the same objects).

Some would not, of course: that very issue arose in response to your earlier post, with one person arguing that 'bloem' symbolized the concept <flower>, and the other that 'bloem' was nonsense that symbolized nothing. Obviously one was right and the other wrong; which couldn't be the case if there were no concepts that referred to objects.

The distinction between 'concepts' and 'words' is not only non-pedantic (as I hope I've shown; I was trying for brevity, so may have sacrificed some clarity), but also (contrary to what you hint above) important to the discussion. If in fact the claim in question had dealt with words rather than concepts – if the claimant had said only, "There's no such term as 'self-proving procedure' in logic" –

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then we probably wouldn't even be having a discussion.

> groente

G'day to you (as we say in Canada).

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• *Follow-Ups:*

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◇ From: H. J. Sander Bruggink

• *References:*

- ◆ [Re: "Friendly Premises"](#)
◇ From: Jesse Alama
- ◆ [Re: "Friendly Premises"](#)
◇ From: Acme Diagnostics
- ◆ [Re: "Friendly Premises"](#)
◇ From: Martin Shobe
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