

Re: The king of france is ...

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- *From:* "Jesse F. Hughes" <jesse@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Sun, 20 Apr 2008 09:06:04 -0400
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Newberry <newberryxy@xxxxxxxxxx> writes:

On Apr 19, 8:05 pm, "Jesse F. Hughes" <je...@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

NOTE: It seems to me that the plain English sentence "all the apples in my basket are red" is true when there are no apples in the basket. I'm not convinced that we always interpret such sentences as having an implicit claim that there are more than one apple in my basket. But, insofar as that's how you want to interpret the sentence, either of the above will do.

Make up your mind. Either

A)

"the apple in my basket is red" = $(\exists x)(Bx \ \& \ Rx \ \& \ (y)(By \ \rightarrow \ y=x))$ and then

"all the apples in my basket are red" = $(\exists x)Bx \ \& \ (x)[Bx \ \rightarrow \ (Rx \ \& \ \sim(y)(By \ \rightarrow \ y=x))]$, or

B)

"the apple in my basket is red" = $(x)[Bx \ \rightarrow \ (Rx \ \& \ (y)(By \ \rightarrow \ y=x))]$

"all the apples in my basket are red" = $(x)[Bx \ \rightarrow \ (Rx \ \& \ \sim(y)(By \ \rightarrow \ y=x))]$ and

Which one is it?

You've drawn the lines differently than I intended. Here are the options. We interpret "All the apples in my basket are red" as implying

(a) nothing about the number of apples in the basket.

$(x)(Bx \ \rightarrow \ Rx)$

(b) that there is at least one apple in the basket.

$(\exists x)(Bx) \ \& \ (x)(Bx \ \rightarrow \ Rx)$

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(c) that there is more than one apple in the basket.

$(\exists x)Bx \ \& \ (x)[Bx \rightarrow (Rx \ \& \ \sim(y)(By \rightarrow y=x))]$

(d) that there is not exactly one apple in the basket.

$(x)[Bx \rightarrow (Rx \ \& \ \sim(y)(By \rightarrow y=x))]$

(d) is most implausible and I was not suggesting that we interpret the sentence as (d). I was suggesting that we interpret the sentence as (a). I don't see the phrase "All of the X satisfying P..." conveys anything about whether or how many X satisfy P.

In this respect, the sentence "The apples in my basket are all red," is different. It *does* seem to imply that there are at least two such apples and I'd say that (c) is the most plausible interpretation. Because the sentences

"All the apples in my basket are red."

"The apples in my basket are all red."

are so similar, I'm willing to admit that one might interpret the former in exactly the same way and hence choose (c). I wouldn't, but it's not obviously wrong.

None of my answers here have a damn thing to do with the question of how to interpret "The apple in my basket is red." That sentence clearly implies there is one and only one apple in my basket and hence should be translated as

$(\exists x)(Bx \ \& \ Rx \ \& \ (y)(By \rightarrow y=x)).$

Clear enough?

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Jesse F. Hughes

"Most of my research is irreducibly complex."

-- James S. Harris

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