

Naive Metaphysics and Fregean Truth

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Abstract

In this paper we will look at Frege's work under a metaphysical lens aiming to identify crucial concepts to be employed in the treatment of objectivity. After presenting the principle of epistemological simplicity and its relation to objectivity through a discussion about naive metaphysics, we analyze how meaning and truth can be employed to understand apparent reality. On the central matter of the nature of truth, we will argue that, under a naive metaphysical perspective, its indefinability is a desirable feature and that it could be advantageous to study truth in terms of an internal and an external versions of judgment. We conclude with some brief examples of applications of these notions.

Keywords: Metaphysics, Epistemology, Truth, Judgment, Frege.

[METAFÍSICA INGÊNUA E VERDADE FREGEANA]

Resumo

Neste trabalho, tentaremos identificar na obra de Frege conceitos cruciais a serem empregados no tratamento metafísico da noção de objetividade. Uma vez apresentados o princípio da simplicidade epistemológica e sua relação com a objetividade, analisaremos a forma como significado e verdade podem ser usados para entendermos a realidade aparente. Sobre a questão central da natureza da verdade, defenderemos que, sob uma perspectiva metafisicamente ingênua, sua indefinibilidade é uma característica desejável e que poderia ser vantajoso estudá-la em termos de uma versão interna e outra externa de juízo. Concluiremos apresentando brevemente algumas aplicações destas noções.

Palavras-chave: Metafísica, Epistemologia, Verdade, Juízo, Frege.

Introduction

In the study of abstract entities, specially in philosophy of mathematics, one commonly faces the dilemma of having to choose between the realist path, which is usually of greater explanatory power, but epistemologically challenging; and the anti-realist path, which is often more epistemologically robust but at the cost of explanatory strength.

One of the key contributors to this dilemma is the non-trivial task of reconciling objectivity with meaning: While the realist derives meaning from what things are in reality, but does not fully clarify (at least not under the skeptics view) how we get to know about such things; the anti-realist explains how we know or understand certain things, but have a hard time explaining why these are the ones we know.

We believe that a Fregean approach to objectivity might alleviate this problem. The meticulous and careful nature of Frege's studies reflect a methodological prioritization of *epistemological simplicity*. Consequently, when directed to the question of objectivity, his approach produces assertions corresponding to *data*, instead of postulates concerning the constitution of base reality. Existential claims in this context, for example, would correspond to the identification in *apparent reality* of (epistemologically) simple things. Meaning that Frege could be interpreted as not attempting to describe base reality (at least not directly), thereby avoiding a major source of epistemological uncertainty associated with realist positions.

This feature is, therefore, of incredible value since the resulting ontology would not conflict with epistemology. In fact, one interesting consequence of this is that objects, concepts, functions, ideas, etc., would not be seen as entities that make up reality, but categories employed in our best explanations of the available data. Ontology acquires a much more taxonomic character.

Beyond that, by re-framing Frege's work in this metaphysical setting we wish to create enough wiggle room to allow for certain speculations, since his precision in capturing the nuances of language and logic makes it fairly difficult to advance in different directions without appearing to be conceptually careless or violating what would be his true intentions. Therefore, given that our work aims to extrapolate certain ideas rooted in his work, but not claim to reflect his views strictly, we chose the metaphysical environment.

Therefore, this work aims to identify crucial concepts to be employed in the treatment of objectivity and is structured as follows: After presenting the *principle of epistemological simplicity* and its relation to *objectivity* through a discussion about naive metaphysics, we analyze how *meaning* and *truth* can be employed to understand *apparent reality*. On the central matter of the nature of truth, we will argue that, under a naive metaphysical perspective, its indefinability is a desirable feature and that it could be advantageous to study truth in terms of an *internal* and an *external* versions of *judgment*. We conclude with some brief examples of applications of these notions.

1. Naive Metaphysics

1.1 Epistemological Priority

By *naive metaphysics*¹ we understand the study of existence that starts with apparent reality and, through the investigation of the nature of things, aims to uncover the fundamental reality of the world. This corresponds to a methodological shift, that we will call *epistemological prioritization*, in which the philosopher does not try to determine what is real before studying the nature of things as they are presented to us. In other words, the attitude of the metaphysician towards apparent reality is not one of first trying to find out what is a part of *base reality*² in order to justify the study of their nature, which violates the epistemological order in which we access the data, but one of taking the appearances as given and trying to understand what is real through investigations about the nature of apparent things.

Since mathematics studies the nature of mathematical entities, this version of metaphysics is very applicable in foundational mathematics: In contrast to more traditional approaches to the metaphysical investigations of the basis of the field, naive metaphysics takes into account the information provided by mathematics in order to uncover deeper truths, instead of imposing philosophical principles to mathematical practice³. This results in less conflict, both conceptually and ideologically, in the philosophic-mathematical frontier. Consequently, this approach extracts the best of both worlds: On one hand, the metaphysical investigation of mathematics is developed informed by the rigorous, meticulous, precise and undeniably successful results of the latter. On the other, mathematics can benefit directly from philosophical explanations, clarifications and justifications, since the strong and conceptually demanding classical metaphysical assumptions are no longer present⁴.

¹ See Fine 2017.

² The constitution of fundamental reality.

³ A very clear example of ways in which philosophical principles can restrict mathematical practice is Intuitionism. In this view, the concept of truth is intimately tied to the idea of provability. A mathematical statement is considered true only if it can be constructed or proven in the mind. This is in stark contrast to classical mathematics, where a statement may be considered true if it can be shown to be logically consistent, regardless of whether a direct construction or proof is available. Although philosophical arguments can be presented in favor of Intuitionism, especially in response to concerns about the reliability of non-constructive methods, the majority of mathematicians still adopt a classical approach and oppose the view that mathematical practice should be altered in response to philosophical concerns.

⁴ To elaborate on the potential impact of the naive metaphysics approach on foundational mathematics, we briefly consider a practical implication: When adopted as a theoretical framework for philosophical inquiry, naive metaphysics does not require dividing mathematics into realist and anti-realist perspectives. What happens is that, for the anti-realist mathematician, what constitutes appearance is neither simply what is the case nor merely what is not the case. Instead, appearance involves something more: a semblance of truth. From this perspective, the anti-realist assigns the same seriousness and significance to quasi-truths as the realist does to truths, leading to methodologically similar mathematical investigations. Consequently, the naive metaphysics framework, given its prioritization of epistemology, avoids the need to bifurcate disciplines or methods, enabling a unified study of the nature of mathematical entities. This unity, in turn, enriches the space of possible explanations for mathematical phenomena, making it fuller and more diverse.

As mentioned, however, this is a mere methodological shift. It should entail a more meticulous and careful study of the world, but the underlying metaphysical principles and ways of reaching understanding remain the same. This means, for example, that when we say "the number one exists", although we are no longer bound to jump to the conclusion that there is something in base reality that we capture, we are still expected to trace the path from the number to base reality if we wish to enjoy the same philosophical and mathematical advantages of a Platonist framework. More explicitly, while a traditional Platonist position would give us an incredibly powerful foundation for mathematics at the cost of a complicated epistemology, the equivalent naive position would not produce the same epistemological problems but would have to be attached to a theoretical system or methodological structure capable of connecting us to a notion of base reality in order to produce an explanatory effect analogous to a classical Platonist view⁵.

Such methodology is not trivial to elaborate. Various principles have been proposed to guide our naive metaphysical research, but no solid method seems to be available according to our view. Ideas like methodological naturalism, the substitution of ontological reduction by metaphysical grounding and so on surely cover some ground on the right direction, but philosophical principles, due to their generality, seem to be unable to discriminate a particular set of desirable actions without having to postulate strong claims that would lead us away from a naive approach.

1.2. Epistemological Minimalism

We think, however, that the very desire to avoid leaving naive domains could work as a principle to guide the confection of a naive metaphysical method. The principle of *epistemological minimalism* tells us that we should not assume things beyond what the available data provides us with, i.e. that we are not allowed to leave naive domains of inquiry.

While this principle may seem innocuous, it has some interesting features:

1. Under this principle, prioritizing the study of the nature of things in apparent reality is not a mere inversion of the order of classical metaphysics' procedures for the sake of epistemology, it is simply the result of reevaluating the contribution of certain metaphysical studies to explanatory power once we abdicate from the weight attached to non-naive ontological claims.
2. Since it is an epistemological principle, it does not touch the ontology of the matter. In fact, it prevents us from both expanding and restricting apparent existence in our explanations. In this situation, even if the missing path to base

⁵ As an illustration, one could consider the case of Set Theory as a foundation for mathematics: Under a Platonist perspective, sets could be seen as components of base reality. This would allow for philosophical explanations that reduce other mathematical entities to sets. Consequently, beyond the formal advantages that come from the use of Set Theory inside of mathematics, this view would provide an intuitive account of the abstract world similar to how we understand the material one. A purely naive perspective would not attribute as much weight to ontological claims. Therefore, even though the claims themselves can still be made, further clarifications on how one is able to extract such conclusions from the nature of things in apparent reality are expected. The philosophical success of Platonist explanations, in this context, would be conditioned to something like a metaphysical methodology or procedure.

reality still needs to be paved in order to restore the explanatory strength once attributed to classical metaphysics in the sense of producing explanations, we already have the advantage of not losing the available ones.

3. It provides the elaboration of a naive metaphysical methodology with the very clear directive of choosing the path that decreases the need of assumptions. Both basic assumptions and the dependence of the method itself on assuming things.

1.3 Epistemological Simplicity and Its Commitment to Objectivity

Each principle can be employed on their own. For instance, epistemological priority alone produces naive metaphysics when applied to the traditional one; while mathematical *quasi-combinatorialism*⁶, the view that infinite combinations should exist just like finite ones do, comes from a form of epistemological minimalism employed by Bernays in his defense of set-theoretical realism. However, we wish to apply them together, and will call the simultaneous use of these principles *epistemological simplicity*.

Ironically, it may not be so simple to further characterize this notion. In fact, being something that we strive to understand better and apply more, a definition for it might not even be available. Therefore, in a somewhat Fregean spirit, we provide an example.

1.4. An example: The Greenness of Green Meadows

Let us imagine that we see a green meadow in front of us. We have, at least, three metaphysical options on how to understand the greenness we experience:

1. Greenness exists and is independent of us.
2. Greenness does not exist.
3. Greenness is not independent of us.

Now, if we associate each alternative with the respective phrase bellow:

- I. "The meadow is green"
- II. "The experience of green is an illusion, there is no property such as greenness"
- III. "We experience greenness, but greenness is a product of our minds"

it may seem like 2 and 3 are epistemologically simpler. The reason being that we do not need to justify our epistemic access to greenness like we would in 1, our experience of green is taken to be primary. However, this is the case only if one assumes that the meaning of the phrases depend on them capturing an instance of reality as it is. This is the scenario in which the two later phrases, because their claims on reality are weaker, would do better. Epistemology in this situation is secondary to ontology.

On the contrary, if we take epistemology to be first, the phrases reflect meaningful ways of accounting for the available data. In such a way that none of them require a particular configuration of base reality to be known. Additionally, under minimal assumptions, the first phrase is simpler because it merely states what can be grasped through the available data, while the other two impose restrictions in our understanding of greenness.

⁶ See Bernays 1983

In summary, following the principle of epistemological simplicity leads us to a version of naive metaphysics occupied primarily with the meticulous study of apparent reality, and it is in this light that we will conduct the rest of our discussion.

1.5. A new notion of objectivity

We believe, in fact, that the notion of apparent reality is captured in a very special way from this perspective. In its broad use and simplest form, apparent reality concerns the way things seem or appear to us, as opposed to the way they are in themselves or in their ultimate nature (what we might call *ultimate reality* or *fundamental reality*). These phenomena may or may not correspond to an underlying, more fundamental reality. By putting epistemological simplicity in the forefront of a methodology for metaphysics, we reject the idea that access to the *real* is fundamentally tied to specific forms of cognition or perception, or that reality must be understood through what we supposedly know about either a world shaped by our minds or a world of independent objects, focusing instead on the available data and its meaning as the primary source of knowledge⁷. Consequently, apparent reality takes on an independent and central role as the subject of an epistemologically focused metaphysics.

A very interesting consequence of such view is that objectivity is no longer a product of what we know about an external reality, instead knowledge of fundamental reality arises from advancing our understanding of objectivity as something built into the available data, just like anything else we have good reason to believe is knowable.

In the following sections we explore how to implement the proposed version of naive metaphysics with Fregean tools.

2. A Fregean procedure

Frege's method for doing philosophy can be seen as a process of detecting and analyzing the apparently simple aspects of our everyday experience, which, upon closer scrutiny, reveal deep philosophical complexities. By focusing on these apparently simple elements one could uncover the underlying structures that govern our thinking and reasoning about the world and, consequently, about the world itself.

Language is an excellent example of an area where Frege applied this procedure. On the surface, language may appear straightforward – an everyday tool we use to communicate our thoughts. However, by closely examining its structure, we can uncover much deeper insights about how we understand apparent reality.

Among the crucial components for the deeper understanding of objectivity in apparent reality we highlight *meaning* and *truth*. For Frege, these are not merely abstract concepts; they are fundamental to how we understand apparent reality. Meaning provides the cognitive framework for referring to and thinking about the world, while truth ensures that our thoughts are objective. Together, they form the basis for knowing and representing reality, whether in the physical world or the abstract realms. We discuss them further in what follows.

⁷ It is important to emphasize that this is not a structuralist perspective. Although it could be said that our world view will be shaped in terms of the organization of the available data, intrinsic features continue to be a part of our understanding of apparent reality and our final goal is still to describe fundamental reality. In this sense, we do not adopt a relational framework, an extrinsic perspective or advocate for the metaphysical primacy of data over its source.

2.1 Meaning

Traditional views often treated meaning as either purely subjective (a mental state or idea in the mind of the speaker) or through a fairly straightforward correspondence to the world. Frege recognized that meaning has multiple dimensions that cannot be reduced to an individual's subjective understanding, or simply seen as a trivial correspondence with base reality, but should be about something epistemologically fundamental that has an objective character (as attested by the fact that it can be shared and understood by anyone who grasps it correctly). This leads to a dual structure of meaning, which Frege divides into:

- *Sense (Sinn)*: The mode of presentation of an entity.
- *Reference (Bedeutung)*: The actual entity.

The reference is objective in the sense that it points to a mind-independent reality. For example, the reference of the term 'Venus' is the planet Venus, which exists independently of our thoughts about it. The sense, on the other hand, is how the term 'Venus' presents this object to us — through different modes of presentation, such as the morning star or the evening star. Even though the sense may vary depending on how the term is used, the reference remains fixed.

It is important to emphasize that objectivity of meaning results from the recognition of just that, the acknowledgment that our best understanding of reality comes from admitting that the available data have a source and a content, not that we are acquainted with the source. When considering the term 'Venus', for example, we recognize that, with respect to the speaker, its meaning has an internal component, the sense, and an external component, the reference. To state that the reference of 'Venus' is the planet Venus means that 'Venus' is a name and the planet Venus is an object. This corresponds to the categorization of available data, where we are essentially identifying the structure of apparent reality, and nothing more. To claim that there is an object in the world with which we are familiar, and that we associate the term 'Venus' to it in order to give the term meaning, would eliminate the necessity of distinguishing between sense and reference. In such a case, it would be impossible to be unaware that 'the Morning Star' and 'the Evening Star' refer to the same object for instance.

This is reflected in Frege's view of truth, which is intricately tied to meaning and objectivity, but not based on a straightforward correspondence between the terms and reality.

But could we not maintain that there is truth when there is correspondence in a certain respect? But which respect? For in that case what ought we to do so as to decide whether something is true? We should have to inquire whether it is true that an idea and a reality, say, correspond in the specified respect. And then we should be confronted by a question of the same kind, and the game could begin again. So the attempted explanation of truth as correspondence breaks down. - Thought (1918), p. 60.

Thus, truth tracks objectivity through meaning because the proposition's truth is grounded in the objective reference of the terms, as revealed by their sense. The truth of the proposition is not a result of a match between thought and reality, but rather reflects that the proposition's meaning allows it to refer, which makes it objective.

Beyond that, meaning occupies a central role in Frege's metaphysical framework because it provides the necessary bridge between our cognitive and linguistic activities and the objective, mind-independent world. The structure of meaning captures the link between the internal and external aspects of apparent reality. The dynamics of meaning is, therefore, a process through which we get to understand apparent reality and objectivity better.

2.2 Truth

If sense and reference are essential for understanding the meaning of singular terms, the analysis of propositions relies on the notion of truth. Thus, while sense and reference are key to determining the classes of entities in apparent reality (in the taxonomic way mentioned in the introduction), the structure of said reality, which is probed through the use of propositions, should be understood in terms of truth.

An advance in science usually takes place in this way: first a thought is grasped, and thus may perhaps be expressed in a propositional question; after appropriate investigations, this thought is finally recognized to be true. - Thought (1918), p. 62.

In the following discussion, we will first summarize some key points regarding the nature of truth and its relevance to reasoning. Then, we will address some aspects that we think require further clarification.

2.2.1 Summary

As mentioned, truth emerges from the reflection on propositions and their role in logical and linguistic systems. In fact, a *thought*, the sense of a sentence, is characterized as the thing to which the question of truth can arise.

Since (following the principle of epistemological simplicity) it cannot be assumed that the truth of a proposition depends on perception or beliefs, and that there are evidence that it holds independently of an individual's knowledge or attitude towards it, the possibility of the objectivity of truth follows naturally. This means that, although its understanding is tied to human internal states, truth should be regarded as having an external component which serves as a standard for evaluating propositions.

Having said all of that, no definition of truth is given. In fact, it is possible to consider that truth is indefinable. Not only because it cannot be reduced to simpler terms or concepts, but also, and perhaps more importantly, because any attempt to define truth would implicitly rely on the concept of truth itself, resulting in a circular definition. Hence, truth cannot be captured by other more basic properties, making it an irreducible element of our understanding of language and logic.

And any other attempt to define truth also breaks down. For in a definition certain characteristics would have to be specified. And in application to any particular case the question would always arise whether it were true that the characteristics were present. So we should be going round in a circle. So it seems likely that the content of the word 'true' is sui generis and indefinable. - Thought (1918), p. 60.

In this scenario, one could ask how should we employ truth in our reasoning? How can it be useful in our understanding of objectivity?

However, it is only when truth is regarded purely as a theoretical construct that its indefinability could impede the progress of our understanding. When considered as a part of apparent reality, it is entirely natural that truth should remain undefined, and that we should further our comprehension of it and its related concepts through ongoing study and inquiry. Furthermore, studying the nature of truth would offer valuable insight both into the facts of the world and the notion of factuality itself. That is, it would be a crucial step toward uncovering and understanding the objective aspects of the data available to us. Therefore, in this respect, the methodological role of truth in our naive metaphysics is to be a north for our intellectual endeavors.

The question that remains is rather how to implement such investigation on the nature of truth?

2.2.2 The nature of truth

Truth does not seem to be a property of thoughts. In *On Sinn and Bedeutung* (1892), Frege maintains that the reference of a sentence is a truth-value: the *True* or the *False*. On the *True*, he writes:

One might be tempted to regard the relation of the thought to the True... rather as that of subject to predicate. One can, indeed, say: 'The thought, that 5 is a prime number, is true.' But closer examination shows that nothing more has been said than in the simple sentence '5 is a prime number.' It follows that the relation of the thought to the True may not be compared with that of subject to predicate. - On Sinn and Bedeutung (1892), p. 35.

Under a somewhat deflationist perspective, Frege's argument in this passage could be reconstructed as follows: Suppose that 'true' in 'The thought that 5 is prime is true' denotes the *True*. Provided that 'true' is a predicate and hence denotes a property of thoughts, then the thought *5 is a prime number* should be different from the thought *5 is a prime number is true*. However, they are the same. Therefore, the *True* cannot be considered a property. This argument implies that what we attempt to express with the term 'true' — that is, truth — cannot be a property of thoughts. Beyond that, the conclusion of the argument, that the relationship between a thought and the *True* is not that of subject to predicate, holds only if 'true' is understood as referring to the *True*. This seems to support the view that Frege equates truth with the *True*, which he clearly considers to be an object. Thus, this interpretation maintains that truth is an object.

While the view that truth is an object would align with the general perspective we have presented, i.e. that it is a part of apparent reality (it would fall under the category of object in a taxonomic classification), it would overlook the ways in which we engage with truth. In fact, it may be argued that considering truth as an object does not align well with Frege's broader views. In *Thought* (1918), where Frege mainly discusses truth, he writes:

*we cannot recognize a property of a thing without at the same time finding the thought **this thing has this property** to be true. So with every property of a thing there is tied up a property of a thought, namely truth. - Thought(1918), p. 61 - emphasis ours.*

This seems to conflict with the earlier passage from *On Sinn and Bedeutung* (1892). In this context, Frege seems to be revealing a part of his conception of truth, which is that predicating truth is always included in predicating anything whatever, even though truth is not a property. However, it also follows that the *True* cannot be predicated.

If truth is neither a property nor an object, the question remains: how should we understand truth?

If we are to follow the perspective advanced in this paper, we should recognize that before understanding what truth is we must characterize it in terms of what is available to us. We should elaborate a framework that captures both how we come to understand truth and what we actually understand about it. More specifically, just as understanding the meaning of names requires a framework that incorporates both our internal grasp of the content and our external connection to an object, so too must our understanding of truth be divided into the aspects we experience directly and those that render it objective. We should refrain from forcing truth into pre-existing categories if it does not naturally align with them.

2.2.3 The role of judgment

2.2.3.1 Internal judgment

The notion of truth is deeply tied to the act of judgment and we believe that this act could be seen as the internal aspect of truth.

Frege distinguishes between *grasping* (understanding or apprehend its content) and *judging* (acknowledging its truth) a thought:

Consequently we distinguish:

*the grasp of a thought – thinking,
the acknowledgement of the truth of a thought – the act of
judgement,
the manifestation of this judgement – assertion. - Thought
(1918: 62).*

In this sense, one could think that the notion of truth can be partially understood through the act of judgment: It is pretty clear from these excerpts that acknowledging the truth of a thought, or recognizing that the content of a proposition is factual, are mental acts performed by individuals and relate to a judgement. So, as long as such acts are available, we would be able to track truth (or, at least, to attempt to track truth).

Furthermore, the *Begriffsschrift* system uses a specific notation, the *judgment stroke* ($\lvert$), to indicate that one is not just expressing a thought but asserting that the thought is true. In this system, writing ' $\lvert\varphi$ ' means not only that " φ " is a proposition, but that the associated thought is true. According to Frege, however, we cannot simply predicate the property of truth of a thought in order to acknowledge its truth, so by adding this stroke we move beyond simply stating a thought to actually asserting that the thought corresponds to the *True*. Thus, a judgment involves recognizing that the thought corresponds to a truth-value, which is either the *True* or the *False*.

If the small vertical stroke at the left end of the horizontal one is omitted, then the judgement will be transformed into a mere complex of ideas, of which the writer does not state whether he recognizes its truth or not. - Begriffsschrift (1879), p. 2.

2.2.3.2 External Judgment

This provides a partial understanding of truth, however, because something beyond an internal mental act must be available in order for us to guarantee the possibility of an objective truth (respecting the principle of epistemological simplicity). An obvious solution would be to consider that the act of judgment is the internal component of truth while truth-values are its external components. The acknowledgement of the truth of a thought would relate to the understanding that the sentence functions as a name for *True* or *False*. In a way analogous to sense and reference, the judgment relates to the content of the available data and truth is identified with the truth-value of that thought. Truth, therefore, would not be a property predicated of a thought but an integral part of the act of judgment itself, serving as a proxy for reality like a referent would.

Now, in a very broad way this would mean that truth is something of the form *True* or *False* (or, perhaps {*True*, *False*}). However, the possibility of objectivity prevents us from being completely neutral and assume that truth is something unsaturated like a concept. We should consider that the form of truth is analogous to a choice between *True* and *False*. This is because we may not know which one is the case, but objectivity demands that it must be one of them, and that it is determined externally. This suggests that the external aspect of truth, like the internal, has the form of a judgment.

Without the principle of epistemological simplicity, this perspective might seem odd. After all, we would be adding a new element to our ontology, one that is also of a different kind. However, in accordance with this principle, we prioritize the appearance of forms of judgments (epistemological priority), rather than assuming that such forms are confined to our internal world (epistemological minimalism).

In summary, we end up with a scenario in which the *True* and the *False* are objects, while truth, as a form of meaning, has an internal component, which is the acknowledgment of the truth of a thought, the mental act of judgment; and an external component, which is the reality of something being true, an objective external act of judgment.

2.3 Some applications

Now we briefly consider some ways in which this perspective might be helpful in understanding truth and objectivity.

In the case of sentences like 'The thought 5 is a prime is true' and '5 is a prime number', since they are invariant under judgment, it would be natural to think that the additional terms concerning truth are irrelevant. Consequently, the freedom from the notions of object and predicate provided by this view seems to alleviate the problem of something as important as truth being irrelevant in asserting thoughts.

Furthermore, once it becomes clear that there are two important aspects of truth that must be taken into account in order to reach a complete understanding of its nature, it becomes evident that logic should have a double character: On one hand, as a science of truth, logic should be descriptive. We aim at the investigation of the external judgment

that makes things objectively the case. On the other hand, we do such study in many ways through our internal act of judgment, in such a way that aligning the two, which corresponds to the correct understanding of the nature of truth, has the effect of correcting our reasoning, which relates to the prescriptive character of logic.

The ambiguity of the word 'law' is fatal here. In one sense it states what is, in the other it prescribes what should be. Only in the latter sense can the logical laws be called laws of thought, in laying down how one should think. - Grundgesetze der Arithmetik, Volume I (1893), p. XV.

I understand by logical laws not psychological laws of holding as true, but laws of being true.? If it is true that I am writing this in my room on 13 July 1893, whilst the wind howls outside, then it remains true even if everyone should later hold it as false. - Grundgesetze der Arithmetik, Volume I (1893), p. XVI

Expanding a little on that. It could be objected that our internal judgment is subjective, therefore it could not be intimately related to an objective thing like the truth. However, throughout his work, Frege mentions the acknowledgment of the truth of thought both when meant as the recognition of the fact that a thought is true — like in scientific contexts — and as the personal act of simply treating something as true — when considering fiction. This dichotomy fits well our perspective, just like thoughts dissociated from an external component are mere ideas, the private judgment is subjective when separated from its external counterpart.

Finally, on *Thought* (1918) Frege writes:

An advance in science usually takes place in this way: first a thought is grasped, and thus may perhaps be expressed in a propositional question; after appropriate investigations, this thought is finally recognized to be true. - Thought (1918), p. 62.

Which certainly indicates that a judgment is required for us to deepen our understanding of the world, but does not make explicit how it would be possible: If we only had internal judgments, it would not be clear why the available data can be converted into an objective answer to our propositional questions. Under this new light, however, reality could be seen as the implementation of the external judgment, in which case the available data could be very naturally seen as having the correct form to answer our inquiry — this, of course, should be understood as meeting the requirement that the external counterpart of our private inquiries belongs to the correct metaphysical category for science to be objective, rather than being naively seen as some sort of conversation that scientists are having with the world.

Conclusion

This short essay may be guilty of not acceding to the standards of rigor required to perform a proper scrutiny of Frege's body of work. However, we present this perspective as an extrapolation of ideas found in his philosophy, hoping that they may be of use in domains of study in which objectivity is paramount, but ordinary realist perspectives offer great epistemological challenges.

We believe that, with some additional work and refinement, the notions of internal and external judgments could be applied in the characterization of truth, allowing the development of a methodology for the naive metaphysics that we put forward in this paper.

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