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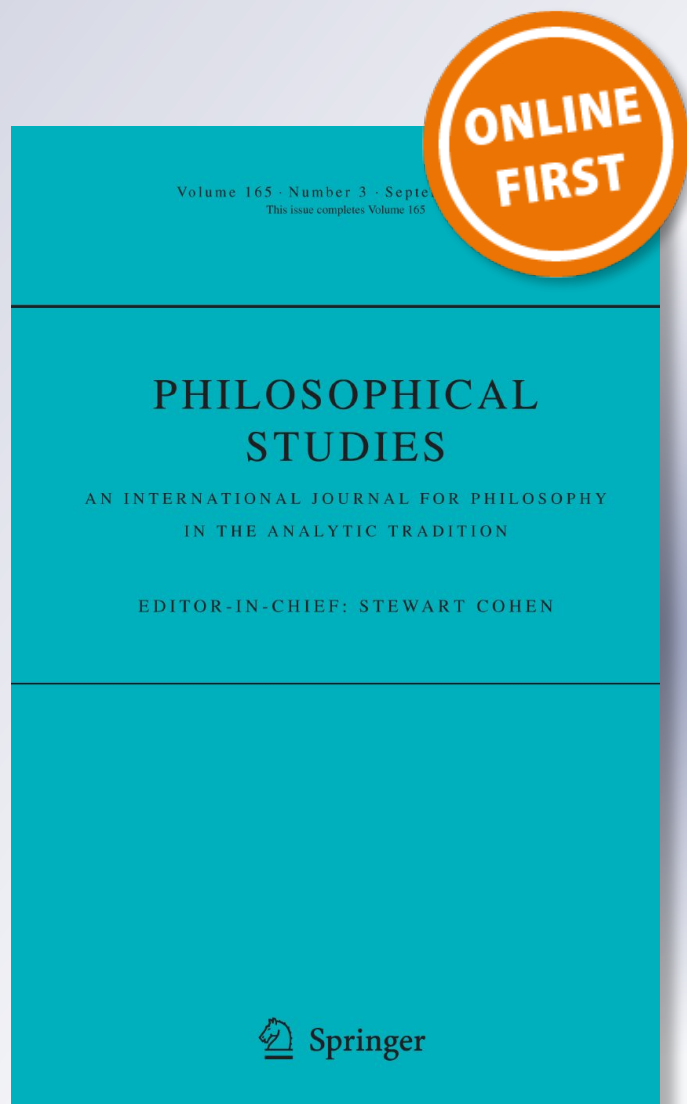
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Abstract It is commonly accepted, after Frege, that identity statements like "Tully is Cicero" differ from statements like "Tully is Tully". For the former, unlike the latter, are informative. One way to deal with the information problem is to postulate that the terms 'Tully' and 'Cicero' come equipped with different informative (or cognitive) values. Another approach is to claim that statements like these are of the subject/predicate form. As such, they should be analyzed along the way we treat "Tully walks". Since proper names can appear in predicative position we could go as far as to dismiss the sign of identity altogether, some told us. I will try to discuss the advantages and/or disadvantages of this approach and investigate whether Frege's view that the 'is' of identity must be distinguished from the 'is' of predication (copula) can be reconciled with the fact that names can appear in predicative position.

Keywords Frege · Mill · Subject/predicate · Identity · Copula · Proper names

1 'Is'

The opening of Frege's "Sinn und Bedeutung" runs as follows:

> Equality gives rise to challenging questions which are not altogether easy to answer. Is it a relation? A relation between objects, or between names of objects? In my *Begriffschrift* I assume the latter. (Frege 1982a: 56)

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Two main questions immediately spring to mind:

(i)   Is identity a relation?
(ii) If it is; is it a relation between objects (the referents) or between the linguistic expressions used to designate them?

In what follows I will mainly concentrate on the first question. In elucidating it we may give some hints of how the second one can be addressed.

If identity is a relation then the 'is' in a statement like "Tully is Cicero" should be represented by the '=' sign in arithmetic expressing an equation. This statement could thus be symbolized by a schema of the form $a = b$. If the 'is' in such a statement is not a relation it can be represented along the way we would represent it in a statement like "Cicero is an orator". Since it is nowadays (commonly) assumed that such a statement is of the subject/predicate form, the 'is' falls into the predicative part (it is a copula) and a statement like this parses along a statement like "Cicero walks".[1] As such, it will be symbolized by a schema of the form Fa, with F representing the predicate and a the name.

Frege takes for granted that the existence verb—e.g. 'ist' (German), 'is' (English), 'è' (Italian), etc.—is ambiguous and ought, depending of the sentence it appears in, to be interpreted as either '=' or as a copula:

> A concept (as I understand the word) is predicative. On the other hand, a name of an object, a proper name, is quite incapable of being used as a grammatical predicate. This admittedly needs elucidation, otherwise it may appear false. Surely one can just as well assert of a thing that it is Alexander the Great, or is the number four, or is the planet Venus, as that is green or is a mammal? If anybody thinks this, he is not distinguishing the uses of the word 'is'. In the last two examples it serves as a copula, as mere verbal sign of predication. We are here saying that something falls under a concept, and the grammatical predicate means this concept. In the first three examples, on the other hand, 'is' is used like the 'equal' sign of arithmetic, to express an equation. (Frege 1892: 43–44)

Frege suggests answering the question concerning the difference between the 'is' of identity and the one of predication in presupposing a logical difference between the two uses of 'is'. At the same time, he argues for the ambiguity of 'is' by postulating different ontological roles. It seems that Frege answers semantics/grammatical

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[1] Both the view that the 'is' of identity is reducible to the 'is' of predication and the opposite view that the 'is' of predication is reducible to the 'is' of identity have been proposed. As we will see, the former is advanced by Lockwood, while the latter pertains to the middle-aged logical tradition as in, e.g., Leibnitz's two-terms theory (see Sommer 1982). Another view is the one proposed by Montague in his PTQ ["The Proper Treatment of Quantification in Ordinary English" (1973)]. Montague circumvents Frege's ambiguity thesis of 'is' and gives the verb 'to be' a unique interpretation. The 'is' of identity and of predication are considered as the same transitive verb in terms of types couched within an intensional logic. Yet, via the syntactic and translational rules we obtain the required interpretation, i.e. that "Tully is Cicero" is a statement of the form $a = b$, while "Tully is a man" of the form Fa. As interesting as this is, it transcends the scope of this paper and does not affect its main argument. I thank the referee of this journal for raising this point.

concerns in relying on ontological (or metaphysical) distinctions. At the same time, though, Frege drives ontological distinctions based on the grammatical subject/predicate distinction and, in particular, on the idea that proper names cannot appear in predicative position. As Geach puts it:

> A proper name is never used predicatively—unless it ceases to be a proper name, as in 'He is not a Napoleon of finance' or (Frege's example) 'Trieste is no Vienna'; in such cases the word alludes to certain attributes of the object customarily designated by the proper name. (Geach 1962: 42).

In short, speaking about a name (*Eigenname*) Frege characterizes it as *what designates* an object, while he characterizes an object as *what is designated* by a name.[2] The same with predicates or concept-words (*Begriffswort*). A predicate is what denotes a concept and a concept is what is referred to by a predicate:

> Frege's use of the ontological term 'object' is strictly correlative to his use of the linguistic term 'proper name': whatever a proper name stands for is an object, and to speak of something as an object is to say there is, or at least could be, a proper name which stands for it. The question therefore naturally arises in which realm, the linguistic or the ontological, the principle of classification is to be applied. (Dummett 1973/1981: 55–56)

Is it the grammar that typifies the ontological categories or are the latter that characterize grammatical distinctions?

To answer this question it is worth looking at what Frege says about functional expressions.

2 Predicates *qua* incomplete functional expressions

In "Function and Concept" (1891) and "On Concept and Object" (1892) Frege advances the view that a functional expression is *incomplete*. As such, it needs to be completed by an argument. This is one of Frege's main logical insights. It should help us to elucidate both how the 'is' of identity differs from the 'is' of predication

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[2] Under the category of proper names (*Eigenname*) Frege subsumes indexicals, names, and definite descriptions. For simplicity sake I will concentrate on what we commonly characterize as proper names. Furthermore, I will not consider utterances where names appearing in predicative position, like in the examples given by Geach, cease to be proper names and works as genuine predicates with the name used either in a deferral, metaphorical or sarcastic way, like 'Caravaggio', 'Lionel Messi' and 'Einstein' in: "There are five Caravaggios in the museum", meaning that there are five paintings of Caravaggio in the museum; "John Smith is not Lionel Messi" meaning that as a soccer player John Smith is not as good as Lionel Messi; "John Smith is Einstein" meaning that John Smith is not intelligent. An interesting question would be to discuss how the position I will propose compares (and possibly undermines) so-called predicativism about proper names (see, among others, Sloat 1969; Burge 1973; Castañeda 1989; Graff Fara 2015; for a criticism of the latter see, for instance, Jeshion 2015). If the picture I will propose, in claiming that a given utterance comes equipped with different contents, comes close to be the right one, the intuitions supporting predicativism about proper names can be easily explained without embracing the view that proper names work as predicates. A detailed discussion of predicativism about proper names, though, transcends the scope of this paper.

and that proper names cannot appear in predicative position. The central idea is that a function must be completed by an argument:

> I am concerned to show that the argument does not belong with a function, but goes together with the function to make up a complete whole; for a function by itself must be called incomplete, in need of supplementation, or 'unsaturated'. And in this respect functions differ fundamentally from numbers. (Frege 1891: 24)

> [T]he expression for a function must always show one or more places that are intended to be filled up with the sign of the argument. (Frege 1891: 25)

When we come to interpret a functional expression, say *Fx*, we have: (i) to assign some domain of objects to the variable *x*, viz. to determine the range of the variable, and (ii) to assign to the function-letter *F* a function from and onto that domain.[3] If the function-letter *F* is coupled with a constant to obtain *Fa* we have to assign to the constant *a* an object in the relevant domain. In translating this discourse into the subject/predicate parlance we would have to assign a domain to the incomplete predicate and an object to the term occupying the argument place:

> [W]hat a predicate is required to do is to yield a sentence, having some one of such semantic value, for each term, denoting an element of the domain, that is inserted into its argument-place. … no further problem about what is to constitute a possible semantic value for a predicate; it is simply a function from elements of the domain to possible semantic values of sentences. (Dummett 1981: 167–168)

Following this insight, it seems that Frege's ontology, i.e. the distinction between objects and concepts, is driven by the grammatical distinction between a subject and a predicate, i.e. by what is often characterized as the asymmetry between the subject and the predicate. In particular, by the fact that the predicate in the formation of a simple subject/predicate sentence of the form *Fa*, *qua* functional expression, needs to be completed by what Frege characterizes as an *Eigenname*, i.e. by an expression designating an object. For, the predicate is incomplete (or unsaturated) and to obtain a whole (a sentence) it ought to be completed by a singular term:

> Frege's ontology is remote from the traditional dilemmas concerning the relation of universal to particulars, or of accidents to substances, and the mode of existence of universal and accidents. The notion of properties admitted by Frege is that under which they are equated with concepts: 'I call the concepts under which an object falls its properties', he says in 'Über Begriff und Gegenstand'. It would therefore be for him nonsense to say that an object is compounded out of its properties, that is, the concept under which it falls, or that it is merely the sum of those properties; and just as much nonsense to deny

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[3] In the spirit of Frege's account it would be more correct to talk about a place-holder instead of a variable. For the *x* in *Fx* should be understood as a place-older for a proper name (an *Eigenname* in Frege's terminology), i.e. *x* signals the place where the *Eigenname* must be inserted to form a whole (a sentence). For simplicity sake, though, we can overlook this distinction.

this and maintain that the object was a featureless *suppositium* in which its properties inhered. (Dummett 1981: 169)

A question remains. What is an object? i.e., what is the referent of a proper name? One way out of this problem, or possibly better, a way to set this (metaphysical) problem aside, is to take the notion of an object, along the notion of a function, as a primitive.[4] We have, therefore, two primitives upon which we can and should build our ontological analysis. But ontology should be understood on the way language works. That is to say, on the way language contributes in shaping our ontological categories. Or, in other words, on how communicators, shape the ontological categories they operate with in their thinking and talking episodes. The starting point resumes in the investigation on how utterances of simple sentences of the subject/predicate form are construed. The subject/predicate distinction should be our guiding notion. Let us consider the utterance of a simple subject/predicate sentence like:

(1)   Socrates is snub-nosed

Intuitively, the speaker uses the name 'Socrates' to designate Socrates and attributes to him the property of being snub-nosed. What the speaker says is true if Socrates instantiates that property. But Socrates, the object picked out by the tokened name 'Socrates', is not defined by him possessing the property of being snub-nosed or any other property for that matter. (1) could be false, yet 'Socrates' would designate Socrates independently of him being snub-nosed or of him having any of his other physical (or psychological) characteristics. What matters, for (1) to be true (or false) is that the name 'Socrates' designates an object that satisfies (or not) what the predicate 'is snub-nosed' stands for. In Frege's parlance, that is to say whether the object Socrates is subsumed or falls under the concept snub-nosed. Along Frege's insights (1) must be analyzed in terms of a function and its value range. Hence, if we withdraw the name 'Socrates' from (1) we are left with an open sentence:

(2) x is snub-nosed

The value range of the variable x is the extension of the functional term (the predicate) 'is snub-nosed'.[5] The predicate, *qua* functional expression, must take an argument to form a sentence (a whole). In the case of a simple sentence of the form Fa, it must take a singular term. For, a monadic predicate to form a sentence of the form Fa it must take a proper name (in Frege's sense) in its argument position. Yet,

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[4] As Dummett puts it: "although there cannot be a featureless object, no object is made up out of the concepts under which it falls: the relation of falling under a concept is just not to be identified with that of containing as a part. … the notion of an object is said to be simple and unanalyzable: but the extension of the predicate 'ξ is an object' coincide with that of 'ξ is the same as ξ', so that it would be easy to introduce the former by defining it to be equivalent to the latter" (Dummett 1981: 170). The same can be said about functions: "The notion of a function is, as Frege frequently remarks, a primitive one, in the sense of being incapable for definition. … Likewise, in Frege's system, a function is not a special kind of relation: rather, a relation (*Beziehung*) is a special kind of function of two arguments" (Dummett 1981: 172–173).

[5] "The general notion of a value-range can, according to Frege, be arrived at only via that of a function: we can think of a value-range only as an extension of a function" (Dummett 1981: 173).

in the extension of the predicate 'is snub-nosed' we can have only nosed individuals.[6] If so, the predicate typifies the ontological category the name must select: only individuals with a nose can be subsumed under the concept snub-nosed. Cities, for instance, cannot be snub-nosed. The utterance of a sentence like

(3)   London is snub-nosed

with the tokening of 'London' designating the capital of England, literally understood, make no sense. For (3) to make sense, 'London' must designate an individual with a nose. Thus on the extension of the predicate (or functional expression) we must select objects that can, in principle, satisfy the predicate. If we take on board Frege's parlance, and assume that proper names designate objects while predicates stand for concepts, then a name in argument position must designate an individual that can, in principle, be subsumed under the concept. Objects that cannot be subsumed under the concept should be expelled from the range of the functional expression. Thus, if the predicate 'is snub-nosed' designates the concept snub-nosed, under this concept only individual with a nose can be subsumed:

> [T]he referent of a predicate can only be a mapping from the referent of proper names to the referent of sentences. If the referent of a sentence is taken to be a truth-value, then that of a predicate must be a mapping from objects to truth-values. Only such an account reflects faithfully what it is that constitutes the basic mode of employment of predicates in the language, namely to form sentences by inserting proper names into their argument place. Moreover, only such an account leaves an unproblematic place for the notion of a relation, allowing us smoothly to explain the semantic role of relational expressions. On the traditional explanation of the predicative nature of qualities or properties, namely that they inhere in or are supported by substances, no sense could be made of relations: it appeared perplexing how there could be a kind of universal that simultaneously inhere in, or was supported by, *two* substances, except in so far as it inhered in, or was supported by, each of them separately. (Dummett 1981: 175)[7]

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[6] Or, at least, individuals that can, in *normal conditions*, be classified as having a nose. Someone may have cut away Socrates' nose or Socrates may have born with the physical defect of missing the nose and Socrates could be nose-less. To be precise we should thus say individuals that in *normal* or paradigmatic conditions have a nose. In some cases 'having a nose' can also be used in a sort of metaphorical way: "The Iberian Peninsula is snub nosed" meaning that on the map it looks as having a snub-nose. In cases like the latter, though, the predicate is not understood literally.

[7] Dummett, though, suggests that we should not take too seriously Frege's view that declarative sentences refers to either the Truth or the False: "[H]e went too far, and wholly assimilated concepts and relations to functions from objects to objects, the True and the False. It is ungrateful to dwell too heavily upon his mistake without recognizing the enormous liberation from the confused metaphysic of centuries which his basic insights effected" (Dummett 1981: 176). Roughly, according to Dummett, Frege's mistake was to assimilate sentences to complex proper names. And it is this mistake that drew him to the view that the referents of declarative sentences were objects: the Truth or the False. In denying that sentences are complex proper names and that truth-values are objects, we should embrace the view that truth-functions are not, properly speaking, functions. They belong to a different logical type: "We can perfectly well admit the functional character of concepts, that is to say the *analogy* between concepts and

I started the paper in claiming that proper names can appear in predicative position. Some clarifications are in order.

3 Proper names in predicative position

Mill, the champion of direct reference and so-called Millianism recognizes that proper names can appear in predicative position. This seems to run against Frege's received view that proper names cannot be understood along predicates or that a proper name appearing in predicative position ceases to be a proper name. I will now try to accommodate both views.

In naming constructions of the form "She is Mary Smith" or "This is London", Mill seems to recognize that there is some information transmitted, i.e. that the referent raised to salience by a demonstrative identification bears that name, thus, that in some cases a name can be used predicatively:

> When we predicate of anything its proper name; when we say, pointing to a man, this is Brown or Smith, or pointing to a city, that it is York, we do not, merely by so doing, convey to the hearer any information about them, *except that those are their names*. By enabling him to identify the individuals, we may connect them with information previously possessed by him; by saying, This is York, we may tell him that it contains the Minster. But this is in virtue of what he has previously heard concerning York; not by anything implied in the name. (Mill 1843: Book 1, ch. 2, §5; *italics mine*)

There is, to say the least, a tension here. For, in suggesting that names can appear in predicative position, as 'York' in "This is York", the name 'York', on top of denoting York seems to be connotative, insofar as it attributes to York the property of being called 'York', i.e. to paraphrase Bach (2002), that York was so-called because of its name.

A way out of this specific problem would be to claim that the 'is' in "This is York" is not a copula, i.e. it is not the 'is' of predication as it would be in "York is a city", but the 'is' of equality.[8] Hence, "This is York" is not of the subject/predicate form (Fa), but an identity statement of the form $a = b$ (like "Tully is Cicero" or

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Footnote 7 continued

functions ... without taking the former as a special case of the latter. On this view, functions proper map objects on to objects, truth-functions maps truth-values on to truth-values, and concept and relations map objects on to truth-values, the logical type being different in all three cases; to acknowledge the analogy is to recognize that the notion of mapping plays an essential role in grasping the character of all these logical types. This is obvious for truth-functions, although the fact has no tendency to make us regard sentences as proper names, nor, therefore, truth-values as objects. It is less obvious for concept and relations; all the more credit to Frege for having perceived their functional character, that is, the analogy, even though he made the mistake of taking it to be more than an analogy" (Dummett 1981: 168–169).

[8] This would no doubt be the interpretation Frege would give, for the demonstrative 'this', like the name 'York', for Frege is an *Eigenname*. Thus when the 'is' is flanked by two singular terms (*Eigennames*) it should be understood as '='.

"$2^2 = 4$"). In so doing we would, though, uncharitably accuse Mill of confusing the 'is' of predication with the 'is' of equality.

Another interpretation (see Lockwood 1975) possibly more in the spirit of Mill's overall theory, and keen on the fact that proper names can appear in various predicative positions, is to avoid positing, *pace* Frege, different interpretations of 'is' and, thus, a contextual ambiguity of the verb. "This is York" could be analyzed as "This is identical with York" and "Tully is Cicero" as "Tully is identical with Cicero". In such cases what we will be substituting is not 'is' with 'is identical with' but 'York' and 'Cicero' with 'identical with York/Cicero':

> I suggest, therefore, that 'Everest is Chomolungma' may be read as 'Everest is identical with Chomolungma'—not, as one might suppose, because 'is' is contextually equivalent to 'is identical with', but because 'Chomolungma' is contextually equivalent to 'identical with Chomolungma' … it seems gratuitous to postulate for 'is', as it occurs flanked by noun phrases in utterances expressing identity statements, a sense different from that which it has in sentences which are uncontroversially of the '*S* is *P*' form. (Lockwood 1975: 479–480)

Following this interpretation 'Chomolungma' is contextually equivalent to the predicate 'identical with Chomolungma' and, as such, it would not pick out an object as referent but a property (or a concept in Frege's words). It would pick out the property of being identical with Chomolungma—in the true spirit of Frege's work we should say, though, that 'identical with Chomolungma' if understood as a predicate, should read as 'falls under *the concept* Chomolungma', whatever the latter could be.[9] One of the main question amounts to know what this property would be. That is, what makes an object identical with Chomolungma or identical with Cicero, if not the object itself? As far as I can see, the property that two individuals carrying the same name, say 'N', share is the property of carrying that specific name, i.e. the property of being called 'N', or the property of carrying the name 'N' (after all, many individuals share the same property like being human, being rational, being artifacts, being married, being French, etc.). In favor of this interpretation we can mention utterances like "I am Jane Smith", "Are you Jane Smith?", etc. When introducing oneself, one of the speaker's aims is to inform the audience of her name. (At conferences, to avoid having to spell out our names when meeting people we do not know, we usually carry a tag signaling our name). Jane could also reach her aim in uttering "My name is 'Jane Smith'". If Jane's utterance

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[9] For an interesting and instructive account of Frege's distinction between the 'is' of identity and the 'is' of predication (copula), see Mendelshon (1987): "Insofar, then, as the alleged distinction between the two senses of 'is' is intended to buttress an argument designed to show that proper names are not genuine predicates, Frege's is simply a *petitio*: the claim that (1) [The morning star is Venus] must be read as (3) [John saw Mary] rather than as (10) [The morning star falls under the concept *Venus*] requires that it had already been established that there is no such thing as the concept *Venus*, whereas this is just what Frege is setting out to demonstrate here … What he should have argued, I believe, is that (11) [The morning star falls under Venus] is incoherent because 'is Venus' could be interpreted as 'equal Venus' or as 'falls under the concept *Venus*', but not as 'falls under Venus' or as 'equals the concept Venus'" (Mendelshon 1987: 144).

merely encapsulates information expressed by a statement of form $a = b$, it would express the proposition that Jane Smith is identical to Jane Smith, or that Jane Smith is identical to herself, the very same proposition Jane could have expressed in uttering "Jane Smith is Jane Smith". When asking Jane whether she is Jane Smith the speaker's aim is not to know whether she is identical with herself, but whether she carries the name 'Jane Smith'. As Russell nicely puts it:

> Let us begin with my name. We substitute 'B.R.' for 'I' or 'you' or 'he', as the case may be, because 'B.R.' is a public appellation, appearing on my passport and my identity card. If a policeman says "Who are you?" I might reply saying "Look! this is who I am", but this information is not what the policeman wants, so I produce my identity card and he is satisfied. (Russell 1948: 101)

I am now going to argue that in speech acts like these the communicative intentions are explained by the reflexive truth-conditions or reflexive contents of the utterance. Within the Perry-inspired pluri-propositionalist framework (see Perry 1986, 2001/12 referential-reflexive theory, see also Korta and Perry 2011 critical pragmatics) I favor, an utterance like (1), "Socrates is snub-nosed", comes equipped with various contents (propositions or truth-conditions).

A simple example may help us to illustrate the pluri-propositionalist model. If one, for instance, finds a note with the message "I will murder him tomorrow", without further information, as a competent speaker of English, one grasps the following: that the note's author will murder (or has murdered) the person s/he intendeds to refer to with 'him' the day after the note has been produced. However, this is not what the writer said or intended. It is a reflexive proposition with the note itself as a constituent. In Frege's terminology, the subject matter is the note, not the referents of 'I', 'him' and the time/day of the writing. Yet, the information conveyed by this reflexive proposition can prompt the reader of the note to start some investigative actions with the intent to save someone's life and/or find the assassin. If the reader's investigation is successful and s/he discovers that the author is, say, Jeff Smith, that with 'him' he intended to refer to Mark Brown, and that the note has been produced on June 22, 2017, our reader is then able to grasp the proposition (official or referential content): that Jeff Smith intends (or intended) to murder Mark Brown on June 23, 2017. The reader is now in a position to inform the police department and report, for instance, that the person who killed Mark Brown on June 23 2017 is Jeff Smith or, if the time of the discovery is June 22, 2017, that Jeff Smith intends to murder Mark Brown tomorrow. As Perry puts it:

> It is fair to call these truth-conditions of [the note], because they are conditions such that, were they satisfied, [the note] would be true … they are reflexive conditions, conditions on [the note] *itself*. The truth-conditions on which philosophers traditionally focus are *incremental*; they are conditions on the *subject matter*; that is, what the world beyond the utterance must be like, for the utterance to be true; or, as I like to put it, what *else*, has to be true, given the linguistic and contextual facts about the utterance … the conditions will not say much about the world independently of [the note]. However the

familiar philosophical concept of truth-conditions corresponds to the case in which one knows a lot about [the note], so the incremental, what else must be the case for [the note] to be true, are conditions that pertain to the world outside [the note], not [the note] itself … as you figure out more about [the note], fixing more of its linguistic properties, the conditions that had to be fulfilled for its truth become more focused on the world. (Perry 2001/12: 93–94)

The traditional philosophical understanding of the truth-conditions of a given declarative utterance are the incremental conditions needed to judge whether it is true or false, once all the linguistic and contextual factors get fixed. In short, in our analysis we start from the product, i.e. the utterance of a given sentence abstracted away from the context of the utterance. That is, we start from the meaning the utterance inherits from the sentence, the type. In so doing we quantify over meanings. We then proceed to fill in the missing ingredients from the actual circumstances in which the utterance occurs. In proceeding this way we can then easily realize how an utterance conveys many other relevant information. In other words, it is by starting to fill in more and more contextual information that the incremental truth-conditions (the official or referential content) is computed. This does not mean, though, that a speaker/hearer ought to be consciously aware of all the processing going from the pure reflexive content to the incremental one. It is, rather, a rational reconstruction in the spirit of the Gricean picture aiming to capture and classify the thoughts and linguistic episodes involved in our linguistic interactions.

If we take on board Frege's idea that the utterance of a sentence like (1), "Socrates is snub-nosed", is of the subject/predicate form and that the predicate works as a functional expression, our analysis could start, roughly, with:

(4)   In uttering 'Socrates' one refers to Socrates
(5)   Socrates satisfies 'is snub-nosed'

We can thus cash out the reflexive content of (1) as follows:

(6)   There is an individual x and a convention C such that:

   (i) C is exploited by (1)
   (ii) C permits one to designate x with 'Socrates'
   (iii) x is snub-nosed

The referential (official) content would correspond to the proposition expressed (roughly, the intuitive what is said or Kaplanian content):

(7)   That Socrates is snub-nosed

Along this line, Jane's utterance:

(8)   I am Jane Smith

can be analyzed as follows. Its reflexive content would be:

(9)   (i) There is an individual x who is the agent of (8) and in (8) 'I' refers to to this individual.

    (ii)   There is an individual y and a convention C such that:

        (iia) C is exploited by (8)
        (iib) C permits one to designate y with 'Jane Smith'

    (iii) $x = y$

Jane's communicative act gets analyzed at the level of the reflexive content. This analysis, as it will be become clearer in the next section, allows us to take on board *both* Frege's view that an utterance like (8) is of the form $a = b$ and Mill's view that in uttering it the speaker attributes to the subject (in our case to herself) the property of carrying the name 'Jane Smith'. In processing the reflexive content or truth-conditions the audience comes to know all she needs, i.e. that the speaker of 'I' carries the name 'Jane Smith' and, thus, that the person she is perceiving is Jane Smith. In other words, when a name is "used predicatively", the speaker exploits the reflexive content of the utterance. Yet, the name does not lose its referential power. In grasping the reflexive content the hearer can start processing relevant information that may ultimately, if all goes well, enable her to grasp the official or referential content. Thus, although, the official content of an utterance of "This is York" expresses the proposition that the indicated object is equal to York (and it is of the form $a = b$), in its reflexive content we have the name 'York'. In processing the reflexive content, the hearer comes to grasp that the indicated object carries the name 'York'. In short, as communication goes, we can focus on the variegated contents an utterance can convey.

4 A Frege–Mill analysis

It is difficult to reconcile Mill's well-celebrated view that names denote but do not connote with his insistence that they can be used as predicates.

    We face a dilemma: (i) if a name 'N' can be used as a predicate, then on top of denoting N it attributes to N the property of bearing 'N' and (ii) if a name denotes but does not connote, then it cannot be used, *pace* what Mill states in the quote I mentioned, as a predicate.[10] A way out of the dilemma is to argue that names denote their bearers without attributing to them any *substantial* property the bearer needs to satisfy in order for the name to refer to it. Thus a name denotes an object independently of any of its properties. And this goes along with the Fregean view on

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[10] Another possibility to spell out the connotative aspect of proper names is in adopting Bach's nominal description theory, i.e. that a name 'N' is semantically equivalent to "bearer of 'N'". For Bach, although the use of a name does not mention itself, it nonetheless expresses the reflexive property of bearing itself (see Bach 1987, 2002). Suffices to notice that in arguing that the use of a name expresses the reflexive property that the bearer carry that names, Bach's position is easily accounted for in adopting the pluri-propositionalist model I defended. For, the reflexive property is subsumed under the reflexive content of the utterance.

objects. Along with Mill we can thus argue that names are directly referential and contribute the name's bearer to the (singular) proposition expressed, to the official or referential content. As such names are tools of direct (Millian) reference insofar as they contribute their referent in the official content. Yet names connote the referent as being the bearer of the name. Thus, a tokening of 'York' directly refers to York without the mediation of a Fregean sense or mode of presentation York must satisfy to be the bearer of 'York' (the way the tokened name relates to its bearer is sustained by the causal theory or causal chain of reference we could argue). But a tokening of 'York', on top of denoting York, connotes it as bearing 'York'. This connotative aspect should be understood as a reflexive property the name or, better, the tokening of the name, expresses or creates. For, as Strawson thought us, names do not refer: people using words can refer. To make a long story short, we can say that *being the bearer of 'N'* or *being called 'N'* is a property created, or expressed, by the very utterance of the name. It is what I characterized as being part of the reflexive content of the utterance containing the relevant name.

Back to Frege. When names appear in predicative position they cease to be proper names, Frege suggests. That is to say, they do not play the individuating role they play as when they appear in argument position. The referential role is played by the term appearing in argument position. Hence, if an utterance like (8), "I am Jane Smith", is of the subject/predicate form, *Fa*, the individuating role is played by the first person pronoun 'I'. If we take the name 'Jane Smith' to be a predicate, then, like any other predicate, it should be analyzed as a functional expression. And as any other predicate it typified the ontological category the subject must stand for. As the predicate 'is snub-nosed' in an utterance like (1), "Socrates is snub-nosed", suggests that the name it takes to form a sentence must stand for nosed individuals, the predicate 'is York', in an utterance like "This is York", takes a term designating an individual carrying the name 'York', i.e. the predicate typify the property of carrying the name 'York'. In such an utterance the predicate 'is York' would predicate to the object referred to by the subject 'this' the property of being called 'York''. This, though, does not seem to generalize. For, how would we analyze an utterance like:

(10)   Tully is Cicero

if, along with Lockwood, we take it to be of the subject/predicate form? If we understand it to be of form *Fa* we could have something along:

(11)   Tully is called 'Cicero'

Furthermore, given Frege's reversibility principle (i.e. the logical truth $x = y$ iff $y = x$), (10) is equivalent with:

(12)   Cicero is Tully

that could be analyzed as:

(13)   Cicero is called 'Tully'

(11) and (13) are thus equivalent. There seems to be something fuzzy, though. For, it seems that we would lose what Frege characterizes as the subject matter. In uttering "Tully is Cicero" the speaker does not intend to talk about the names 'Tully' and/or 'Cicero' but about Cicero/Tully, the referent.[11] Furthermore, the reversibility principle rests on the interpretation of 'is' as an identity, i.e. as '='. Yet an analysis like (11)/(13) rests on interpreting (10) to be of the subject/predicate form and, thus, the 'is' to be a copula. It seems that something ought to go.

An easy way out of this tension is to adopt the pluri-propositionalist model. For the predicative aspect is captured at the reflexive level where the names are mentioned without having to reject the view that utterances like these are of the form $a = b$. We can thus maintain, along with Frege, that (10) and (12) are identity statements and, as such, are equivalent. In so doing, we take on board the uncontroversial reversibility principle and the fact that the subject matter of the utterance is the referent of the terms flanking the 'is' of identity. Yet, in tokening the name one also predicates that the object referred to carries that name. The reflexive truth condition of (10) and (12) would be:

(14)   There is an individual x, an individual y and conventions C and C^* such that

    (i) C and C^* are exploited by (10/12)
    (ii) C permits one to designate x with 'Tully' and C^* permits one to designate y with 'Cicero'
    (iii) $x = y$

The moral should be that tokened names are both referential and predicative. Thus, we need not give up Frege's insight that in utterances like "This is York" and "Tully is Cicero" we have the 'is' of identity, while in utterances like "York is a city" and "This is a cat", we have the 'is' of predication. What we have, rather, is that when a name appears in an alleged predicative position it contributes in directing the interpretation toward the reflexive content. Thus, in a subject predicate utterance like "Tully is an orator", the name, appearing in argument position, refers to Tully and direct our interpretation toward the official content, i.e. the proposition that Tully is an orator. Such an utterance can be interpreted as being of the subject/predicate form, Fa. In an utterance of "This is Tully", the name, by appearing in an alleged predicative position, may contribute in directing the interpretation toward the reflexive content. Yet we do not have to give up the Fregean insight that it is of the form $a = b$. We can thus, along with Frege and Geach, maintain that, properly speaking, names cannot be analyzed along predicates *qua* functional expression. If an utterance like this is understood as an identity statement, given the reversibility

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[11] Actually, Frege's claims is that if an utterance like (10), "Tully is Cicero", is analyzed (cf. Frege's *Begriffsschrift*) as "'Tully' and 'Cicero' are coreferential" we lose the subject matter. If, on the other hand, we analyze it as "Cicero is (also) called 'Tully'" the subject matter would be Tully, not 'Tully'. What we are talking about is Tully, the subject matter, carrying the name 'Cicero'. An understanding along these lines is more consonant with the pluri-propositionalist framework I presented in which the mentioned name appears in the reflexive truth-conditions of the utterance. For a detailed interpretation of Frege's "conflicting" account to the theory of identity he proposed in "Sinn und Bedeutung" and in the *Begriffshrift* along these line see Corazza and Korta (2015).

principle, "This is Tully" is (semantically) equivalent with "Tully is this". Their difference, if any, can be explained on the focus the utterance directs the attention toward. While the first directs the attention toward the reflexive content, the latter may direct it toward the official content.[12]

Another way to cash out the difference between utterances like (10) and (12) would be to posit an intermediate content between the purely reflexive one and the official one. That is, a content that aims to capture the speaker's communicative intentions. Imagine that (10) and (12) are answers to the questions "Who is Tully?" and "Who is Cicero?", respectively. In answering these questions a collaborative communicator cannot reply by "Tully is Tully" or "Cicero is Cicero". The intuitive idea is that the appropriate answer should convey, respectively, the information that Tully is also called 'Cicero' and that Cicero is also called 'Tully', or something along these lines. There is, thus, a difference in focus between (10) and (12). This difference cannot be accounted at the purely reflexive content, i.e. (14), nor at the official content (the proposition having the individual Tully/Cicero, and the identity relation as constituents). The difference ought somewhat to capture the different intentions conveyed by the speaker in uttering (10) and (12). The intermediate reflexive contents of (12) and (14) could be something along:

(15)   There is an individual, Tully, and an individual x and conventions C such that

   (i) C is exploited by (10)
   (ii) C permits one to designate x with 'Cicero'
   (iii)   Tully $= x$

(16)   There is an individual, Cicero, and an individual x and a convention C such that

   (i) C is exploited by (12)
   (ii) C permits one to designate x with 'Tully'
   (iii)   Cicero $= x$

Roughly, in starting from the pure reflexive content of (10) and (12), represented by (14), we can first fix the reference of 'Tully' and goes on the say that Tully also goes by the name 'Cicero', and vice versa. While (10) focuses on the fact that Tully is also called 'Cicero', (12) puts the stress on the fact that Cicero is also called 'Tully'. The intermediate reflexive contents represented by (15) and (16) should deal with the intuition that the first occurrence of the name in an identity statement is referentially used, while the second occurrence of a name in an identity statement directs the attention toward the reflexive-predicative interpretation.[13]

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[12] If we characterize this phenomenon as a kind of focus-direction, we can recognize that on top of the grammatical (words order) form of the utterance, other pragmatic clues can enter the scene, such as e.g., the tone of the voice, the background information, the stress, etc. These should be understood as a pragmatic phenomena that pertain to a general theory of communication and, as such, do not affect the semantics (and logical form) of the utterance.

[13] The solution proposed here bears resemblances the one proposed by Korta (2013) and (Korta and Perry 2011; ch. 11). Korta and Korta and Perry propose the maxim of reference: "Chose your way of referring according to the cognitive fix you want your hearer to get on the reference, to facilitate the inference or

We can thus save Mill's view that a name can be predicated to an individual. The official content of "This is Tully" and "Tully is Cicero", is the same and of the form $a = b$. Yet, when names appear in alleged predicative positions they may contribute in the triggering of a sort of interpretation switch. They direct the speaker-hearer attention toward the reflexive content of the utterance. We can thus argue that, logically speaking, names cannot appear in predicative position. We can nonetheless claim that names, on top of being referential tools, they can function, depending the utterance they appear in, as interpretation switchers in directing the interpretative focus either on the official content or the reflexive contents.[14]

5 Conclusion

In this paper I attempted to show that it is only if one embraces mono-propositionalism, i.e. the view that the content of an utterance of a simple sentence is exhausted by the proposition expressed (the referential or official content) that one is likely to embrace some of the following positions: (i) the 'is' of identity is reducible to the 'is' of predication (e.g. Lockwood); (ii) names refers via the mediation of a mode of presentation/sense (Frege 1892); names denote but do not connote (Mill).

The pluri-propositionalist framework allows us to hold to the intuitive theses that: (i) the 'is' of identity differs from the 'is' of predication (copula); (ii) tokened names are directly referential; (iii) tokened names denote *and* connote the referent as being the bearer of the tokened name.

In short, in accommodating some features of Mill and Frege's views concerning names and identity statements, I defended the view that names are tools of direct reference *and* that names convey some connotative features, for a tokened name connotes the referent as the bearer of that name. To do so I introduced the, Perry-inspired, model of communication what I labeled 'pluri-propositionalism', viz. the view that in the analysis of a given utterance we can focus on various contents

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Footnote 13 continued

implicatures". Following this suggestion, in answering to the question "Who is Cicero?" one could reply: "He [pointing to a picture of Cicero] is Cicero" or "Cicero is Tully". In the first answer the speaker conveys a demonstrative cognitive fix and said that the indicated individual is Cicero; in such a case the audience can fix (and thus have a cognitive fix) on the indicated individual and comes to know that he is Cicero. In the second answer the speaker, in assuming that the questioner has a notion of Cicero, conveys that Cicero is also called 'Tully'. The intermediate reflexive contents (15) and (16) I proposed attempt to capture the communicative intentions involved in these speech acts and characterize how communicators process utterances like these.

[14] The view that names contribute in directing the focus toward the official or reflexive contents of the utterance, could also be spelled out in appealing to Frege's context principle, *viz.* that it is only in the context of a sentence that a word has meaning and, therefore, that any inquiry about names can be made only as names *qua* constituents of sentences *used* to express thoughts. Therefore, from a pragmatic and communicative viewpoint, given that names ought to be understood as constituents of a whole (a sentence), it should not come to big of as a surprise if a tokened name in a given utterance can (pragmatically) contribute in directing the interpretative focus on distinct contents the utterance come equipped with.

(truth-conditions, or propositions). In so doing, the intuition underlying predicativism about proper names is explained by appealing to the reflexive contents associated with an utterance. Hence, the account proposed helps us to do justice to Frege's distinctions between the 'is' of identity and the 'is' of predication (copula). We can thus embrace both Frege-inspired distinction between the subject and the predicate and the Fregean view that, from a logical viewpoint, a name cannot appear in a predicative position without ceasing to be a (logical) proper name. In so doing, though, we do not have to dismiss the intuition that names appearing in predicative position, on top of being referential terms, may contribute in conveying further information.

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