

**GUSTAV LAUBEN.** In the rather complex Gustav Lauben example (*glauben* is ‘to believe’ in German), different characters form different beliefs about Gustav Lauben. Because of that, they attach different senses to the name ‘Gustav Lauben’. Then there is a question about the sense that speaker attaches to the indexical ‘I’. As the text shows, the example was initially supposed to illustrate the use of indexical expressions, such as ‘I’, ‘today’, ‘now’. We skip this large subject in our course. We have to explain Frege’s remarks on the senses of proper names.

**LEO PETER AND RUDOLPH LINGENS.** So Gustav Lauben is a doctor living in a certain house. Fighting in a duel (say), he utters the sentence:

I was wounded. (4-1)

Leo Peter is witness to this utterance. How can he express the same thought? Not by uttering (4-1)! He must instead replace ‘I’ with the speaker’s proper name. As he knows that the speaker is called ‘Gustav Lauben’, he should say:

Gustav Lauben is wounded. (4-2)

Enter Rudolph Lingens. He is a competent German (well, English here) speaker, who is *also* witness to Lauben’s utterance. Then some days later he overhears Leo Peter uttering (4-2). Question: Should he at once grasp the thought that Leo Peter is now expressing (which is the same thought as Gustav Lauben was expressing before)? In other words, does Leo Peter succeed in communicating his thought to Rudolph Lingens?

Well, before we rule on this, consider a different question: How should Lingens express what *Lauben* was saying before? We imagine, with Frege, that Lingens does not know how Lauben looks, so he cannot use (4-2). Perhaps he should say:

The man with a wooden leg is wounded. (4-3)

To return to Leo Peter, Lingens hears Peter uttering (4-2). It is clear that he will not agree with Peter, but why? I say, it can be either because they understand what is said, but disagree on the facts. Or they do not understand each other.

As Frege imagines the situation, Lingens is a user of the name ‘Gustav Lauben’ and he *can* identify him, though not visually. So you can imagine this dialogue:

LP: Gustav Lauben was wounded!

RL: No, you are wrong: I know Gustav Lauben, and I have talked to him on the phone today!

LP: But he is the man with the wooden leg you saw yesterday at the duel. (4-4)

RL: Ach ja! So Gustav Lauben has a wooden leg... And he was wounded!

So here both characters speak of the same person. Do they associate the same sense with it? It seems to me that we have to say that they do. For if they do not, then they do not understand each other. However, I wish to say that they do understand each other and that their disagreement is just on the facts.

**OTTO FENBAR.** Suppose though there is *another* character, Otto Fenbar (*offenbaren* is ‘to reveal’ in German). He was at the duel, but he has not heard the name ‘Gustav Lauben’ before. Then this dialogue could take place the next day:

LP: Gustav Lauben was wounded!

OF: Who is Gustav Lauben?

LP: He is the man with the wooden leg you saw yesterday at the duel. (4-5)

OF: Ach ja! So his name is ‘Gustav Lauben’.

Here Otto Fenbar does not *understand at all* at first what Leo Peter is saying. Why is that? Precisely because he does not understand what the name is referring to—i.e. does not know the sense of that name. Leo Peter reveals the use of that name to Fenbar.

Now thought is the sense of a sentence. And the sense of the sentence is composed of the senses of its ingredient parts (see Handout 5). Hence, for Peter and Fenbar, the thought initially expressed with the utterance (4-2) is also different. In fact, as things stand, for Fenbar there is no particular thought expressed: he does not understand the utterance.

**THE DIALECTIC.** It is important to keep track of the dialectic here. Frege uses this example to claim that the thought expressed by Lauben with (4-1) is not the same as the one expressed by Peter with (4-2). For if it were the same, then Lingens, who *understood* what Lauben was saying, should also have understood what Peter was saying.

**HERBERT GARNER.** The idea of understanding proper names is refined further when we consider Herbert Garner who knows that Lauben was born on 13/09/75 in Berlin. It happens to be, miraculously, that no one was born in Berlin on that day. So we say that Garner *can* identify Lauben, though again not perceptually. Leo Peter can also identify Gustav Lauben ('the doctor living in that house'). And in this case, Frege says that, in using the name 'Gustav Lauben', they do not speak the same language.

**LUDWIG ANDERS.** The situation of Herbert Garner is analogous to the situation of Lingens. And therefore, Frege implicitly takes the line that Lingens also does not speak the same language with Leo Peter. I think this should be wrong.

But we do have cases where people speak 'different languages' while using the same name. So consider Ludwig Anders who believes that 'Gustav Lauben' refers to his colleague living in a different city (*andere* is 'other' in German). Thus when Ludwig Anders hears the utterance (4-2) he completely misunderstands the speaker Leo Peter. Unlike Lingens, however, he forms *a* thought—namely, the thought that his colleague is wounded. Consider:

LP: Gustav Lauben was wounded!

LA: You are lying! Gustav Lauben is healthy, I have seen him today.

LP: No, I mean the doctor living here.

(4-6)

LA: Ach ja! *That* Gustav Lauben was wounded.

So Ludwig Anders is able to disagree with Leo Peter, because he attributes to Leo Peter a thought about Gustav Lauben who lives in a different city. He *misunderstands* Leo Peter. Once the original thought of Leo Peter is clarified, disagreement is no longer. It is in this case that we should better not use the same name. That is, we should associate the same shapes and noises when referring to two different individuals. We should perhaps have Gustav Lauben<sub>1</sub> and Gustav Lauben<sub>2</sub>, or as Frege suggested, 'Gustav Lauben' and 'Dr Lauben'. This ambiguity should have no place in a ideal, well regimented language.

**PERCEPTUAL KNOWLEDGE.** I have argued that, as far as the use of proper names is concerned, there is no interesting difference between Leo Peter, Rudolph Lingens, and Herbert Garner. All three are competent users of the name 'Gustav Lauben'. All three are in possession of identifying senses—pieces of knowledge allowing them to single out Gustav Lauben among the objects in the universe. They do not, however, know everything there is to know about Gustav Lauben. Thus it is possible for them to disagree with each other and to have false beliefs about Gustav Lauben.

*Question 1.* What kind of knowledge does Gustav Lauben have of the name 'Gustav Lauben'? Is it any different from the knowledge of either of the three other characters?

Yet it may be thought that Leo Peter is fundamentally *more* competent than either Lingens or Garner. That is because he knows how Gustav Lauben looks: on seeing Lauben, he is able to say, 'This is Gustav Lauben.' Unlike either of the other characters (at least initially), he is able to recognise Gustav Lauben in the crowd.

I do not find this idea at all plausible. What is special about visual knowledge? That it is sensory? What about sounds and smells? Do we gain special knowledge about the person when we identify his voice or smell among other voices and smells? That seems odd.

In general, visual appearance is not the most individuating fact about the person, not the primary one that sets him apart from others. If you know very many unique facts about a person, his biography etc., but do not know what he looks like, shall we say that you are missing a vital bit of information? That is unlikely.

Also, appearances mislead. You may know how Louis XIV or Julia Roberts look in official portraits. But you will have no clue who they are when you meet them in a steam room.