

### Characterizations of some useful terms

*Sentence*: An inscription, or a token. We will mostly be concerned with sentences that can be true or false, declarative sentences, but questions and commands and exclamations are also sentences. One can utter a sentence, or write it down. I indicate sentences with scare-quotes: ‘The tree outside my window is barren’. I might also just display it, and give it a name:

1. The all-time home-run leader is a steroid freak.

I have named this sentence ‘1’.

*Sentence type*: An abstract object which can be instantiated by either an utterance or an inscription, or maybe even an idea. In 2 and 3:

2. Maisy is a mouse.
3. Maisy is a mouse.

we see two sentence tokens, but only one sentence type.

*Proposition*: The meaning of a sentence, an abstract object. Propositions are often expressed as that-clauses. So, 1 means that the all-time home-run leader is a steroid freak, and 2 means that Maisy is a mouse. Propositions, unlike sentence types, are language independent. So,

4. Maisy es una ratón.

is a different sentence (token and type) from 2, but expresses the same proposition. Frege calls propositions thoughts.

*Assertion, or statement*: A declarative sentence, used to say something that can be either true or false. We use sentences to make assertions, by expressing propositions.

*Subject-predicate form*: The above terms all refer to sentence-sized objects. Declarative sentences (and their corresponding propositions, etc.) can be parsed into subject-predicate form. Predicates (which, like sentences, can be tokens or types) express, or stand for, properties, which are abstract objects. Properties are sometimes called attributes.

Sentence	Subject	Predicate
1	the all-time home-run leader	x is a steroid freak
2	Maisy	x is a mouse
Whales are mammals	whales	xs are mammals
Mark went to the movie with Stephanie	Mark	x went to the movie with Stephanie
Mark went to the movie with Stephanie	Mark, Stephanie	x went to the movie with y

Notice that we can parse ‘Mark went to the movie with Stephanie’ either as having a single subject, and a more specific predicate, or as having two subjects, and a more general, relational predicate.

*Expression*: Usually used to refer to a sub-sentential phrase, either a subject term or a predicate term.

*Name*: A term which picks out a particular object (e.g. ‘Maisy’). Most names apply to more than one object, but we imagine that they do not, because we can disambiguate by the context of their use.

*Definite description*: An expression, usually beginning with ‘the’, which, like a name, picks out a particular object (e.g. ‘the all-time home-run leader’). Russell calls them ‘denoting phrases’.

*Singular term*: Expressions referring to a specific thing. Names and definite descriptions are singular terms. We might interpret ‘whales’ as a singular term, referring to the one set of all whales. But, it is more natural to think of it as referring to many (all) whales.