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Angelelli, Ignacio [Angelelli, Ignacio A.] (1-TX-Q)

The meaning(s) of “is”: normative vs. naturalistic views of language. (English summary)

*The road to universal logic*, 171–179, *Stud. Univers. Log.*, Birkhäuser/Springer, Cham, 2015.

This is a superb paper which significantly clarifies a controversial issue: the logical treatment of the different meanings of the word “is”. Frege explicitly distinguished four meanings (sheer predication, identity, assertion, and existence) and a fifth meaning (subordination) follows from Frege’s new theory of predication. It is part of the Fregean doctrine that special symbols corresponding to different meanings of “is” are to be used.

Those distinctions have been strongly challenged by Jaakko Hintikka theoretically and historiographically. The author studies in detail both challenges and concludes that neither challenge is successful. Behind the conflict around “is” there are two conceptions of language: language as culture vs. language as nature (“natural language”).

The paper has the following sections: (1) Introduction; (2) The five meanings of “is” according to Frege; (3) Hintikka’s twofold (theoretical and historiographical) revolt against Frege; (4) Language as culture versus language as nature.

The paper holds outstanding scholarly value for anyone interested in Frege, Hintikka, and the use of “is”.

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{For the collection containing this paper see [MR3380568](#)}

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