



An Animated and Narrated Glossary of
Terms used in Linguistics
presents

Truth condition



Definition

- The **set of conditions** necessary for any given **proposition p to be true** is known as the truth conditions of p .
- Truth conditions are often also called **entailments**.
- If a proposition p is true, then all truth conditions must be satisfied, i.e. all entailments of p must be true.

Note: If an entailment of p is false, then p is false.



Example

Consider the proposition expressed by the sentence *The child pinched an elephant.*

- False if nothing was done to any elephant.
- False if the act upon any particular elephant by the child was not pinching.

Some truth conditions:

1. Something was done to an elephant.
2. The elephant was pinched.

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Sentences & Propositions

- Truth conditions apply to **propositions**, not sentences.
- Propositions are often expressed in sentences, but needn't be.

The man in yellow is blowing bubbles.



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Sentences & Propositions

A sentence may contain numerous propositions,
while itself being a proposition.

The child tickled the elephant and the elephant ran away.

Proposition 1: The child tickled the elephant.

Proposition 2: The elephant ran away.

Proposition 3: Conjunction of Proposition 1 & Proposition 2.



Further Reading

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Further Reading

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The End

Wee, Lian-Hee and Winnie H.Y. Cheung (2009)
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