Reference

1. The phenomenon of reference

In a paper evaluating animal communication systems, Hockett and Altmann (1968) presented a list of what they found to be the distinctive characteristics which, collectively, define what it is to be a human language. Among the characteristics is the phenomenon of "aboutness", that is, in using a human language we talk **about** things that are external to ourselves. This not only includes things that we find in our immediate environment, but also things that are **displaced** in time and space. For example, at this moment I can just as easily talk about Tahiti or the planet Pluto, neither of which are in my immediate environment nor ever have been, as I can about this telephone before me or the computer I am using at this moment. Temporal displacement is similar: it would seem I can as easily talk about Abraham Lincoln or Julius Caesar, neither a contemporary of mine, as I can of former president Bill Clinton, or my good friend John, who are contemporaries of mine. This notion of aboutness is, intuitively, lacking in some contrasting instances. For example, it is easy to think that animal communication systems lack this characteristic—that the mating call of the male cardinal may be caused by a certain biological urge, and may serve as a signal that attracts mates, but the call itself is (putatively) not **about** either of those things. Or, consider an example from human behavior. I hit my thumb with a hammer while attempting to drive in a nail. I say, "Ouch!" In so doing I am saying this because of the pain, and I am communicating to anyone within earshot that I am in pain, but the word *o1.0m/2 0 0 -12 72 495 Tm /F1.0*

in which they correspond to facts and things in the world around us. In present times, this finds its clearest articulation in the framework of model-theoretic semantics. Yet not everyone finds these basic intuitions of aboutness quite so compelling as to base a theory of natural language meaning upon them. Most notably in this past century, Wittgenstein is generally interpreted as articulating quite a different view of natural language meaning which, at best, treats "aboutness" as derivative or epiphenomenal (Wittgenstein 1953). Also, Chomsky (1981, 1992, 1995), Hornstein (1984), Ludlow (2003) and others have articulated

all manner of cause for question and uncertainty. For example, in the utterance above, might I also be referring to myself (by using *my*), gardens in general (by using *garden*), the quality of being poor, and so forth? Intuitively, these questions have sensible answers both yes and no. But it does remain a very solid intuition that I am referring to my garden, where an intuitively-based denial would seem far less convincing. For this reason, the focus of a theory of reference has been on those elements of a sentence or utterance which most clearly display the intuitive phenomenon of reference, leaving aside the subsequent questions for resolution within a more precisely articulated theory. The types of words and phrases that canonically display reference (see Strawson 1950) include demonstrative and indexical words and phrases (e.g. *this table*,

by the contribution they make to the truth-value of the whole. Or, as McGinn (1981) puts it: "Reference is what relates words to the world of objects on whose condition truth hinges." (p157)

If one then turns specifically to intuitively referential phrases and words and calculate the contribution they make to the truth-value of the whole, one encounters and initially surprising result: that the truth-value of sentences containing referential phrases is (in part) determined by what the phrases themselves refer to, and not by any other or further characteristics of the phrases themselves. From an intuitive point of view, if I say (falsely) that Ringo Starr wrote the novel *War and Peace* then the truth-value of this sentence has not to do with any particular beliefs or conceptions I or anyone else might have about the world, but rather what Ringo himself, that guy out there, has and perhaps has not accomplished. Let K be the person Ringo Starr. It is as if I am saying something to the effect that: K wrote *War and Peace*.

Slightly more technically, and the success of this is easy to overlook, *any* phrase that has the reference K will be **automatically** guaranteed to yield a sentence of the same truth-value if placed in the same syntactic location in the sentence as the phrase *Ringo Starr*. Thus, supposing that the phrases *the most famous drummer for the Beatles*, *Jimmy Smits' boyhood hero*, and *that man over there* have, on an occasion of use, the reference of Ringo Starr, their contribution to the meaning of any sentence will be K and nothing more. This will mean that all the following sentences are likewise guaranteed to be of the same truth value as "Ringo Starr wrote *War and Peace*"; as will, in fact, any other way whatsoever of referring to the particular man

see how this might go. I wonder if the word *someone* is a referring term, and on an occasion of use can be used to refer to Ringo. (This would seem intuitively plausible under certain circumstances. Suppose, for instance, I host a birthday party for Jimmy Smits and have invited Ringo as a surprise guest, and when Jimmy complains how the party is dragging I might say presciently, "Yes, but someone has yet to arrive!") Now consider the contribution to the truth-value of "someone" in the following:

(2)   Someone wrote *War and Peace.*

The judgments here are not wholly secure, but most people who think about these things agree that what has been said here is, in fact, true, whereas if it were referential and had the value K, it would have to be false. Assuming these intuitions hold up, then *someone* is not a referential phrase (though see Fodor and Sag (1982), for a different point of view). It makes some other contribution to the meaning of the whole.

One might, thus far, look upon this discussion as a rearticulation of LEIBNIZ'S LAW of the intersubstitutibility of indiscernibles *salva vertitate*. But there are some objections to this that have been the source of continued inquiry to the present time, which Frege also tried to deal with, chiefly in Frege (1892). One objection, that I will mention and put to the side, is that one must not use examples where the use of a term is metalinguistic. Words and phrases function as names of themselves occasionally in language. When so construed, they do not have reference to the "usual" objects and individuals, but to **different**

While it is not always a straightforward matter to determine metalinguistic usage (e.g. consider the discussion of METALINGUISTIC NEGATION (Horn, 1989), this particular objection has had primarily nuisance value in the development of a theory of reference. More telling are one type of intuitive objection, and another based on failures of intersubstitutibility. The intuitive objection can be simply illustrated thus. If the meaning of a word or phrase is its reference, and "Ringo Starr" and "the Beatles' most famous drummer" have the same reference, then they have the same meaning. This just plain is not so: these phrases have obviously different meanings. This objection has clear force. The other objection gets to the heart of the naive theory of reference: that phrases with the same reference are not always intersubstitutible preserving truth-value. This phenomenon has received a huge amount of attention in the literature. One facet of this objection comes from the behavior of propositional attitudes. The following pairs of sentence can easily diverge in truth-value:

(4)　　a. James believes that Ringo Starr is a solo singer.
　　　　b. James believes

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taking responsibility for the contents of the referring phrases--does not adequately address this point. There is a reading (perhaps the more natural one) where identity of truth-value is not the consequence, and on the purely naive theory of reference discussed here this simply should not happen. This is traditionally called the *de dicto* reading, and if the theory thus far is correct there should be no such phenomenon.

The other major type of consideration is that of the contents of identity sentences, which are generally assumed to be successfully analyzed by the "=" relation. Such sentences do not appear to introduce operators giving rise to opaque or *de dicto* contexts, but nevertheless are a similar source of puzzlement. If the contribution to the meaning is the reference of the noun phrases in the following sentences, then both ought to have the same "cognitive value" (a phrase that will be somewhat clarified below).

(6)   a. The Beatles' most famous drummer is Ringo Starr.
       b. Ringo Starr is Ringo Starr.

That is, both have the value:

(7)   K = K

But while the second is very obvious and can be known to be true a priori (assuming both instances of "Ringo Starr" are the same, see below for comments on this), the first seems to convey contingent information that may actually come as news to some people. This is a genuinely different kind of objection, because in fact '=' preserves truth-value given identical referents. Whichever way one finds of referring to Ringo Starr, intersubstitution will in fact yield identical truth-value.

Frege's proposed solution to these problems is well-known and often written about, but is itself problematic. The proposal is that words and phrases, besides having a reference, also have something which, in English, is called a SENSE.

distinguished by their senses. The sense contains the "mode of presentation" of a referent; it is an objective, and not a subjective thing, but it is what we psychologically "grasp" in understanding a word or phrase, and in so grasping enables us to find out the reference of the word or phrase. However, in Frege's view, it is not the psychological grasping itself that actually determines the reference, but rather the objective sense itself that is responsible for determining the reference. Thus, reference is determined indirectly from expressions of a language (this includes mathematical notation): a bit of language **expresses** a sense, which in turn **determines** a reference. This holds in the case of proper names as well—the names *Richard Starkey* and *Ringo Starr* (or *Hesperus* and *Phosphorus*, or *Cicero* and *Tully*, to revert to more traditional examples) have different senses associated with them despite common reference.

Frege's solution to the problem of *de dicto* meanings appears, initially at least, to work but strikes many people as unduly complex and counterintuitive (see especially Barwise and Perry (1983)). In certain syntactically-definable contexts such as embedded clauses, a referring expression does not have as its reference its "usual" one, but rather its sense. Thus, in the propositional attitude examples such as those above, the reference of *Ringo Starr* and *the Beatles' most famous drummer* is not the "usual" K, but rather the "customary"

determine S$_2$ as their references in examples such as those in (8). But, unlike the customary senses, we have no clear intuitive grasp of what these might be. Further, the claim is that referring phrases in *de dicto* contexts have as their meanings different things from what they have in *de re*

Making use of the discussions to be found in McDowell (1977) and Dummett (1975), this is what may have been intended. From the point of view of one understanding an utterance, "grasping" the sense, which determines the reference, does not enable one to automatically grasp the reference itself. If this were so, and we happened on Smith foully murdered, all we would need to do is to hear someone utter the phrase (in a *de re* context) *Smith's murderer* and the identity of the murderer would be automatically known to us; but, obviously, it is not. Likewise, we would (in at least one uncharitable interpretation of Frege's framework) only have to understand a sentence in order to know its truth value. To check on how many copies of an article we need to submit to a journal for publication, we'd only need to hear someone go through a list "*The Journal of Modern Fregean Studies* requires one copy...two copies..." etc. until we hit on the reference "true".

But there has to be some kind of psychological connection between grasping a sense and determining a reference (let's call this relation "finding" a reference, incorporating Russell's notion of "acquaintance" as a "direct cognitive relation" (Russell 1910). Consider, for instance, your understanding of the phrase "My sister's oldest daughter". If you can read this paper then you clearly understand what this means—you "grasp" its sense—but it is very doubtful you are antecedently familiar with that particular person. That is, the reference is unknown to you. However, if

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one with any guaranteed

the form J *does not exist* would appear contradictory. Now suppose, as is currently the case, that there is no such J . The form of the proposition would appear to be an unsaturated proposition of the form __ *does not exist*, which is assigned no truth-value since it lacks anything that the phrase *the king of France* contributes to the proposition.

2.2 Russell

From there it is a short step to negative existential sentences, provided one has a syntactic means of according the negation widest scope. "The king of England does not exist" comes out as an unremarkable statement:

(10) ¬$x [King of England (x) & " y [King of England (y) Æ y=x]]

Proper names are taken as disguised definite descriptions and analyzed accordingly. Thus, *Pegasus* might have the contents of being a winged white horse of mythology, abbreviated as WWH, and "Pegasus does not exist" similarly comes out as:

(11) ¬$x [WWH (x) & " y [WWH(y) Æ y=x]]

There is no need for Meinongian non-existent objects, or any strange reference at all since, since definite descriptions and names do not have reference in the first place.

Identity statements like "Hesperus is Phosphorus" become, on this view, unproblematic as well. Let the contents of *Hesperus* be ES and that of *Phosphorus* MS. Abbreviating by omitting the uniqueness clauses for the sake of simplicity, the identity statement comes out something like a fairly ordinary looking assertion:

(12) $x $y [MS(x) & ES(y) & x=y]

And, finally, the problem of *de dicto* contexts receives a treatment that avoids the piling up of senses that is a consequence of the Fref (th7hom BT 12 0

b. James believes [$x [most-famous-drummer (x) & solo singer (x)]]

The *de re* reading would simply accord the existential expressions widest scope.

In Russell's framework, then, did anything at all have reference value? He did admit of something called a logically proper name which despite terminology is no proper name but would strike most as an indexical expression. This is exemplified by directly-referring demonstratives without nominal contents such as *this* and *that* used in a context to make unmediated reference to some individual or object. Note that such instances do not, in fact, cause immediate difficulties for identity, or for negative existentials (e.g. "This (said, pointing at a table) does not exist" seems a blatant contradiction), or for *de dicto* contexts.

This would appear to be a significant improvement, but this theory too has been met by influential reply on two major fronts. One, articulated by Strawson (primarily, Strawson (1950)) questions whether Russell's theory of descriptions might be missing something crucial. The other type of objection concerns the descriptive contents of proper names, discussed by Kripke (primarily, Kripke (1972)), which gave rise to the idea of **direct reference** theories of names. (Though for an updated defense of Russell's position, see Neale (1990) and Ludlow and Neale (1991)).

3. Reference as Pragmatic

3.1 Strawson. The fundamental question Strawson raised is whether what we are calling "reference" is a matter of (linguistic) meaning. Both Frege and Russell expounded what we can call a "semantic" theory of reference, in the sense that a semantics characterizes the meanings of words and phrases of a language in a general sense. Any further meaning that results from producing and understanding the actual utterance of a sentence, which are types of human actions, is not characterizable within the semantics as there is no reference there to speakers and hearers, only words, phrases, syntactic categories, etc. Thus, Strawson argues, truth and falsity are not (semantic) properties of sentences of a language, but

rather is a property of a **use** of a sentence (via an utterance) on a particular occasion. To illustrate his point, he presents the example of "I am hot". Now, he points out, it makes no sense to ask if this **sentence** is true or false; it is only when use is made of the sentence that we can so evaluate it. Thus, at this moment, if I pointlessly utter "I am hot" aloud, it's false, but said by another at this very moment it might be true. He points out, similarly, that a referring noun phrase like *the king of France* can only be evaluated for its reference value with respect to a use of the term via an utterance as well. It just so happened that Russell, writing in the early 20th century, was writing at a time when there was no king of France; had he written two centuries earlier, there would have been and the phrase would have had a reference. But again, this is not a fact about the noun phrase meaning itself, but about a particular use of the noun phrase.

He further points out that the verbs *mention* and *refer* (he treats them as synonymous) are verbs of **doing**. This point is elaborated on more clearly by Linsky (1963), who notes that the verb *refer* does not have only a general sense (e.g. as in "x refers to y"), but also a specific sense that may be applied to individuals, such as in saying, to use his example, "Who are you referring to when you say 'the Sultan of Swat'?", and receiving the reply "I am referring to Babe Ruth, of course". This more specific (non-stative, achievement verb) is not something we apply to language: it is strange to say "'The Sultan of Swat' is referring to Babe Ruth." Linsky points out that the question, to what does x refer? is a different question from asking, what are you referring to in using x? Further, in most instances, definite descriptions cannot be said, in general, to have any reference at all, even if they have meaning. Thus, "the man with the gray hair" is and can be used to refer to some particular man on a given occasion of use, and another on another occasion, but the semantics of this phrase does not pick out some unique individual (there being many with gray hair) *simpliciter*.

To revert momentarily to the Fregean framework, we might reason thus: If the contribution to the meaning of a proposition is the reference of a phrase, and we determine the contribution some expression makes to the

meaning of a proposition in terms of its contribution to the truth-value of the sentence expressing it, and if the notion of truth-value is something assigned to specific uses of a sentence via its utterance (and is therefore not a part of the semantics proper)—then, the notion of "reference" plays no (clear) role in the semantics proper but, rather, only in the use of a sentence on a given occasion.

Strawson points to another intuitive phenomenon that Russell's analysis provides no room for. If I were to say to you, right now, "The king of France is wise", on Russell's analysis I would have said something false (there being no such unique king). However, Strawson raised the point that it does not seem to be true or false *simpliciter*, but rather, there is something funny or strange about the utterance. His intuitions are, if asked if the sentence so used is true or false, he'd be at a loss. As he puts it, since there is no king of France, then the question of truth or falsity of the sentence simply does not arise. The use of the phrase *implies* that there is such a king, and in the absence of the validity of this implication one can make no sense of evaluating for truth or falsity. In more modern terms, this would be called PRESUPPOSITION failure. Note, again, that this "implication" can hold or not hold depending upon when the sentence is used, so its holding or not is thus a matter of usage, not of semantics proper. Strawson holds that even in cases of presupposition failure, the **sentence** still has "significance"—it is not gibberish—but this significance is not grounded in evaluating for truth or falsity. Strawson also goes on to point out that the same phenomenon occurs with Russell's logically proper names, which behave in this respect just like definite descriptions, despite having a very different analysis in Russell's theory.

3.2 Kripke and "direct reference". Kripke's critiques (Kripke, 1972) focus on something quite different—the analysis of proper names that Russell presented (and also, though perhaps somewhat unfairly, Frege presented in according names senses), in which names were treated as disguised definite descriptions. His critiques more or less interweave with similar critiques of Putnam (1975), Barcan Marcus (1963), Donnellan (1972), Geach (1962) and Kaplan (1986). Kripke argued very persuasively that any such analysis will fail, and that another

understanding of the nature of the reference of proper names is required in which names refer directly to their referents, without the mediation of any sense or descriptive contents (which is very similar to the "naive" theory of reference). The arguments take a variety of forms, so I will present only a couple here to illustrate how this conclusion might be reached. An excellent summary may be found in Salmon (1989).

Suppose that we provide the name *Ringo Starr* with the content "(most famous) drummer for the Beatles", or something similar. The modal argument is that this would entail that no matter what the circumstances, the drummer for the Beatles would be Ringo Starr. This is, if Ringo had not passed his audition, and someone else had, then **that** person would be Ringo Starr, not the unemployed drummer wandering the streets of Liverpool. This type of argument rests on contrafactual thinking, but seems fairly persuasive. That Ringo Starr is the drummer for the Beatles is not a logical truth. The epistemological argument has a similar flavor; it rests on the possibility of mistakes.   This works best for historical figures around whom legends have developed, where the proposed meaning of a name may contain all sorts of factual error, and identify either no one at all, or by chance someone else, which seems counterintuitive.

The strongest argument though seems to be the semantic argument, which does not deal in possibilia but relies upon our judgments about who or what a name does

us in fact refers to that obscure student. Manifestly, it does not (examine the discussion immediately above for clear evidence). It refers to, well…, Thales. The view that results from this general line of thought is that proper names are expressions which refer directly to their referents, and there is no mediating sense or meaning which is employed to necessarily determine reference. Further, this reference is RIGID, in that a name picks out the same individual in all possible worlds. Putnam (1975) has employed arguments that are similar in thrust to argue that natural kind terms, such as *tiger* or *gold*, lack extension-determining semantic descriptive contents.

But this seems to leave us with the problems of identity sentences and the other issues Frege was struggling with. In partial answer, Kripke outlines an approach (which he himself does not characterize as a theory) that is critiqued subsequently by Evans (1973). This is the CAUSAL THEORY of names. The general idea is this: a speaker who uses a given name A will make successful reference to the individual it refers to L   just in case there is a reference-preserving chain of usage of A that extends back to L. Informally, at first there is some veridical naming or "dubbing" that initially fixes the reference of A as the individual L. When one of the dubbers uses A in the presence of a further person Dr. X, then Dr. X's use of A will pick out L on the strength of the dubber's (secure) usage. This works transitively, so that if Dr. X talks to Prof. Y and uses the name, Prof.

actual theory, however, is daunting; Evans (1973) argues that the causal theory is problematic and resorts to a notion of communal knowledge about the use of a name and the intention to use the name in accordance with that communal knowledge. In some respects, this is similar to the causal theory, in that it does not accord proper names a semantic meaning, but rather reference is achieved via the mechanism of social practice.

Thus far, we have seen a communal line of thought in which the notion of reference has, in fits and starts, become increasingly removed from being a purely semantic notion, and increasingly a function of human action and interaction. At this point, though, I wish to step back and ask the extent to which this particular direction is justified.

4. Semantic Reference and Pragmatic Reference

4.1. Some issues. One problem with talking about "reference" is that

If we apply the notion, in slogan form: "reference determines truth", across the board, and consider all those other words and phrases in a sentence, it turns out that all of them play a role in determining truth and falsity. This, in very rough form, is what Church (1943) and Gödel (1944)

However, with quantificational noun phrases, which are not considered referential on the whole, no such similar reduction is possible. Since Montague chooses to represent definite descriptions in the Russellian manner, they too come out as quantified noun phrases. But updating the framework some, and allowing for presupposition failure with definite noun phrases, one can arrive at an interpretation which is of the form P(a), with a, as Russell might say, as the "logical subject" of the predication. In this way, we might begin to understand why certain types of noun phrases can be used "referentially", and others not. However, looking at things this way may seem to open the door once again to a semantic view of reference.

One view is discussed in McGinn (1981) and rests on an analogy. We do, in fact, make reference to things by uttering certain noises under certain circumstances. However, consider the commonplace activity of buying something. This might at first sight seem to be a causal interaction describable in such terms, but this doesn't seem correct (e.g. that we can buy things, and often do, which do not exist at the moment of purchase). In making a purchase, we operate against a background of conventions and constructs, such as the notion of money, ownership, legalities of exchange, and so forth. These notions are not behaviors, but rather collectively define certain types of economic relations between individuals and objects. In actually making a purchase, we are in fact guided by perception and perform actions, but these things are not part of the economic relations themselves. And we also have considerable freedom of behavior in that there are many ways to make a purchase. Rather, making a purchase results in a relation between us and objects that we "get into" by doing certain things in concert with others. Similarly, McGinn invites us to consider, reference is like

There is also a concrete strategy for "semanticizing" reference. It is, basically, Kaplan's notion of how to accord a meaning to indexical expressions (see also the contribution on indexicals, this volume). Before doing this, though, we need to give a bit of background on the notion of "truth".

The focus on truth and falsity as indicators of the reference of the use of a phrase needs to be distinguished from the notion of giving truth **conditions**. Let's approach it this way, within a possible worlds framework. In saying something like "Larry is in Spain," I am expressing a proposition p. That proposition p is a function in some theories from possible worlds (and times, but I'll omit this) to truth-values. That is, given a certain possible world w, then p(w) will yield either T or F. At the moment, I happen to know that who I am referring to by using the name *Larry* is, in fact, not in Spain. That is, I know that p(w) = F. Does this mean that, as a speaker, I know which possible world w is? No, I do not. For instance, I do not know if this is among the possible worlds in which Larry is in Spain **and**

None of this means we can have no cognitive "grasp" of truth-**conditions,** however. For any world w^n, $p(w^n)$ is true or false. We just don't happen to know if it's our world or someone else's.

4.2 Kaplan's analysis. Let us, in this setting, move on to Kaplan's notion of "character" of indexicals. There is a persistent intuition that although a noun phrase like *this woman* can be used on various occasions to refer to different women, and the class of women so referred to has nothing qualitatively in common (apart from being referred to in that way), nevertheless the phrase *this woman* has a constant meaning that transcends its particular uses.

Kaplan (1986, 1989) proposed that indexical expressions such as *I* or *that man* are expressions which, due to their nature, are assigned extensions (or references) only when their interpretations take arguments that most other words (such as *man*) need not (though see below for some qualification). These arguments, or parameters of interpretation, are the CONTEXT: who is speaking, who is the addressee, where the speaker is located, who or what else is

expression can, for something like "F is green" at best, has a "word-play" nature to it, much like threatening to hit someone over the head with a newspaper and saying "I'm going to... (action of raising a rolled-up newspaper as if to strike the addressee in the head)", or the bumper stickers reading, "I © my dog".

Another way of putting it is the question of whether pointing has semantic significance. Reimer (1991) argues contra Kaplan (1989) that this is so, at least in cases where pointing is an accompaniment to the utterance of a demonstrative indexical; it is not just an attention-directing device. Reference is, Reimer notes, coupled with a certain intention on the part of the speaker to make reference. But the intention does not always determine what is said. For example, if there is a single dog sleeping among felines and there is no accompanying demonstration, the descriptive contents of the phrase *that dog* will be sufficient in the context to uniquely pick out (or discriminate) a unique reference, regardless of speaker's intentions. Likewise, if there are multiple dogs but one is especially salient in the context, say one wildly barking dog among other sleeping dogs, reference is again secured by uttering *that dog* in context. And again, the claim is, that reference would succeed independently of speaker's intentions; a pointing demonstration would be redundant. But suppose there are two equally salient dogs in a context, say both barking wildly. Here, pointing does have semantic significance in that it discriminates one dog from another. The dog pointed at is thereby the reference, and whatever is said of it is, truly or falsely, said of that individual, again regardless of speaker's intentions. If the speaker intends to point to refer to the white dog, but instead points at the black one, the black dog and not the white one determines the truth or falsity of what is said.

4.4 Intentions. Bach (1992) argues, on the other hand, that the "best of intentions" are good enough; that is, demonstrations do not have semantic significance. He considers a scenario where there are two (equally salient) sets of keys on a desk, and the speaker says, "these keys are mine," but by simple error grabs her office-mate's keys. Here, the mistaken demonstration (or, rather, what directs the listener's attention),

it is argued, does not affect reference. The intentions of the speaker to refer to her own keys still holds. However, referential intentions are not just any intentions, but rather ones whose distinctive feature is that its fulfillment consists in its recognition. It involves also intending that one's audience identify something as the reference. This is the piece that is missing in the office keys example.

One's reference, in this case, is not fixed by one's beliefs; it is fixed by the intention to refer and the intention that it be recognized as such. Consider the case, Bach suggests, where the speaker is sitting at her desk where behind her on the wall is normally placed a picture of Carnap. Unbeknownst to the speaker, someone has replaced it in the night with a picture of former U.S. vice-president Spiro Agnew. In gesturing towards the picture and saying, "that is a picture of the greatest philosopher of the 20th century", the speaker's belief is that the picture is one of Carnap, but the intention is to make reference to the picture (which is of Agnew) on

both speaker and hearer, as in happening on a colleague murdered and saying something about Smith's murderer, whoever that may be. There is, however, the referential use which does not rely heavily, (or maybe even at all?), on the contents of the noun phrase. This is most clearly the case when there is a mistake in

so there's no way a speaker can refer to whom he intends to refer to (i.e. the person who administered the beating) under Donnellan's account.

4.5 Meaning imparted via usage. Recall that on the direct reference theory of names, there is no propositional contribution of the interpretation of the name corresponding to a sense—there is only the reference. This left hanging, as noted above, the question of why we find "Sam Clements

to think, led to his attributing a sense to proper names (which was a change from an earlier more direct-reference view he held). However, once we make this separation, it becomes clear that "securing" the reference is a matter of how actions are carried out and the context in which they occur, and in particular by using certain words. In using a name, we also impart the information that use of that particular linguistic form can, in context, secure a particular reference. If we use a different name, even for the same object, then we are imparting a related but *different* type of information. Thus a sentence like "Samuel Clemens is Mark Twain" will impart information that "Mark Twain is Mark Twain" will not, even if the contents are identical. Soames (2001) mounts a substantial defense of (approximately) this point of view.

Perhaps, in the end, a notion of "reference" as a type of direct connection to objects in the world might well be appropriate for both a semantics and a pragmatics, as Kripke (1977) suggests, and that terminology could be modified to distinguish them.

5. What can we refer to?

Work on reference has, as noted above, tended to focus on what one might call the clearest cases. But the boundaries have been, for the most part, fairly limited. There remain a great number of questions and issues that the direct-reference theory raises. One particularly difficult issue that has received a great deal of attention, though, is the simple question: if a referring expression has no object for its reference, then can it have any content? That there should be some contents is intuitively clear from consideration of names of fictional characters. We need to distinguish cases of fictional reference from failure of reference. After all, Superman does, in fact, wear a cape, and the Lone Ranger a white hat, and decidedly not the other way around; however, at this moment, if I use the term *the giraffe in my office* and there is no such thing, this is simply reference failure. As there is no Superman or Lone Ranger, either, how can we attribute truth-values to such sentences?[2] A number of answers have been suggested, such as Bertolet's (1984) notion that the content of such assertions is not the apparent subject, but that the myth or story (which is

a part of the real world) exists and is structured in a certain way. In saying, for instance, that Pegasus does not exist, one presupposes that there is a story in which Pegasus figures, but asserts there is no real individual which the story is about. Hintikka (1983), on the other hand, takes a possible worlds approach and suggests that Pegasus, Superman, and the others are to be found as objects, but in other possible worlds from our own. So when we make reference to them, we are doing so in those worlds where they do exist, just not this one.

But "nonexistent objects" are not limited by any means to fictional characters (Parsons 1980). There is the case of dreams and hallucinations, for instance, where we use referential terms to make something like successful reference. If, for instance, while in therapy I hallucinate that there is a wolf in the

characteristic or property? Is *spring* the name of

1. By "pointing", I intend any means of indication of an object, whether one uses the index finger, an open hand, a sideways nod of the head, one's lips, chin, etc. What constitutes "pointing" is, like other gestures, subject to cultural variation.

2. It seems likely that no language distinguishes the fictional from the real in terms of reference. Gregory Ward notes that he made an inquiry on the Linguist List as to whether any known language formally distinguishes noun phrases making reference to fictional entities and real ones, and none were reported.

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