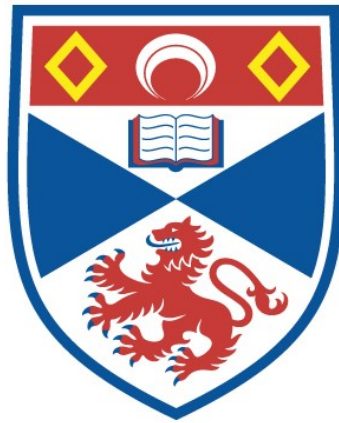


# ATTITUDES AND THEIR ATTRIBUTIONS

Manidipa Sen

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD  
at the  
University of St Andrews



1996

Full metadata for this item is available in  
St Andrews Research Repository  
at:

<http://research-repository.st-andrews.ac.uk/>

Please use this identifier to cite or link to this item:  
<http://hdl.handle.net/10023/14692>

This item is protected by original copyright

# ATTITUDES AND THEIR ATTRIBUTIONS

a thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the  
University of St. Andrews

**Manidipa Sen**

Department of Logic and Metaphysics  
The University of St. Andrews



February, 1996

ProQuest Number: 10167190

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 10167190

Published by ProQuest LLC (2017). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code  
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.  
789 East Eisenhower Parkway  
P.O. Box 1346  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

Th  
B968

**For Ma and Baba**

## A b s t r a c t

This doctoral dissertation is on the semantics of propositional-attitude ascriptions. To be more precise, it is mainly concerned with various kinds of analyses of singular propositional attitude ascriptions. These are sentences of the general form 'X  $\phi$ s that a is F', where 'X' can be replaced by the name of the person who is in the particular mental state, ' $\phi$ ' can be replaced by a propositional attitude verb, like 'believe', 'doubt', 'hope', 'desire', etc., 'a' can be replaced by the name of the individual/object about whom/which the particular attitude is held, and 'F' can be replaced by the name of the property that the individual/object is said to have. The dissertation takes belief to be a paradigmatic example of a propositional attitude, and, thus, focuses mainly on the semantics of ascriptions of beliefs. The thesis it defends is that while a correct analysis of belief ascriptions in general involves a relation between the believer and the proposition which is believed (and which can be regarded as the reference of the 'that'-clause of the belief report), a semantic distinction still needs to be made between *de re* and *de dicto* beliefs. This distinction can be made by distinguishing between two different kinds of propositions -- Russellian propositions corresponding to *de re* beliefs, and Fregean propositions corresponding to *de dicto* beliefs. This approach is motivated by arguing that the recent proposals of the 'hybrid' type concerning the semantics of belief reports, advocated by such philosophers as Schiffer, Crimmins, Richard, etc., fail. These proposals fail because of over-generalisation, and, therefore, fail to capture the *de re/de dicto* distinction. Therefore, if the *de re/de dicto* distinction is genuine, and the propositions occurring within these two kinds of reports are essentially different, then a single account of belief ascriptions cannot be given. We need two different semantical accounts to capture the distinction. A *de re* report is best understood by a semantics of the broadly Russellian variety, while a *de dicto* belief report is best understood by a semantics of the Fregean variety.

## Declarations

(i) I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 55,000 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

Date: 11.2.96

Signature of Candidate: ✓

(ii) I was admitted as a research student in October, 1992 and as a candidate for the degree of Ph.D. in October, 1993; the higher study for which this is a record that it was carried out in the University of St. Andrews between 1992 and 1996.

Date: 11.2.96

Signature of Candidate: ...

(iii) I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of Ph.D. in the University of St. Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

Date: 12/2/86

Signature of Supervisor

In submitting this thesis to the University of St. Andrews I understand that I am giving permission for it to be made available for use in accordance with the regulations of the University Library for the time being in force, subject to any copyright vested in the work not being affected thereby. I also understand that the title and abstract will be published, and that a copy of the work may be made and supplied to any bona fide library or research worker.

Date: 11.2.96

Signature of Candidate: .

## Acknowledgements

I came to Britain in the academic year of 1992 on a Commonwealth Scholarship to study for a Ph.D. Being a student in a foreign country is as difficult as it is exciting. A large number of individuals and institutions, with their unfailing support and generosity, made my study in Britain such a pleasure. I am very happy to have this opportunity of putting on record my sincerest thanks to all of them.

The work, in the first three years, was financially supported by the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission through the British Council. I am thankful to them, not only for this, but also for giving me this opportunity to study in Britain. I am also grateful to the University of St. Andrews and the British Federation for Women Graduates for providing me with financial assistance for the last few months. The University of St. Andrews, particularly the Department of Logic and Metaphysics, with its friendly and encouraging intellectual atmosphere, is an ideal place to study, and I would like to thank both the University and the Department for providing me with all the necessary facilities to carry on my work smoothly.

I am indebted to more individuals than I can mention. I would like to start by expressing my deepest sense of gratitude and respect for my supervisors, Professor Crispin Wright and Professor Bob Hale. Their infinite kindness, unfailing assistance, patience, and ceaseless intellectual guidance are responsible for whatever I have been able to do during the last three years and a half. The experience of discussing philosophy with them is something I will forever treasure. I am indebted to Dr. Amita Chatterjee, my teacher in India, for the constant source of inspiration to pursue my academic career. I was initiated to the topic of my dissertation by my father and my teacher Professor P.K. Sen. He has always been there to encourage my intellectual endeavour, and taught me to love philosophy.

My thanks go to Ms. Susan Lafferty and Mrs. Jane McGee for painstakingly proof-reading the dissertation.

I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation for my innumerable friends in St. Andrews. They have, in one way or another, helped me continuously. Without their incessant emotional backing and love it would have been impossible to carry on with the work. I cannot but feel extremely lucky to have them as friends.

What sustained me most throughout these three and a half years was the love and affection that I received from my parents and my sister. In spite of being physically so far away, they were a constant source of inspiration. My mother and father have done whatever was humanly possible so that I could carry on with my work. My greatest debt is to them, and to them I dedicate this dissertation.



# C O N T E N T

<b><u>Introduction</u></b>	1
I. Propositional Attitudes and their Dyadic Relational Structure	1
II. Frege's Puzzle and Attitude Attributions	5
III. Quine and Referential Opacity	9
<b><u>Chapter 1: Quine and the Indeterminacy Thesis</u></b>	13
1.1. The Main Objective and the Connection it has to the Indeterminacy Thesis	13
1.2. The Indeterminacy Thesis	17
1.3. The Argument for the Indeterminacy Thesis	20
1.3.1. Preliminary Remarks	20
1.3.2. The Argument from Above	23
1.3.3. The Argument from Below	27
1.4. The Philosophical Implications of the Indeterminacy Thesis	32
1.5. The Indeterminacy Thesis Evaluated	34
<b><u>Chapter 2: De Re Thoughts</u></b>	43
2.1. The Distinction Between <i>De Re</i> and <i>De Dicto</i> Beliefs	44
2.1.1. Preliminary Remarks	44
2.1.2. Quine and <i>De Re</i> Belief	47
2.1.3. Burge and <i>De Re</i> Belief	50
2.2. The Motivation for Admitting Irreducibly <i>De Re</i> Beliefs	54
2.3. Evans and <i>De Re</i> Thoughts	56
2.3.1. Preliminary Remarks	56
2.3.2. Evans on Frege and Russell	57
2.3.3. Russell's Principle and Information-Based Thoughts	61
2.3.4. The Main Argument for the Russellian Status of Singular Terms	65
2.4. Russell's Principle Evaluated	70
<b><u>Chapter 3: The Hybrid View of Belief Ascription</u></b>	80

3.1. Preliminary Remarks	80
3.2. A Hybrid View of Belief Ascription	81
3.3. Motivation for the Hybrid View	90
3.4. Mark Crimmins on the Semantics of Belief Reports	94
3.5. The Hybrid View Evaluated	103
<b><u>Chapter 4: On the Fregean Account of Belief Ascription</u></b>	<b>111</b>
4.1. Preliminary Remarks	
4.2. Frege's Account of Sense	113
4.2.1. Sense and its Function	113
4.2.2. Sense and Reference	119
4.3. Intersubjective Variations in Sense and the Resultant Problems	124
4.4. Forbes on a Modified Fregean Account	131
<b><u>Chapter 5: On the Russellian Account of Belief Ascription</u></b>	<b>142</b>
5.1. Contrasting Frege and Russell	142
5.2. Motivations for Russellianism	146
5.2.1. The Role of Proposition outside Belief Ascriptions	146
5.2.2. Considering the Way Beliefs are Ascribed	149
5.2.3. Considering <i>De Re</i> Attributions of Belief	151
<b><u>Conclusion</u></b>	<b>154</b>
<b><u>Bibliography</u></b>	<b>157</b>

## INTRODUCTION

### **I. Propositional Attitudes and their Dyadic Relational Structure**

Belief, along with a host of other psychological states or mental acts, is called a 'propositional attitude'. Propositional attitudes are generally expressed by verbs like, 'believe', 'disbelieve', 'hope', 'desire', 'wish', 'know', 'want', 'assert', 'doubt', 'think', 'imagine', 'understand', 'predict', etc. The peculiarity of these verbs lies in the fact that their complement is standardly a 'that'-clause which is traditionally taken to designate a proposition. Hence many of our psychological attitudes of believing, doubting, wishing, fearing etc., can be regarded as relations between the subject having that attitude, and something else, a proposition, towards which the attitude is directed. So any sentence ascribing a propositional attitude can be said to have the following form:

$$X \text{ } \emptyset \text{ that } p,$$

where ' $\emptyset$ ' can be replaced by any one of the above verbs.

This dissertation is concerned with propositional attitudes involving particular individuals/objects -- attitudes that are directed towards particular individuals/objects -- and how we successfully ascribe them. So the kind of propositional attitude ascribing sentence that we will be mainly concerned with can be schematically represented as 'X  $\emptyset$ s that a is F', where 'a' can be replaced by a referential singular term.<sup>1</sup> One of the main purposes here is to give a satisfactory answer to questions of the following kind :

---

<sup>1</sup>Following Frege we will include in the class of singular terms both proper names and definite descriptions.

When someone says 'Lois believes that Clark Kent can't fly'<sup>2</sup>, how must things stand with Lois in order for the report to be true?

This way of formulating the question makes it clear that it is impossible to provide a semantics of attitude attributions without saying something about the relation that holds between the person who has the attitude and the object towards which the attitude is directed, that is, without saying something about the attitudes themselves. As Crimmins points out,

If we cannot square an account of what makes belief reports true with a sensible theory of believing, then we need to wonder what accounts for our failure. Can belief reports never be true? Is there really no such thing as believing? While some philosophers have taken to this sort of scepticism, most have hoped that it is our own fault, rather than the world's, that we lack a viable analysis of belief reporting. For surely our claims about what we and others believe are systematically meaningful and often true.<sup>3</sup>

Richard echoes the same thought when he says,

... it would be difficult to say anything illuminating about the meanings of 'believes', 'desires', and their friends without saying something substantive about beliefs, desires and the other propositional attitudes.<sup>4</sup>

It should also become clear, in the course of the discussion, that the nature of the object of a propositional attitude, which varies in accordance with the context of the utterance of the attitude-attributing sentence, plays a very important role in the semantics of attitude attribution.

---

<sup>2</sup>I rely on the the famous story about Superman where his friend Lois Lane is unaware of the fact that her colleague Clark Kent is no other than Superman. This example will be used quite often and for convenience we will take this story to be true.

<sup>3</sup>Crimmins [1992], p.ix.

<sup>4</sup>Richard [1990], p.1.

According to the way of understanding sentences of this kind advocated here, it becomes evident that 'believes' and other propositional attitude verbs are taken to be dyadic relational predicates. The first term of the relation is an individual referred to by the name replacing 'X', while the second term is a proposition, designated by the complex 'that'-clause, which the individual is said to believe. This might be made clear by drawing an analogy between a sentence ascribing a belief like, 'Ralph believes that Ortcutt is a spy' and an ordinary sentence, like, '3 is smaller than the ratio of 8 and 2'. From the latter sentence we can get, by existential generalisation, the following sentences:

1.  $(\exists x)(x \text{ is smaller than the ratio of 8 and 2})$
2.  $(\exists x)(3 \text{ is smaller than the ratio of } x \text{ and 2})$
3.  $(\exists x)(3 \text{ is smaller than the ratio of 8 and } x)$
4.  $(\exists x)(3 \text{ is smaller than } x)$ .

We have similar existential generalisations from 'Ralph believes that Ortcutt is a spy'.

- 1'.  $(\exists x)(x \text{ believes that Ortcutt is a spy})$
- 2'.  $(\exists x)(\text{Ralph believes that } x \text{ is a spy})$
- 3'.  $(\exists x)(\text{Ralph believes that Ortcutt is } x)$
- 4'.  $(\exists x)(\text{Ralph believes } x)$ .

4', that is, existential generalisation in the position of the 'that'-clause suggests that belief is a relation that holds between Ralph and something. This dyadic predicative characterisation of the 'that'-clause reveals that the 'that'-clause, in a paradigmatic belief ascription such as 'Ralph believes that Ortcutt is a spy', can be regarded as a referential singular term. One might say, at this point, that the mere possibility of taking the surface syntax of a belief ascription in this way is not enough to show that belief is a relation between a believer and a proposition, and that the 'that'-clause is a referential singular term designating the proposition which is believed. It should be noted, however, that we are making a modest claim here. We are saying that one natural way of understanding existential generalisations of the above kind is to take the

'that'-clause as a singular term. It does seem to be telling us one of the many things that Ralph believes. That the 'that'-clause in a belief ascribing sentence is a referential singular term draws support from the evident validity of a host of ordinary arguments involving sentences of this form. Let us consider arguments like the following :

Ralph believes that Ortcutt is a spy and so does Jane.  
Therefore, there is something that both Ralph and Jane believe.

Ralph believes everything that Jane believes.  
Jane believes that Ortcutt is a spy.  
Therefore, Ralph believes that Ortcutt is a spy.

Ralph believes that Ortcutt is a spy.  
That Ortcutt is a spy is impossible.  
Therefore, Ralph believes something that is impossible.

Ralph believes that Ortcutt is a spy.  
It is true that Ortcutt is a spy.  
Therefore, Ralph believes something that is true.

Everything that Ralph believes is true.  
Ralph believes that Ortcutt is a spy.  
Therefore, it is true that Ortcutt is a spy.

All the above arguments seem to be valid. And the validity of these arguments depends upon a particular reading of the belief sentence, a reading which carves out of the whole sentence a part on which existential generalisation can be made. In other words, it isolates a part which could be replaced and then captured by an existential quantifier. This cannot be anything other than what is replaced by the word 'something'. And it is obvious that 'something' replaces the whole of the 'that'-clause. So the 'that'-clause should be treated as a singular term which can be a substituent of a variable in quantification. A natural explanation of the

way in which these arguments may be valid does presuppose that 'that'-clauses are referential singular terms.<sup>5</sup>

One of the most important characteristics of a 'that'-clause as a singular term is that it is a complex singular term whose reference is determined by the references of the constituent terms. So the reference of 'that Ortcutt is a spy' is determined by the references of 'Ortcutt' and 'is a spy'. In answer to the question, what are the references of these two expressions, philosophers have come up with two broadly different kinds of answers. According to Frege and his followers, the terms in a 'that'-clause refer to modes of presentation and the whole 'that'-clause refers to a structured proposition made up of those modes of presentation. Conversely philosophers belonging to the broadly Russellian tradition, hold that the 'that'-clauses are made up of the customary references of the constituent expressions. So the individual Ortcutt and the property of spyhood constitute the proposition represented by 'that Ortcutt is a spy'. Therefore, there are at least two ways in which the nature of a proposition as the object of propositional attitudes can be understood. This, in turn, has led to at least two different accounts of the semantics of propositional attributions -- one can be said to be the Fregean account, while the other can be regarded as a broadly Russellian account. We will compare these two approaches in the chapters which are to follow in order to arrive at an answer to the original question stated in the beginning of this section. But in the rest of the introduction I would like to discuss some of the puzzles or problems that arise in the contexts of attitude attributions and how they seem to be at odds with 'extremely reasonable assumptions about language'<sup>6</sup>. These puzzles will provide a testing ground for the various theories to be examined in what follows.

## II. Frege's Puzzle and Attitude Attributions

How should we report a singular belief so that the belief report is true? What is necessary for a belief report like, 'Lois believes that Clark Kent can't fly' to be true? The intuitive answer, an answer given by many

---

<sup>5</sup>I am aware of the fact that here I am assuming that quantification in the position of the 'that'-clause in this context is objectual rather than substitutional.

<sup>6</sup>Crimmins [1992], p.ix.

philosophers as well, is, that for the report (or the attribution) to be true, the expressions within the belief report should refer to the same person and the property to which Lois refers when expressing her belief. Frege, however, thought that attitudes were not the kind of thing that could be characterised in terms of objects and properties that the expressions occurring within attitude attributions refer to. According to Frege, an expression governed by an attitude verb goes through a shift in reference, and refers to something totally different from its usual reference. What led Frege to arrive at this thesis? To answer this we need to discuss what Frege found puzzling about attitude attributions.

The puzzle with attitude ascription can be set up in the following way<sup>7</sup>:

1. If two expressions  $t$  and  $t'$  refer to the same object and if two sentences  $S(t)$  and  $S(t')$  differ from each other only in that  $t$  occurs in the former while  $t'$  occurs in the latter, then  $S(t)$  and  $S(t')$  express the same proposition.

2. If  $S(t)$  and  $S(t')$  express the same proposition, Tom believes that  $S(t)$  if, and only if, Tom believes that  $S(t')$ .

3. But there are contexts where Tom might believe  $S(t)$  but not  $S(t')$ .

Let us take a concrete example here. Suppose Tom believes that Ortcutt is a spy, but due to his ignorance regarding the fact that Ortcutt and Mr. B are one and the same person, in fact due to his firm belief that the two names refer to two different individuals, Tom may not believe that Mr. B is a spy. Now, in a context like this the report 'Tom believes that Ortcutt is a spy' is true, whereas the report 'Tom believes that Mr. B is a spy' is false. How is it that even when 'Ortcutt' and 'Mr. B' have the same reference, the two belief reports where these two terms occur have different truth values?

To understand the answer that Frege provides to this problem we need to discuss the three theses that Frege takes into consideration in the

---

<sup>7</sup>See Recanati [1993], p.348.



understanding of the puzzle.<sup>8</sup> These are the principle of compositionality, Frege's law (as called by Salmon [1986], p.57), and the further premise that a sentence of the form 'a=a' is a priori and uninformative, while that of the form 'a=b' is informative and *a posteriori*. We can call this 'the identity premise'.

A. Compositionality : a preliminary investigation into the nature and structure of a proposition expressed by a singular declarative sentence suggests that a singular proposition is a complex entity composed of the things referred to by the components of the declarative sentence. The proposition that Russell is a philosopher (expressed by the sentence 'Russell is a philosopher') has as one component the thing it shares with the proposition that Russell is a mathematician, and has as another component the thing it shares with the proposition that Wittgenstein is a philosopher. So, it is made out of two things -- the individual the proposition is about -- the man Russell, and the property of being a philosopher which he possesses. The puzzle occurring in the case of attitude attribution seems to challenge this principle of compositionality. The alternative proposal to the usual compositionality principle is that if the two propositions expressed by two sentences (differing only in having two different names for the same individual/object) are such that we have distinct cognitive attitudes towards them in spite of the fact they are composed of the same referents, then there must be some significant property had by one and not by the other.

B. Frege's Law: the strategy that Frege takes in producing two distinct pieces of information that are about the same individual and that have the same predicative component is, first to offer a pair of declarative sentences which have different singular terms but the same predicative expressions, and then to argue that these sentences must be seen as containing different pieces of information. To do this he appeals to what may be called 'Frege's Law'. Suppose two declarative sentences S and S' have the very same cognitive content. In a case like this we can say that S is informative if and only if S' is. When we say that a declarative sentence

---

<sup>8</sup>Salmon [1986] has a detailed discussion of the original puzzle and the principles based on which Frege answers to the question.

S is informative, what we mean to say is that 'the information content is not somehow already given, or that the content is nontrivial, or that it is knowable only by recourse to experience and not merely by reflection on the concepts involved, or that it is an "extension of our knowledge" ...'<sup>9</sup>

C. The Identity Premise: connected with Frege's law is the question whether sentences expressing identity are informative or not. According to Frege sentences of the form 'a=a' are uninformative, known to be true *a priori* and do not extend our knowledge about the state of affairs. Whereas, identity sentences of the form 'a=b' are informative and in many cases knowledge of this identity is a significant extension of our knowledge about the world. For example, someone might have two independent bits of information that the star which appears in the morning is called 'Hesperus' and that which appears in the evening is called 'Phosphorus'. He will also know *a priori* that Hesperus is Hesperus and that Phosphorus is Phosphorus. But when he discovers that Hesperus is none other than Phosphorus and says 'Hesperus is Phosphorus', then he is certainly not just saying an object is self-identical. Though the two terms 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus' refer to the same celestial body, there is something other than the reference, by virtue of which the identity statement 'Hesperus is Phosphorus' is informative.

It should be noted that Frege introduced the notion of sense (over and above the notion of reference) primarily to distinguish between informative and uninformative identity statements. Frege's puzzle, as it is usually understood, is the puzzle about pairs of identity statements of the above kind. However, the puzzle concerning propositional attitude attributions can be shown to be an extension of this puzzle. When it is asked, what is it that makes the report 'Lois believes that Superman is Superman' true, whereas the report 'Lois believes that Clark Kent is Superman' false? Frege appeals to the difference in the senses between the two terms 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent' to account for the difference in the truth-values. As we know, Frege thinks that a singular term occurring within a propositional attitude-ascribing context refers to its customary sense. As Lois attaches two different senses to the names 'Superman' and

---

<sup>9</sup>Salmon [1986], p.57.

'Clark Kent', the report 'Lois believes that Clark Kent is Superman' is false. This is just an initial characterisation of what Frege found problematic about propositional attitude attributions, and an indication of his proposal to solve the problem. We will discuss this proposal in detail and we will try to show that Frege's proposal, or at least a proposal in the Fregean spirit, is needed in understanding some kinds of belief reports.

### III. Quine and Referential Opacity.

With a view to arriving at a correct analysis of sentences which ascribe propositional attitudes, Quine, inspired by Frege, concluded that the semantic function of a name occurring in a propositional attitude attribution cannot be, or cannot simply be, its reference. A context where the function of a singular term cannot be merely to refer, and thus, where substitution of co-referential singular terms may fail, is what Quine calls an 'opaque context'. There are two things which need distinguishing at this stage:

- (a) an occurrence of a singular term, and,
- (b) a context in which a singular term occurs.

We can say that when an occurrence of a name resists substitution by a co-referential name,<sup>10</sup> whatever the reason, the name occurs opaquely. When an occurrence of a name allows such substitution the occurrence is called 'transparent'. Now, whether an occurrence of a name is transparent or opaque depends on the context in which it occurs. In this sense, propositional attitude ascribing contexts may be said to be opacity-inducing contexts. We might compare contexts of this kind with such transparent contexts as 'it is true that', which clearly permits substitution of co-referential names. If it is true that Superman can fly, it is also true that Clark Kent can fly. A context of the occurrence of a term may be said to be opaque if it induces opacity in occurrences of terms within it. According to Quine the three most important contexts of opacity are quotational contexts, modal contexts and propositional attitude ascribing contexts.

---

<sup>10</sup>Two names are co-referential if, and only if, the identity statement formed out of these two terms is true. So 'Tully' and 'Cicero' are co-referential if, and only if, the identity statement 'Tully is Cicero' is true.

How substitution of co-referential names fail to preserve truth-value will be discussed in detail mainly in connection with the Fregean account of belief ascription.

There is another issue connected with the opacity of attitude attribution which requires mentioning at this stage. It is an issue which plays a very important role in the discussion of the nature of propositional attitudes and how we talk about them. Although Quine argues that propositional attitude ascribing contexts are opaque, sentences ascribing propositional attitudes are amenable to two sorts of interpretations -- one can be regarded as the transparent reading of propositional attitude ascriptions, while the other can be regarded as the opaque reading of the same. One of the obvious ways of understanding a sentence like, 'Tom believes that Cicero is a Roman' is by parsing it as 'Of Cicero Tom believes that he is a Roman' or 'Cicero is such that Tom believes that he is a Roman'. This interpretation entails that the sentence is really an assertion about the individual Cicero, an assertion which says that Tom entertains a certain belief about Cicero. Tom's belief about Cicero can be regarded as a property of Cicero, which is being predicated of the individual in the sentence 'Cicero is such that Tom believes that he is a Roman'. This, in turn, entails that 'Cicero' would really take the position of the subject, falling outside the scope of the belief operator. Now, if the sentence 'Tom believes that Cicero is a Roman' is about the individual Cicero, and if the belief operator is made to form a part of the predicate, we can replace 'Cicero' by 'Tully', even when Tom does not know that Cicero is Tully. Tully and Cicero being the same individual, what can be predicated of Cicero can be predicated of Tully. If, of Cicero, Tom entertains a particular belief, then of Tully, Tom can entertain the same belief.

The transparent and the opaque readings of propositional attitude ascribing sentences correspond to what is known as the *de re* and *de dicto* ascriptions of propositional attitudes respectively. Attitude ascriptions that allow a transparent reading, that is, a reading where the singular term can be exported out of the attitude verb and can be substituted by a co-referential singular term, are regarded as *de re* ascriptions of propositional attitude. One may reject the *de re* reading of propositional attitude

ascribing sentences<sup>11</sup>, and their reason for rejecting the *de re* reading may be prompted by a kind of Fregean consideration. *De re* readings of propositional attitude ascriptions are based on a mistaken assumption on which they are based. The assumption is that we can make an ascription of a propositional attitude, say a belief, about an object to a subject, without involving the manner in which (or, on Fregean terminology, the mode of presentation under which) the object is picked up by us or the subject. In a report like 'Tom believes that Cicero denounced Cataline' we are implicitly providing an answer to the question 'What is Tom believing?', and the report is correct so long as we specify the object of Tom's belief and the property that he is believed to have. But, according to many philosophers, the answer would be incorrect if we totally ignore how Tom picks out Cicero. It would be incorrect on the reporter's part to describe the content of Tom's belief in a way that is different from the way in which the content was initially presented before Tom's mind. It would be a distortion of facts if we say, in specifying Tom's belief, that it is of Tully that Tom believes he denounced Cataline, for it might very well be that Tom is unaware of the truth of the identity statement 'Cicero is Tully'.

So far we have been talking about ascriptions of propositional attitudes rather than the nature of propositional attitudes themselves. But the problem that is being raised against *de re* ascriptions seem to depend on whether there can be any *de re* propositional attitudes -- whether it is possible for someone to be able to pick out the object independently of the particular modes of presentation. If we can show that there is a class of attitudes which are essentially *de re*, then the correct report of such an attitude can be claimed to be *de re*. We will try to show that the *de re/de dicto* distinction is genuine at the level of attitudes themselves and any account of the semantics of propositional attitude ascription should be sensitive to this distinction. As remarked in the very beginning of the introduction, talk about attributions of belief and other propositional attitudes must be, in an important way, based on what our attitudes themselves consist in. Therefore, questions of opaque and transparent occurrences of terms in propositional attitude attributions cannot be dealt with properly unless the *de re/de dicto* distinction, at the level of

---

<sup>11</sup>Just as Quine rejected *de re* reading of sentences involving modal operators.

propositional attitudes, is made clear. There are two traditional accounts of propositional attitude ascriptions --- one is the Fregean account and the other is the Russellian account -- and they seem to fit nicely with the *de re/de dicto* distinction. Reserving for later the detailed discussion and the complicated issues that are involved, we can just mention here that the Fregean account may be said to correspond to *de dicto* propositional attitudes, while the broadly Russellian account may be said to correspond to *de re* propositional attitudes. A major part of the dissertation will be concerned with trying to make sense of the *de re/de dicto* distinction. It will also try to reveal the important differences between Russellian and Fregean in their accounts of semantics of attitude ascription. The main aim is to show that once we take the distinction between *de re* and *de dicto* propositional attitudes seriously, we cannot be satisfied with one single uniform account of propositional attitude attribution.

The acceptance of the dyadic relational structure of propositional attitude ascribing sentences immediately leads us to the acceptance of propositions of one or another kind. However, this makes our position vulnerable to the Quinean objections to propositions, so, before we can move on to the main discussion of propositional attitudes and their attributions, we need to address ourselves to these objections to propositions. This is what we will look at in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 1

### **Quine and the Indeterminacy Thesis**

#### **1.1. The Main Objective and the Connection it has to the Quinean Indeterminacy Thesis**

Once we accept the fact that a propositional attitude verb involves a relation between a subject having that attitude and the proposition towards which that attitude is directed, we are immediately led to provide an acceptable account of what is it that A and B both believe when we say that they believe the same thing, and what is it that A and B both say when we claim that they say the same thing. But the whole project of arriving at a viable account of propositional attitudes and propositions as their content is put in jeopardy by Quine's arguments against facts about meaning from his thesis on the indeterminacy of translation, because by rejecting meaning facts Quine directly attacks the notion of proposition.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup>The price that Quine has to pay is quite high. He has to abandon all reports and beliefs about what anybody says, thinks, believes, doubts, hopes etc., in their usual interpretation. It should be noted that with the help of the indeterminacy thesis, Quine is directly attacking one particular notion of proposition -- it is the notion of proposition as the meaning of a declarative sentence. But his arguments against propositions in this sense may be shown to be extended to the other notions of propositions as well. In fact his rejection of propositions leads to his rejection of propositions as objects of propositional attitudes. In the last part of *Word and Object* [1960], particularly in the chapter entitled 'Flight from Intension', Quine spends a great deal of time trying to show that there are no objects of propositional attitude verbs like 'believe', propositions or otherwise. He ends Section 44 of the chapter by saying 'there is no need to recognise 'believes' and similar verbs as relative terms at all; ... Hence a final alternative that I find as appealing as any is to dispense with the objects of propositional attitudes.' [pp.215-16] According to the Quinean analysis, 'believes' in, say, 'Tom believes that Cicero is a Roman', does not stand for a relation between the believer Tom and the reference of the 'that'-clause, as there is nothing (such as a proposition) to which the 'that'-clause can refer. The verb 'believes' here, ceases to be a term and becomes part of an operator 'believes that', or 'believes [ ]', which, when applied to a sentence, produces a composite absolute general term whereof the sentence is counted an immediate constituent.' [p.216] So in 'Tom believes that Cicero is a Roman' the singular term 'Tom' is attached to the complex predicate 'believes that Cicero is a Roman', and the sentence is true iff Tom in fact is included in the extension of the predicate 'believes that Cicero is a Roman'. This way of understanding propositional attitude ascribing sentences is disastrous since it precludes the construction of a finitely based theory of meaning for the language which will have infinitely many semantically primitive expressions.

Let us try to elaborate this further by pointing out the various reasons which prompt philosophers to admit propositions over and above written and spoken sentences. There are three main demands that the notion of proposition is introduced to meet. Firstly we require a noun to stand for that which two people who believe the same thing both believe, two people who doubt the same thing both doubt and the like. The claim is that the best way of explaining what is involved in the case where we say that two people share a belief is that there is some single object -- a proposition -- which is what they both believe. Secondly, a proposition is taken to be that which two declarative sentences, either of the same language or of different languages saying the same thing, both say. The respect in which two sentences, regarded as saying the same thing, are the same, is what is commonly known as meaning, and therefore, propositions are taken to be meanings of declarative sentences. Furthermore, philosophers introduce propositions to give an account of the truth and falsity of an uttered or written sentence. It should be noted that it is only regarding a sentence which has been uttered or written (that is, a sentence conveying a particular thought) that we can sensibly ask whether the sentence is true or false. In answer to the question, 'what makes a sentence true or false on a given occasion of use?', they have come up with the view that it is something other than the sentence which is the bearer of truth or falsity, because an uttered or written sentence cannot itself be true or false absolutely.

Is it proper to introduce something -- a proposition -- as that which two people who say the same thing both say, two people who believe the same thing both believe, two people who wish the same thing both wish, and so on? Some philosophers are opposed to admitting propositions in this sense. This hostility might take various shapes. Some may say that since propositions are abstract entities, an empiricist ought to understand and paraphrase such talk in terms of some more concrete notions. According to another form of the objection, we can permit talk of propositions but should keep in mind that they are of no value in clarifying any problem in the theory of meaning, the value such talks have might only be pragmatic. The last and the most radical approach is



that we cannot permit talk about propositions at all, even as analysing or paraphrasing in some other terms, because the notion itself is infirm.<sup>13</sup>

Quine's reasons for dispensing with propositions are of the third and most radical kind. In the very beginning of *Philosophy of Logic*, he writes

My objection to recognising propositions does not arise primarily from philosophical parsimony -- from a desire to dream of no more thing in heaven and earth than need be. Nor does it arise more specifically, from particularism -- from a disapproval of intangible or abstract entities. My objection is more urgent.<sup>14</sup>

Again, in *Word and Object* he says.

The very question of the conditions for identity of propositions presents not so much an unsolved problem as a mistaken ideal.<sup>15</sup>

It should be noted, at this point, that the way Quine approaches this problem in *Philosophy of Logic* is different from the way in which he approaches it in *Word and Object*. The 'urgent' objection that he puts forward against the notion of proposition in the former is that if we are to admit propositions, we have to admit them as determinate equivalence classes of sentences where the equivalence relation is the relation of synonymy. But Quine thinks that this equivalence relation does not make any sense.

In this chapter, we will, however, concentrate on Quine's objection to propositions from the arguments from the indeterminacy of translation -- arguments that are found in his book *Word and Object* [1960] and later on in the paper 'On the Reasons for Indeterminacy of Translation' [1970b]. Our main task will be to show that Quine's

---

<sup>13</sup>See Blackburn [1975].

<sup>14</sup>Quine [1970a], p.3.

<sup>15</sup>Quine [1960], p.206.

arguments from the indeterminacy thesis do not work against the notion of proposition. Here one might say that even if we succeed in showing this, Quine seems to have a separate argument against the notion of proposition -- the argument which can be found in *Philosophy of Logic*. Does Quine really have an argument, independent of the one based on the indeterminacy thesis, against propositions? It does not seem so. Once we closely scrutinise the two arguments, we will come to realise that the one found in *Philosophical Logic* is a special version of the one that we get in *Word and Object*.

Quine's arguments against the notion of synonymy can be shown to be related to his arguments from the indeterminacy thesis. This is how the relation may be established. Once we admit indeterminacy of translation we will be able to show that partitioning of sentences into determinate equivalence classes collapses, and therefore, the notion of proposition makes no sense. Whereas, in *Word and Object* Quine's argument is roughly that if we can establish the indeterminacy thesis, then we have to reject any objective fact about meaning and thereby reject the notion of proposition altogether. The two Quinean arguments may be schematised respectively in the following way:

1. Indeterminacy of Translation → No determinate equivalence classes of sentences → No propositions.
2. Indeterminacy of Translation → No facts about meaning → No propositions.

Having schematised the two arguments thus, it can be shown that 1 is really a special version of 2. The reason why Quine says that the notion of equivalence classes of sentences does not make any sense is that the equivalence relation, the relation of synonymy, based on which the partitioning is made, makes no sense. To say that the relation of synonymy makes no objective sense can be interpreted as saying that there are no objective meaning facts. This point can be elaborated more: in 'Two Dogmas of Empiricism' [1953] Quine raises doubts about the notion of synonymy. But one could argue that in this article Quine does no more

than show that the notion of synonymy has not been satisfactorily explained, not that it can not be explained, and not that it makes no sense. Whereas if Quine's indeterminacy thesis is correct, then there are no meaning facts, and if there are no meaning facts there is no synonymy, as acceptance of the relation of synonymy implies the acceptance of meaning facts. So, the indeterminacy thesis, by rejecting meaning facts, provides an important argument against synonymy. Hence, the rest of the chapter will concentrate on Quine's thesis for the indeterminacy of translation, as it is developed in *Word and Object* and his paper 'On the Reasons for the Indeterminacy of Translation'. The main aim of the chapter is to state Quine's doctrine of the indeterminacy of translation, the two arguments -- the argument from above and the argument from below -- trying to establish the indeterminacy thesis, the assumptions on which the arguments depend and how we may try to answer Quine. But before entering into any other discussion, we need to know what the thesis is, and how Quine argues for it.

## 1.2. The Indeterminacy Thesis

Before stating the thesis itself, we need to mention that what is fundamental to much of Quine's philosophy is the naturalistic behaviouristic conception of language, and that his major doctrines develop within this framework of language. Quine hints at this conception of language thus:

Language is a social art. In acquiring it we have to depend entirely on intersubjectively available clues as to what we say and when. Hence there is no justification for collating linguistic meanings, unless in terms of men's dispositions to respond overtly to socially observable stimulations. An effect of recognising this limitation is that the enterprise of translation is found to be involved in a certain systematic indeterminacy, ...<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup>Ibid, p.ix.

But this naturalistic behaviouristic conception of language is explicitly stated thus,

Philosophically I am bound to Dewey by the naturalism that dominated his last three decades. ... knowledge, mind, and meaning are to be studied in the same empirical spirit that animates natural science. There is no place for a prior philosophy.

When a *naturalistic* philosopher addresses himself to the philosophy of mind, he is apt to talk of language. Meanings are, first and foremost, meanings of language. Language is a social art which we all acquire on the evidence solely of other people's overt behaviour under publicly recognisable circumstances. Meanings, therefore, those very models of mental entities, end up as grist for the *behaviourist's* mill.<sup>17</sup>

After having characterised language in this way, Quine goes on to say that meanings, which are primarily meanings of linguistic expressions, must be construed in terms of behaviour. But, Quine argues, if meaning is primarily a property of behaviour, then we have to admit that there are no meanings, nor likenesses and distinctions in meanings, beyond what are implicit in people's dispositions to overt behaviour. What, according to Quine, results when we turn towards a naturalistic view of language and a behavioural view of meaning is that we give up the assurance of determinacy. The question whether two expressions are alike or unlike in meaning has no determinate answer except insofar as the answer is settled in principle by people's speech dispositions.

Having said this we can start our discussion of Quine's thesis of the indeterminacy of translation. Suppose a translator, for convenience take him to be an English speaker, is attempting to understand an unknown language, with no link to the language he is familiar with. To study how semantic facts are manifested in behaviour without any risk of relying

---

<sup>17</sup>Quine [1969a], pp. 26-7.

upon information which already embodies a semantic interpretation of the alien language, the translator,

(a) cannot appeal to dictionaries or existing partial translation manuals,

(b) cannot appeal to a partial translation into a third language for which translations into English already exists, and,

(c) cannot indulge in an historical study tracing common origin of English and the language to be translated.

Quine, it should be noted, discusses this special case of what he calls 'radical translation', 'translation of the language of a hitherto untouched people'.<sup>18</sup> According to Quine this is a fundamental case -- a case where, by abstracting from institutional frameworks involving both the linguist and the informant, we are free to focus exclusively upon the relation between physical facts and verbal behaviour. If this is the case then Quine thinks,

Manuals for translating one language into another can be set up in divergent ways, all compatible with the totality of speech dispositions, yet incompatible with one another.<sup>19</sup>

The above statement brings out the essence of Quine's indeterminacy thesis. A translation manual can be taken to be a function which maps expressions of one language onto the expressions of another language. Concerning the variety of translation manuals available, we usually regard one to be better than the others, because we believe that it gets right what is said in the language under translation, and also believe that there is such a thing as the correct translation of a language, etc. Quine's thesis questions all these claims. According to him, between any two languages there are likely to be many translation manuals, all of which are adequate<sup>20</sup>, yet which offer radically different translations of many sentences of that language.

---

<sup>18</sup>ibid, p.28.

<sup>19</sup>ibid, p.27.

<sup>20</sup>A translation manual, that is, a function which maps expressions of one language into expressions of another language, is said to be adequate, if the sentences which are the arguments and values of that function are semantically equivalent.

To understand the arguments put forward by Quine for his indeterminacy thesis, it is essential to be clear about some of Quine's general concerns. These may be clarified by pointing out what Quine is not concerned with.<sup>21</sup> In the first place, Quine, in his thesis of the indeterminacy of translation, is not offering a description of the actual experience and process of translation. He is aware that, as a matter of fact, translators don't encounter a huge number of manuals of translation which are incompatible with one another. Neither is he suggesting that translation is much harder (or easier) than we usually suppose it to be. He is not denying the fact that most of the time we come across a translation manual which is obviously the best and reasonably take other translators to agree with it. Nor is he making the obvious claim that the differences in nuances and tones make it impossible for any translation to be adequate. As Hookway points out, 'The problem runs deeper than that and concerns how we are to describe what occurs in translation.'<sup>22</sup> It is usually taken to be the case that it is an objective factual matter whether or not the meaning of an alien utterance is the same as the meaning of the utterance of an English sentence, and therefore, in the case of translating an alien utterance we come to discover this objective fact and translate the alien utterance accordingly so that it conforms to the objective fact of the matter. Quine challenges this assumption itself. The translator does not discover any fact of the matter about whether an alien utterance is synonymous to some utterance in English simply because there is no fact of the matter to be discovered.<sup>23</sup>

### 1.3. The Arguments for the Indeterminacy Thesis

#### 1.3.1. Preliminary Remarks

There are mainly two arguments advanced to establish the thesis of the indeterminacy of translation. They are, the argument from above based on the underdetermination of physical theory by observation and the

---

<sup>21</sup>See Hookway [1988], pp.128-9.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid, p.128.

<sup>23</sup>The thesis does not say that there may be a uniquely correct translation, but that we cannot get at it because our evidence is inadequate to settle the matter. Quine's scepticism is not of this kind -- what he says is that there is no such fact of the matter -- whether adequate or inadequate -- to settle the issue.

argument from below based on Quine's famous 'gavagai' example or inscrutability of reference. Quine clearly distinguishes these two elements in his thought about indeterminacy of translation in the following way,<sup>24</sup>

There are two ways of pressing the doctrine of indeterminacy of translation to maximise its scope. I can press from above and press from below, playing both ends against the middle. At the upper end there is the argument, early in the present paper<sup>25</sup>, which is meant to persuade anyone to recognise the indeterminacy of translation of such portions of natural science as he is willing to regard as underdetermined by all possible observations. If I can get people to see this empirical slack as affecting not just highly theoretical physics but fairly common-sense talk of bodies, then I can get them to concede indeterminacy of translation of fairly common-sense talk of bodies. This I call pressing from above.

By pressing from below I mean whatever arguments for indeterminacy of translation can be based on the inscrutability of terms.

So it seems that the fact about 'gavagai' and the fact about the empirically underdetermined character are two separate issues. Though it should be pointed out here that some philosophers, like Blackburn [1975], think that the argument from below is needed to bolster up the argument from above and therefore should not be treated separately. It does not seem, reading Quine, that he himself takes the relation to be so. We will follow him and try to develop the arguments separately.

Both the argument from above and the argument from below start from the same considerations. Quine takes the example of a radical translator where the language which is being translated into English is completely without any pre-existing aids to translation. The two considerations from which both the arguments start are, according to Quine, as follows:

---

<sup>24</sup>Quine (1970b), p.183.

<sup>25</sup>This argument is encapsulated in the doctrine of the underdetermination of physical theory.

As always in radical translation, the starting point is the equating of observation sentences of the two languages by an inductive equating of stimulus meanings. In order afterward to construe the foreigner's theoretical sentences we have to project analytical hypotheses, whose ultimate justification is substantially just that the implied observation sentences match up.<sup>26</sup>

So the first step in radical translation consists of translating a significant class of observation sentences. This is done by making inductively checkable guesses as to what the native's sign of assent and dissent are. In this way the radical translator correlates native utterances with sentences of his own having the same stimulus meaning.<sup>27</sup> The second step consists of going beyond observation sentences and gaining access to the rest of the native language by adopting certain analytical hypotheses<sup>28</sup>. It will become clear, from a detailed discussion of the arguments, how they diverge after starting from the same considerations. So let us pass on to the main arguments.

---

<sup>26</sup>Quine [1970b], p.179.

<sup>27</sup>A note about stimulus meaning and observation sentences. Stimulus meaning (either affirmative or negative) of a sentence S for a given speaker is the class of stimulations which would prompt assent to or dissent from S. Two sentences for a given speaker are stimulus synonymous when they are assented to in just the same circumstances for a given speaker. Observation sentences are a subset of the set of occasion sentences. An occasion sentence (like, 'It is snowing'), as opposed to a standing sentence (like, 'Snow is white' or '2+2=4'), is assented to on some occasions and not on others. An occasion sentence is an observation sentence if all speakers assent to it in response to the same stimulation. Quine's suggestion is that stimulus meaning of an observation sentence does full justice to its meaning. (See Quine [1960], pp.31-4).

<sup>28</sup>A note on analytical hypothesis. Unlike observation sentences, most of a person's utterances cannot be correlated with publicly observable situations. But in case of radical translation, where no translation is yet available, the translator needs to go beyond observation sentences. The strategy he follows is to dissect the unconstrued sentences into smaller parts and then hypothetically correlate them to words and phrases of his native tongue. These are called 'analytical hypothesis'. By means of these analytical hypotheses we construe analogies between those sentences that have been successfully translated and those which have not. As Quine says (See Quine [1960], p.70), 'The method of analytical hypotheses is a way of catapulting oneself into the jungle language by the momentum of the home language. It is a way of grafting exotic shoots onto the old familiar bush...'. In this subtle way the linguist superimposes his home language and conceptual scheme upon the foreign language in almost every act of translation, and it is here that translational indeterminacy becomes philosophically interesting.



### 1.3.2. The Argument from Above

Quine (1970b) remarks that philosophers wrongly take the 'gavagai' example as the ground for his doctrine of indeterminacy and hope, that by resolving the example, doubt can be cast on the doctrine itself. But 'the real ground is very different, broader and deeper.'<sup>29</sup> That is why we start our discussion with the argument from above. It should be noted that we are not, contrary to what Quine's remark suggests, assuming that the argument from below has a lesser value. It, in fact, seems to be a very important argument and will be discussed in full. The argument from above is based on the underdetermination of physical theory. The essential feature of underdetermination of a physical theory consists in the fact that a physical theory transcends all observational evidence, and hence, different competing physical theories can be developed from the same set of observational evidence. Quine argues for this in the following way:

Naturally it [i.e., a physical theory] is underdetermined by past evidence; a future observation can conflict with it. Naturally it is underdetermined by past and future evidence combined, since some observable event that conflicts with it can happen to go unobserved. Moreover, many people agree, far beyond all this, that physical theory is underdetermined even by all possible observations.... Theory can still vary though all possible observations be fixed. Physical theories can be at odds with each other and yet compatible with all possible data even in the broadest sense. In a word, they are logically incompatible and empirically equivalent.<sup>30</sup>

It should be noted that there is a basic difference between the third characterisation of underdetermination on the one hand, and the first two, on the other. In the first two characterisations Quine says that

---

<sup>29</sup>Quine [1970b], p.178.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid, p.179. A small note on the last two lines in this quotation may be made here. It seems to be one thing to say that two different theories might be empirically equivalent and another thing to say that two empirically equivalent theories might be logically incompatible. Quine seems to be making a further point here.

physical theories are, in fact, underdetermined -- they are either underdetermined by past observations because future observations could conflict with them, or underdetermined by both past and future observations because some conflicting observations may go unnoticed. Whereas in the third characterisation he makes the stronger claim that they are, in principle underdetermined. Quine's main assumption here is that physical theories are, at least to some extent, undetermined by all possible empirical evidence.

Having noted this underdetermined character of a physical theory, suppose we set up to translate a foreigner's physical theory from scratch. We begin by pairing observation sentences of the foreign physicist with ours, on the basis of identity of stimulus meaning, subject only to inductive uncertainty. In translating theoretical sentences of this foreign physicist we adopt some analytical hypothesis, the justification for which is that they deliver results consistent with all the evidence bearing on sameness of stimulus meaning of observation sentences we have already obtained. Quine thinks that it would now become clear what happens in radical translation of a radically foreign physicist's theory,

Insofar as the truth of a physical theory is underdetermined by observables the translation of the foreigner's physical theory is underdetermined by translations of his observation sentences. If our physical theory can vary though all possible observations be fixed, then our translation of his physical theory can vary though our translations of all possible observation reports on his part be fixed. Our translation of his observation sentences no more fixes our translation of his physical theory than our own possible observations fix our own physical theory.<sup>31</sup>

As Gibson points out,<sup>32</sup> Quine's argument for the indeterminacy of translation is directed towards those who already accept underdetermined character of physical theory. So we accept that a physical theory is

---

<sup>31</sup>Quine [1970b], p.180.

<sup>32</sup>See Gibson [1982], p.91.

undetermined insofar as observation by itself is insufficient to fix, in any unique way, the theoretical sentences of a theory. Now, when setting out to translate a physical theory, the linguist does so by translating the observation sentences of the theory, and this he does by equating stimulus meaning. To go beyond the observation sentences, he has to use the analytical hypothesis. However, the same old empirical slack<sup>33</sup>, as Quine puts it, arises at this level as well. The analytical hypotheses are themselves underdetermined by all possible observation, and the linguist could have chosen a different set of analytical hypotheses compatible with the observational evidences.

This, however is not the whole story, because Quine remarks,

The indeterminacy of translation is not just an instance of the empirically underdetermined character of physics. The point is not just that linguistics, being a part of behavioural science and hence ultimately of physics, shares the empirically underdetermined character of physics. On the contrary, the indeterminacy of translation is additional.<sup>34</sup>

Quine says that where we have two physical theories -- A and B -- compatible with all possible data, we may adopt A for ourselves and still remain free to translate the foreigner either as believing A or as believing B. Now our choice between the translations of A and B may be guided by simplicity. It might be that between the two translations one is simpler and more direct, involving less elaborate contextual paraphrases. If both A and B involve complicated and cumbersome translation rules, then another possibility might be to refrain from ascribing to the foreigner either A or B. What would happen in a case like this is to attribute to the foreigner a false physical theory which can be refuted, or some obscure physical theory, or hold that he has no coherent physical theory at all. It might, however, happen that A and B are both equally attributable.

---

<sup>33</sup>When a theory is said to have empirical slack it is methodologically underdetermined by observation, that is, observation by itself is insufficient for fixing, in any unique way, the theoretical sentences of a theory.

<sup>34</sup>Quine [1970b], p.180.

Nothing is there for us to decide between the two theories. In a situation of this kind, Quine says,

The question whether, ... the foreigner really believes A or believes rather B, is a question whose very significance I would put in doubt. This is what I am getting at in arguing for the indeterminacy of translation.<sup>35</sup>

Indeterminacy of translation, not just being an instance of the empirically underdetermined character of physics, should have properties which do not follow solely from the underdetermined character of physical theories, but from some other principles. Before specifying these additional principles, we might mention the respect in which translation is parallel to a physical theory by quoting Quine once again,

In respect of being under-determined by all possible data, translational synonymy and theoretical physics are indeed alike. The totality of possible observations of nature, made and unmade, is compatible with physical theories that are incompatible with one another. Correspondingly the totality of possible observations of verbal behavior, made and unmade, is compatible with systems of analytical hypotheses of translation that are incompatible with one another. Thus far the parallel holds.<sup>36</sup>

On the other hand, the additional principles on which indeterminacy of translation is based is Quine's naturalism and his adherence to scientific realism. Though there is a parallel between translation and physical theory, at a certain point this parallel breaks down. Being a scientific realist, Quine believes that all facts are physical facts and all explanations are physical explanations. Physical theory is the ultimate parameter, and despite its underdetermined character, the currently accepted physical theory serves as the last word regarding the truth of nature. In comparison, no manual of translation enjoys the status of ultimate

---

<sup>35</sup>Ibid, p.180-1.

<sup>36</sup>Quine [1969b], pp.302-3.

parameter. So while we can expect to settle questions like 'Are there electrons?' in science, we can never expect to settle questions like 'What does 'gavagai' really refer to?' in linguistics. Indeterminacy of translation is its infactuality. But science is the paradigm of facts. As Gibson says,

The former kind of question has a (physical) fact of the matter, by dint of physics being the court of last appeal; the latter kind of question has no (physical) fact of the matter because when all the (physical) facts are in, the question (i.e., the indeterminacy) remains unanswered. Translation, therefore, is indeterminate, for there is no fact of the matter for the translation to be right or wrong about.<sup>37</sup>

Quine's adherence to physicalism -- that is physical facts are all the facts -- plays an extremely important role in his indeterminacy thesis, and we will come back to this point later on in the discussion. According to Quine, the correctness of a translational manual is not determined by facts, facts here being physical facts. His claim, as Hookway points out, is that 'the only physical facts which could possibly be relevant to fixing the correctness of translational manuals are facts about stimulus meanings. ... He holds that a unique correct translation manual is not determined by facts about stimulus meaning. And he also holds that if a unique correct translation manual is not determined by facts about stimulus meanings, then neither is it determined by physical facts. Ordinary talk about synonymy and translation is not determined by physical facts, so it is not factual discourse.'<sup>38</sup>

### 1.3.3. The Argument from Below

In *Word and Object* Quine almost entirely concentrates on showing how indeterminacy can be derived from the argument from below involving the famous 'gavagai' example. In 'On the Reasons for Indeterminacy of Translation', he points out that the 'gavagai' example works as a direct example for inscrutability of terms, and not of indeterminacy of

---

<sup>37</sup>Gibson [1982], p.93.

<sup>38</sup>Hookway [1988], p.137.

translation as such. But it does have a very important, though indirect, bearing on the argument for indeterminacy of translation. According to Quine the 'gavagai' example is 'aimed not at proof but at helping the reader to reconcile the indeterminacy of translation imaginatively with the concrete reality of radical translation.'<sup>39</sup> By working as a concrete example of radical translation it helps in persuading us of the indeterminacy thesis. Let us now see how it proceeds.

As has already been mentioned, the first step in trying to translate an utterance of a wholly unknown foreign speaker into English consists of the linguist's observation of the agent speaking -- that is, a close observation of the overt behaviour of the speaker in a particular context of linguistic behaviour. Thus the most elementary step involved in translating the foreign language is the translation of the speaker's utterance associated with the present event that is conspicuous to the linguist and his subjects. The linguist experiences that whenever a rabbit scurries by, the foreign speaker utters 'gavagai'. So he notes down that 'rabbit' is the tentative translation of the utterance 'gavagai' in this unknown foreign language, but with the proviso that it is subject to future test.

The next step in the translation consists in testing whether the speaker assents to the utterance 'gavagai' when spoken by the linguist. This step is necessary for two reasons:

(a) There may be situations where the foreign subject could have said something, but in fact does not. It may very well happen that a rabbit runs by but the speaker does not utter the sentence 'gavagai'. The only way to find a solution to this difficulty for the linguist is to utter the sentence under consideration himself and see whether the native speaker assents to it or dissents from it;

(b) Furthermore, the linguist must be able to discriminate among terms that overlap in their reference, and he can do so only if he has settled on the native expressions of assent and dissent. For example, the linguist would have to discriminate between the foreign equivalence of 'rabbit'

---

<sup>39</sup>Quine[1970b], p.182.

(which is 'gavagai') and the foreign equivalence of the term 'animal'. So, on the basis of these observations the linguist makes a guess as to what is the assent and dissent behaviour of the native, and if any difficulty follows in his taking assent and dissent in the way he does, he may discard his first hypothesis and guess again.

Once the linguist decides on the native's expressions of assent and dissent, his next task is to equate observation sentences of the foreign language with observation sentences in English. This is done by learning to utter sounds in the foreign language sufficient to the task of querying a native speaker for assent or dissent under various stimulus conditions. Working inductively the linguist is able to make approximate identification of stimulus meanings. It is true that the linguist cannot directly compare his own stimulus meaning for some sentence of English with his subject's stimulus meaning for some sentence in the particular foreign language, but the linguist can learn that his subject is prepared to assent to or dissent from the query 'gavagai?' in the same public conditions where the linguist himself would be prepared to assent to or dissent from the query 'rabbit?'. So he concludes that the two stimulus meanings are approximately the same.

All these careful observations suggest that the stimulus meaning of the alien utterance 'gavagai' is the same as that of the English sentence 'rabbit' or 'there is a rabbit'. However, many other English sentences may have the same stimulus meaning as 'there is a rabbit'. We may list a few here:

- (a) This is an undetached part of a rabbit.
- (b) This is an instance of rabbithood.
- (c) This is a stage in the history of a rabbit.

The point to be noted is that all these sentences, although derived from different translation manuals, are compatible with all the facts about stimulus meaning which helps us in translating 'gavagai' as 'there is a rabbit'. The linguist may be reasonable enough to equate 'gavagai' with 'rabbit', but he will be mistaken if he thinks that the correlation of two

observation sentences fixes the reference of the term 'gavagai' uniquely. It may quite well be possible that instead of being a concrete general term, 'gavagai' is an abstract singular term referring to rabbithood, or even if it is a concrete general term, it may be one that is true not of rabbit but of undetached rabbit parts or rabbit stages. What this suggests is that meaning and reference are indeterminate on behavioural grounds, and to enquire beyond the possible behavioural evidence for a unique meaning or a unique reference is a mistake. So, we give up determinacy of meaning and we recognise that there is no fact of the matter regarding unique translation. That is, there are no unique meanings or unique referents of native expressions beyond what can be established on behavioural evidence.

It should be noted that Quine does not deny that a community of translators are more likely to have terms for rabbits rather than for parts of rabbits or, more unlikely, for stages in the history of rabbits. There may be supplementary arguments which will help us in narrowing down the choice among different candidate translations. But what he suggests is that they are really pragmatic reasons for preferring one manual over another without giving any reason for thinking it to be true. The choice between manuals of translation does not rest on any preference for the manual which is actually true, it is grounded in pragmatic considerations, and is not, if Quine's argument is right, settled by the observable data.

Now, in trying to decide whether we should equate 'gavagai' with 'undetached rabbit part' or 'rabbithood', the linguist might follow the technique of uttering 'gavagai' and at the same time pointing to an undetached rabbit part. But this technique of ostension is ineffective in deciding the issue because it so happens that in pointing to a part of rabbit the linguist points to the rabbit as well. The questions that the linguist is concerned with at this stage are two-fold: is the term 'gavagai' used to talk about an object at all, and if it is used to talk about an object, which object is it talking about? Quine believes that the facts about stimulus meaning do not give a determinate answer to either of these two questions. The only way for the linguist to start to settle these questions is by fixing the English equivalences of plural endings and pronouns, etc. of the language



under study -- only then can he ask questions like, 'is this gavagai the same as that one?' or 'Is there one gavagai or two?'. But while this method of translation is the best one could hope for, given the fact that all we have to go on is the individual utterance and its stimulus meaning, it is not sufficient for settling absolutely the indeterminacy between translating 'gavagai' as 'rabbit' or as 'undetached rabbit part', and as 'rabbithood', and so on. The reason for its not being sufficient is due to the fact that we can, by appropriately varying our analytical hypotheses about the translation of the native's plurals, identity predicates, etc., accommodate whatever answers they supply to the queries we put to them. Therefore, according to this thesis, it is possible to formulate alternative systems of analytical hypotheses all of which are compatible with the totality of speech dispositions of all concerned, and, at the same time, produce translations that are incompatible with one another. Quine admits that 'there is an obstacle to offering an actual example of two such rival systems of analytical hypotheses. Known languages are known through unique systems of analytical hypotheses established in tradition or painfully arrived at by a unique skilled linguist.<sup>40</sup> But he goes on to say,

...one has to reflect on the nature of possible data and the methods to appreciate the indeterminacy. Sentences translatable outright, translatable by independent evidence of stimulatory occasions, are sparse and must woefully underdetermine the analytical hypotheses on which the translation of all further sentences depends. To project such hypotheses beyond the independently translatable sentences at all is in effect to input our sense of linguistic analogy unverifiably to the native mind. Nor would the dictates even of our own sense of analogy tend to any intrinsic uniqueness; using what first comes to mind engenders an air of determinacy though freedom reigns. There can be no doubt that rival systems of analytical hypotheses can fit the totality of speech behaviour to perfection, and can fit the totality of dispositions to speech behaviour as well, and still specify

---

<sup>40</sup>Quine [1960], p.72.

mutually incompatible translations of countless sentences  
insusceptible to independent control.<sup>41</sup>

We can sum up the whole argument as follows. It is impossible, on behavioural grounds, to settle the meaning or reference of terms of a foreign language. We can depend on ostension to settle the stimulus meanings of observation sentences like, 'gavagai', but ostension can never tell us determinately that 'gavagai' and 'rabbit' are terms, and neither can it help in settling once and for all that they have the same meaning or that they are coextensive. Further, resorting to analytical hypotheses may settle these questions in a relative way, for it is quite possible that another linguist working independently may arrive at another system of analytical hypotheses having the consequence of equating 'gavagai' with an 'undetached rabbit part'. Both linguists can account for all the speech dispositions of the subject. But, by making different adjustments in their respective systems of analytical hypotheses, utilised in translating the grammatical particles and constructions they bear on reference, the two linguists can come up with manuals that differ in the ontologies they attribute to the subject. So the analytical hypotheses are not sacrosanct and there can be no useful sense to question what 'gavagai' really means -- there is no fact of the matter corresponding to the utterance.

#### **1.4. The Philosophical implications of the Indeterminacy Thesis**

Hookway [1988] discusses what consequences, about mind and meaning on the one hand, and reference and truth on the other, follow from the indeterminacy thesis.<sup>42</sup> Semantic notions which are intensional<sup>43</sup> -- such as synonymy and analyticity -- have no place in Quine's account of logic and philosophy of language. Our ordinary conception of mind is intensional, we explain human actions in terms of propositional attitudes like belief, desire etc. Our ordinary ways of describing and explaining mental events presuppose that they have propositional content, and we try to identify these propositional contents. There are two things on which

---

<sup>41</sup>Ibid, p.72.

<sup>42</sup>Hookway [1988], pp.139-45.

<sup>43</sup>Quine has no hesitation in using concepts which are properly extensional in logic and philosophy of language.

we rely on in doing this. On the one hand, we observe the external behaviour of the agent and try to guess what beliefs and desires they have. On the other hand, we attend to their verbal behaviour and treat their utterances as manifestations of their beliefs and desires. According to Quine's thesis of indeterminacy, the behavioural evidence never determinately fixes the contents of propositional attitudes. 'Verbal behaviour fixes the propositional contents of beliefs only relative to a translation manual. When we ascribe a belief to somebody, we specify its content by using a sentence: it is the belief that *there are rabbits in the garden*, or that *snow is white*. If that sentence does not express a determinate content, then we have not assigned a definite content to the belief through using it.'<sup>44</sup> The consequence of adhering to the indeterminacy thesis is that Quine rejects propositions, senses, and attributes. So there is no point in asking questions like, 'do these two sentences express one proposition or two?'. Propositional content, thus, being indeterminate, propositional attitudes have no place in the scientific study of mind and language<sup>45</sup>. The same argument he puts forward against intensional notions like necessity and possibility.

Indeterminacy of translation casts doubt not only on intensional concepts, it affects the way in which we think about the reference, truth and ontological commitment. The answer to the question, 'when the native utters 'gavagai' what is he talking about?', can be, according to Quine, rabbit, rabbit parts, rabbit stages, rabbithood, etc. As it is possible to construct adequate translation manuals, between which no possible evidence could decide, suggesting that the native may be talking about rabbit, rabbit parts, etc., there is no fact of the matter concerning which of them is correct. It should be pointed out that, although it is meaningless, in a Quinean framework, whether a term like 'gavagai' really refers, we can ask the question in a different but meaningful way. We can meaningfully ask this question only relative to a translation manual. Therefore, statements about the ontological commitment of theories will always be relative to a particular manual of translation.

---

<sup>44</sup>Hookway [1988], pp.139-40

<sup>45</sup>Scientific study of mind and language, according to Quine, is purely extensional as well, remaining faithful to the Watsonian behaviourist approach to mind.

This is a problem which not only affects radical translation, it affects the understanding of one speaker by another speaker of the same language. Suppose that one English speaker is trying to understand another English speaker. Quine's claim is that even in this case we are engaged in what may be called 'homophonic translation', so, when someone says 'there is a rabbit', we take him to mean exactly that and not that there is a rabbit-stage (or rabbit part or whatever) by translating the speaker's utterance onto his own idiolect. It is true that homophonic translation has a role in a case of domestic understanding to which nothing corresponds in radical translation -- the basic words and phrases of our mother tongue are learned by imitating our elders and it is here that homophonic translation becomes useful. But this special role is not to be explained by saying that, in the homophonic case, we uniquely capture the fact of the matter corresponding to what our fellow speaker says. So Quine's claim is much stronger than it appears. As Hookway says, 'Reflection should make clear that Quine denies that even what I say has any determinate meaning for me: the ontological commitments of my own assertions are inscrutable to me. I can systematically reinterpret my own utterances and conclude that 'rabbit' in my mouth is true of rabbit parts or stages. The conclusion is that there is no fact of the matter about the ontological commitments of any sentences of theory.'<sup>46</sup> So if Quine's indeterminacy thesis is correct, then there is no objective fact of the matter whether a sentence (this includes sentences involving perfectly ordinary terms and not just vague ones) is true or false, other than relative to a particular manual of translation.

### 1.5. The Indeterminacy Thesis Evaluated

This is, in brief, Quine's thesis for the indeterminacy of translation and the philosophical implications it has. By arguing for the indeterminacy thesis Quine questions the basic semantic concepts, like, reference, meaning, propositions and rejects that our verbal behaviour can have any psychological explanation. As Hookway remarks, 'It will be evident that it<sup>47</sup> leaves intact very little of our familiar concept of mind

---

<sup>46</sup>Hookway [1988], p142.

<sup>47</sup>that is, the indeterminacy thesis.

and undermines most of the traditional aspirations of philosophy. We are left with an impoverished, highly naturalistic vocabulary for describing and explaining human practices, including the search for knowledge.'

Overwhelmed by this attack philosophers have tried to disprove it on various grounds. This has given birth to a huge literature, trying to show where Quine might have gone wrong. We are concerned with propositions -- that which two synonymous declarative sentences (either they be of the same language or of different languages) have in common, which is commonly known as meaning, which our translations try to preserve and which constitutes the object of propositional attitudes like, belief. By casting doubt on determinate translation Quine casts doubt on determinate meaning (a determinate meaning fact) that two sentences of the above kind are taken to have in common.

In order to see what are the debatable aspects of Quine's position, it may be worthwhile to start the discussion by considering some of the objections raised by Evans in his paper 'Identity and Predication' [1985]. Evans starts by pointing out the difference between a translational manual and a theory of meaning. A translation manual is nothing but a mapping from expressions to expressions. So it tell us that

'Snow' is the English translation of German 'Schnee'.

The main purpose of providing a translation manual is to help us in arriving, for each sentence of the language under study, at a quoted sentence of another language having the same meaning. The translation manual has a limited capacity. It tells us which pairs of expressions have the same meaning, but not what their meaning is. For many philosophers theory of meaning, on the other hand, aspires to offer more than this. For them, it should explain the meanings of expressions by showing how they relate to the world. So, a theory of meaning, for each expression of the language under study, would provide a statement of what it means, a statement like the following:

'Schnee' in German means snow.

The most important difference between a theory of meaning and a translation manual is that the former is an explanatory theory (explaining how the meanings of sentences depend upon the semantic properties of their parts) while the latter is not. Being explanatory in nature, 'it is hoped that the construction of theory of this sort, which will do justice to the complexity of natural language, will provide revealing insights into the underlying logical structure of our language and into our ontological commitments'.<sup>48</sup> The demand that a theory of meaning provides a good explanation of semantic competence will rule out those theories which entails that the aliens are talking of rabbit stages or undetached rabbit parts.

According to Evans, Quine's arguments can be regarded as philosophically important only if they point towards an indeterminacy in the theory of meaning. Evans thinks that it does not do so. The particular argument that Evans wants to attack is as follows:

Some expressions that divide their reference differently ('rabbit', 'rabbit stage', 'rabbit part') and some expressions that do not divide their reference at all ('rabbithood', 'the rabbit fusion', 'rabbitheth') have incontestably the same stimulus meaning when used in one-word sentences.<sup>49</sup>

As Hookway points out,<sup>50</sup> Evans relies upon two claims in criticising Quine's arguments. The first, which we have already mentioned, is that constructing a theory of meaning is a more deeper and fundamental enquiry, and that a translation manual should be answerable to the kind of facts uncovered by theories of meaning. Secondly, in constructing a theory of meaning we should choose theories that are 'natural' on the grounds that they provide better explanation of verbal behaviour. And the theory which provides a better explanation is true as the explanatory power is the indication of truth.

Before explaining what Evans means by a natural theory of meaning, a few remarks about the form of such a theory needs to be made.

---

<sup>48</sup>Hookway [1988], p.153.

<sup>49</sup>ibid, p.27.

<sup>50</sup>ibid, pp.155-6.

In giving a theory of meaning of an alien language, we have to see that the theory gets, 1. the truth-conditions of the sentences right, and, 2. it explains the psychology underlying verbal behaviour. Now, let us suppose that we have the following two axioms for the alien predicate H:

1.  $(x)(x \text{ satisfies } H \text{ if and only if } H \text{ is a rabbit})$
2.  $(x)(x \text{ satisfies } H \text{ if and only if } H \text{ is an undetached rabbit part})$

Now, to prove the indeterminacy in the theory of meaning, we have to establish the truth of the claim if there is an adequate theory incorporating 1. then there will another such theory incorporating 2, which is cognitively equivalent to 1. Evans point is that this cannot be established because use of the second axiom will leave us unable to give a correct account of the truth conditions of some complex sentences in which H occurs. Take another predicate W, for white. Then we will have the following complex axioms for W and H thus

- 1'.  $(x)(x \text{ satisfies } W \wedge H \text{ if and only if } x \text{ is a white rabbit})$
- 2'.  $(x)(x \text{ satisfies } W \wedge H \text{ if and only if } x \text{ is a white undetached part of rabbit}).$

But 2' gets the stimulus meaning wrong as it allows  $W \wedge H$  to be satisfied by a white foot on an otherwise brown rabbit.<sup>51</sup> So it seems that the axiom for W must be

3.  $(x)(x \text{ satisfies } W \text{ if and only if } x \text{ is a part of a white animal}).$

However, that would prevent us from making good sense of statements about white pieces of paper or white handkerchief. Here someone might come up with a suggestion which appears to be quite ad hoc. The axiom for W might be construed in a complicated way so that this problem may be avoided:

---

<sup>51</sup>It seems that different parts of the same rabbit and also a rabbit and its part are indistinguishable by the predicate 'white' of the language. This is surely an absurd consequence.

- 3'. (x)(x satisfies W if and only if, either  
    (a) W occurs together with H and is part of a white  
        animal, or  
    (b) W occurs in some other context and x is white).

Therefore, we see that the above kind of manoeuvre may be employed to overcome the difficulty raised against the Quinean proposal. Now, the important point is that, we shall obviously prefer a theory which involves a simpler axiom, like,

(x)(x satisfies W if and only if x is white)

Now the crucial question revolves around the ground for such preference. Are the grounds for choosing a theory incorporating a simpler axiom factual or are they pragmatic? And the main difference between Quine and Evans lies in the contrasting responses to this question. Quine would agree that it is better to prefer a natural theory to an *ad hoc* one. But he would not attach any cognitive significance to this judgement. 'The different approaches fit the *fact* equally well. The preferred choices are justified on pragmatic grounds.'<sup>52</sup>

What, for Evans, is a natural theory of meaning? -- A natural theory, in the first place, being a theory of meaning, points towards a system of dispositions which provide psychological explanation of linguistic behaviour. The natural theory hypothesises a single dispositional state underlying all the uses of a particular term, while the more ad hoc one theories hypothesis varied dispositional states to explain all underlying uses of the term. Therefore, 'if that is correct, we can choose between the two theories by noting which provides the best explanation of the subject's linguistic behaviour and which fits best into all other things we know about his psychology. For example, if we find that initial training in how to use W equips an alien child to do it in all contexts -- there is no need for separate training in how to use the term in connection with rabbit stages and how to use it for other purposes -- then we shall conclude that the natural theory will fit best into a general psychological theory

---

<sup>52</sup>Hookway [1988], p.156.



which accounts for language learning and colour perception in a satisfactory way.<sup>53</sup>

The reason why Quine's argument does not follow this line may be that he does not think that a translation manual or a theory of meaning should give a satisfying psychological explanation of the speaker's verbal behaviour. It is sufficient that it describes their verbal dispositions. As Hookway remarks, 'Some of Quine's suggested translations lead us to attribute desires and beliefs to people which are psychologically absurd.'<sup>54</sup>If a translational manual leads us to regard that 'gavagai' refers to undetached rabbit part and not to rabbits, then we have to say that they are perceptually sensitive to undetached rabbit parts and not to rabbit, they want an undetached rabbit part rather than rabbits, and ascribe to the agent a whole lot of other very curious psychology. In choosing a translation manual we should be guided by a network of considerations -- our understanding of human perceptual capacities, the nature of human desire, psychology of reasoning and deliberation as well as sociological and anthropological information. Quine seems to be ignoring them altogether. As Evans sums up about Quine's analytical hypothesis, where the actual indeterminacy crops up:

..., the novel theories cut the referent of 'rabbit' either coarse or finer than it is cut in the orthodox theory. The coarser theories appear not to work at all. The finer theories have a better chance of working, but involve attributing to the speakers of the language unwarranted dispositions.<sup>55</sup>

The reason why Quine does not accept Evans's point that cognitive psychology and semantic theory have explanatory autonomy can be traced back to his adherence to physicalism. Adherence to physicalism underlies both the argument from above as well as the argument from below. There are several strands to his physicalism. Physical facts are all the facts and all explanations are physical explanation. Physics is the paradigm of scientific enquiry. Science other than physics do not provide autonomous

---

<sup>53</sup>Ibid, p.157.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid, p.158.

<sup>55</sup>Evans, p.47.

explanation, or study distinctive feature of reality. Being a realist about physical theory Quine accepts that there are physical facts of the matter about which physical statements are true. Quine, in this respect is very close to the traditional behaviourists. As Hookway remarks,<sup>56</sup> Quine's position can be viewed as a combination of two claims: 1. the metaphysical assumptions of the traditional behaviourism are unassailable, and, 2. the behaviouristic outlook cannot do justice to the kind of discourse about meaning and the mind which are familiar from ordinary language and the work of cognitive psychologists. So cognitive psychology should be banished and ordinary language should be replaced by a suitably regimented form of discourse for purposes of scientific understanding. 'Full coverage' is the business of physics. No change takes place in this world without some redistribution of physical states.

One cannot but feel acute uneasiness to this Quinean position. It seems that Quine has a very narrow vision about philosophy. Quine may have been aware of this fact and has made initial attempts explain our ordinary practises of using concepts like belief or necessity. But he is always hampered by his working within the physicalistic framework. What Quine misses may be constitutive of human experience. Furthermore, as Hookway asks, 'why should we take the point about 'full coverage' to show that the physical fact exhaust all the facts at all?'<sup>57</sup> That all changes involve physical changes does not entail that all facts are physical facts.

If, again, as the argument from above requires, underdetermination of physical theory is compatible with realism about physical theory, why can't we say that underdetermination of translation theory is compatible with realism about them? Why can't we say that there is a fact of the matter about which either of a pair of rival translation scheme is correct? If we say that the intrusion of pragmatic considerations in deciding which of the two rival translation schemes is sufficient for the conclusion that there is, in general, no fact of the matter, why isn't the parallel intrusion of pragmatic considerations in deciding between two rival physical

---

<sup>56</sup>Hookway, p.160.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid, p.214.

theories enough to ensure that there is no fact of the matter either? Quine's answer may be that though a translation theory is parallel, it is additional. But the fact remains that it is parallel. The logical possibility of alternative interpretation of meaning cannot possibly feature in an attack on the concept of meaning in the way Quine thinks it does. As Blackburn<sup>58</sup> points out,

... if the logical possibility of choice about meaning in the face of evidence were taken to discredit that concept, then the logical possibility of choice about almost anything in the face of evidence would discredit virtually all concepts. In particular there would be an exact parallelism with the concepts of physical science, where most philosophers, but especially Quine, believes that there is not logically conclusive evidence for the truth of theories containing them

Quine might say that we do not need semantic concepts as much as we need scientific concepts. But this kind of pragmatism itself seems to be too narrow. The task of a current physical theory is to seek a correct description of what are taken to be facts behind the appearance of things. In a similar way, one can say that a current theory of translation wants to describe and explain facts about linguistic behaviour. And a linguistic behaviour involves much more than what Quine's thesis of the indeterminacy of translation takes it to involve. As Simon Blackburn says,

It is difficult to imagine a more valuable intellectual goal than removal of the fear that there is no fact of the matter which explains and interprets the human signs which are such an important component of everyone's experience.<sup>59</sup>

Therefore, it seems that Quine's arguments for the indeterminacy thesis are based on the assumption that physical facts are all the facts. In this section we question this assumption, and by so doing cast doubt on the

---

<sup>58</sup>Blackburn [1975], p.196.

<sup>59</sup>ibid, p.197

arguments. We try to show that meaning facts or semantic concepts play a very important role in the understanding of human behaviour and language, and realism about meaning facts is unavoidable. If it is essential to admit meaning facts over and above physical facts, then we have to admit propositions. Once we admit propositions, we can take them to be objects of propositional attitudes. Hence, for now we can leave aside the initial challenge posed by Quine's indeterminacy thesis against propositions and move on to our discussion of propositional attitudes themselves.

## CHAPTER 2

### *De Re Thoughts*

Bertrand Russell starts his essay 'On Propositions: what they are and how they mean' by saying '*A Proposition may be defined as: What we believe when we believe truly or falsely*'. Among the many uses that the notion of proposition is traditionally taken to have, Russell's definition brings out one of its most important. After defining the notion of proposition in this way, Russell goes on to say 'In order to arrive, from the definition at an account of what proposition is, we must decide what belief is ...'<sup>60</sup>. That is exactly what we want to do in this chapter. Our discussion will follow two distinct stages. In the first stage, to decide on what belief as a paradigmatic case of propositional attitude is,<sup>61</sup> we will try to understand its nature by motivating the distinction between two kinds of belief -- the *de re* and the *de dicto* belief. It should be noted that interest in the *de re/de dicto* distinction is not something new. The distinction was first applied to modal contexts, and then extended generally to attitude (and more specifically to epistemic) contexts. The intuitive idea behind the distinction was that besides the class of *de dicto* beliefs, which are individuated by their content and mode, there is a class of beliefs which are essentially about objects.

In spite of its widespread use, important questions have been raised concerning the very distinction itself -- particularly concerning the existence of *de re* beliefs. Opposition to the distinction has taken various

---

<sup>60</sup>Russell [1956], p.285.

<sup>61</sup>Note that the discussion which is to follow will concentrate mainly on examples of belief-ascribing sentences. In the philosophical literature on propositional attitudes, philosophers very often concentrate on discussing belief and belief-reports. The reason may be that many (of course not all) other propositional attitudes can be said to involve belief in some way (e.g. my intention to have an ice-cream involves my belief that I can have an ice-cream) and the 'that'-clause in all the other cases can be given a reading uniform to the one in the case of belief-ascription. Therefore what is true of belief could be regarded as true of other propositional attitudes as well. We are not committing ourselves to this position, but as it is true that belief is the paradigm of propositional attitudes, and as there seems to be no reason why it should not be taken to be a typical example of a propositional attitude, it is convenient to concentrate our discussion on belief-ascribing sentences to bring out the general features of sentences which ascribe propositional attitudes.

forms. Some philosophers have claimed that there may be a distinction to be drawn at the level of belief reports, but this distinction does not correspond to any distinction at the level of beliefs themselves. Another line of attack consists in reducing *de re* beliefs to *de dicto* beliefs, and claiming that *de re* beliefs are really a species of *de dicto* beliefs. Simply saying that *de re* beliefs are a special case of *de dicto* beliefs because the former can be reduced to the latter, however, does not necessarily imply that they are the same. In the second stage, we will try to show that there is a genuine distinction at the level of the beliefs themselves. The reason for admitting *de re* beliefs is based on the very nature of our thoughts about the world.

## 2.1. The Distinction between *De Re* and *De Dicto* Beliefs

### 2.1.1. Preliminary Remarks

The orthodox distinction may be set up in a very simple way: belief *de dicto* is a belief that a certain dictum (or a proposition) is true, whereas belief *de re* is about a particular *res* (or an individual) that has a certain property. In this sense, we can say, following Woodfield<sup>62</sup>, that a *de re* belief can initially be taken to have two features:

- (a) It is about an object.
- (b) It is tied to objects constitutively.

The second feature really suggests that the thought could not exist without the object existing, because, to individuate the thought, it seems essential to individuate an object. It should be noted that there is a difference between the orthodox way and our way of understanding the *de re/de dicto* distinction. According to the standard way of explaining the distinction we allude to here, in a *de dicto* belief the thinker has a belief in a proposition, but does not in the case of a *de re* belief. What we are trying to defend here, however, is that even in a *de re* belief context the belief is in a proposition -- a singular proposition, which has as its essential constituent an object and a property. So even if the discussion may

---

<sup>62</sup>Woodfield [1982], p.1.

sometimes suggest that *de re* beliefs have non-propositional content, it really means that they do not have as their contents propositions in the Fregean sense. This terminological point is brought out by McDowell [1984]. According to him, in the case of a *de re* attribution one should recognise a 'Russellian proposition'. As he says, 'It would be a merely terminological question whether one should say that there are no propositions but "complete" ones, so that *de re* attributions involve no propositions; or whether in connection with *de re* attributions one should recognise propositions of a different kind: "Russellian propositions" ...'<sup>63</sup>.

A widely held view among philosophers<sup>64</sup> is that all beliefs are *de dicto*. The support comes from Frege's arguments for admitting a thought or a sense of a sentence to be the content of a propositional attitude -- like belief. Philosophers who adhere to this view think that if the thought or the sense of a sentence is the content of belief, any correct ascription of belief would involve a complete specification of the thought, that is, specification of the sense without any specification of the reference of the constituent expressions, and so the belief has to be a *de dicto* belief. In the case of a singular belief, expressible by a sentence like, 'Tom believes that Cicero is a Roman orator', the Fregean view, in one of its interpretations, has to be supported by the idea that knowledge of a particular object is essentially indirect, because even the so-called referring expressions require the mediation of sense to determine the reference. The relation between thought and object is also indirect. In dealing with names which do not have any reference, a Fregean would say,

... the sense of a name, if expressible otherwise than by the name itself is expressible by a definite description. Definite descriptions are taken to have whatever sense they have independently of whether or not objects answer to them. Thus a name without a bearer could, in Frege's view, have a sense in exactly the same way as the name with a bearer.<sup>65</sup>

---

<sup>63</sup>See McDowell [1984], p.99.

<sup>64</sup>See, for example, Searle [1983] and Sosa [1970]. Crimmins [1992] expresses his reservations against *de re* beliefs.

<sup>65</sup>McDowell [1977], p.172.

If this is the case, then whether the object exists or not would be merely incidental to the availability of the thought. One who is against *de re* propositional attitudes is committed to this view, and thus would claim that there is no need to specify beliefs in terms of objects, in fact, a correct specification of belief should be made in terms of the specification of the complete thought.

A non-Fregean may, at this point, argue that whether a name has a bearer or not does make a difference as to the ascription of belief containing that name. So McDowell says,

A sincere assertive utterance of a sentence containing a name with a bearer can be understood as expressing a belief correctly describable as a belief, concerning the bearer, that it satisfies some specified condition. If the name has no bearer (in the interpreter's view), he cannot describe any suitably related belief in that transparent style. He can indeed gather from the utterance, that the subject believes himself to be expressing such a belief by his words. That might make the subject's behaviour, in speaking as he does, perfectly intelligible; but in a way quite different from the way in which, in the first kind of case, the belief expressed makes the behaviour intelligible.<sup>66</sup>

So, in cases where the name occurring within a belief context has a reference, it seems essential to specify the belief in terms of the object in question. When someone sincerely and assertively utters a sentence containing a proper name, one does not mean to be expressing a belief whose availability to be expressed is indifferent to the existence, or otherwise, of the bearer of that name.

Here, one may take up the first line of attack mentioned at the very beginning and argue that the *de re/de dicto* distinction is a genuine one at the level of belief ascription but not at the level of belief itself. When we give a *de re* report of a belief, that is, just specifying the object about which

---

<sup>66</sup>Ibid, pp.172-73.



the reported thinker has her belief, we are doing so because we do not want to commit ourselves to a claim about the way in which the reported thinker thinks of the object of her belief. The general distinction is a distinction between a belief report where the modes of presentation associated with expressions used in the report are intended to match the modes of presentation the believer uses in having that particular belief (this being the case of a *de dicto* belief report), and, on the other hand, a belief report where the intention is merely that the reference is preserved (this being the case of a *de re* belief report). But this distinction within belief reports cannot be extended to belief itself. To counter this argument we need to show that there are some genuine *de re* beliefs. The discussion which follows will try to do this. By taking clues from Gareth Evans's arguments for singular/Russellian thoughts, we will try to establish that some beliefs themselves are to be characterised as *de re*.

These are all preliminary remarks. But one thing that they seem to suggest is that the *de re/de dicto* distinction is not as unproblematic as it appears. Most philosophers are doubtful about the *de re* side of the distinction. So it seems essential to see why, if at all, this distinction is needed, what is the motivation for admitting a class of beliefs which are *de re* over and above the *de dicto* beliefs.

### 2.1.2. Quine and *De Re* Beliefs

One motivation for distinguishing between *de re* and *de dicto* beliefs comes from considerations of Quine's distinction between notional and relational senses of belief, or, as has been indicated in the Introduction, his distinction between transparent and opaque contexts and the problem of substitution in these contexts.<sup>67</sup> We have already mentioned, sentences reporting beliefs and other propositional attitudes, according to Quine, are ambiguous. They may have either a transparent reading or an opaque reading. The two sentences 'There is someone whom Ralph believes to be a spy' and 'Ralph believes there are spies' may both be ambiguously expressed by the sentence, 'Ralph believes that someone is a spy'. But the distinction between the two sentences is vast. In one case there is a

---

<sup>67</sup>See Quine [1960], pp.138-56, 166-70, pp.206-16, and [1966], pp.185-96.

particular man whom Ralph has in mind, and believes of him that he is a spy. In the other case Ralph is just like one of us who believes that there are spies without having the belief about any particular individual. Let us take another example. Suppose that there is a particular spy Holmes suspects of being a murderer, while Watson suspects only that there is a spy who is a murderer. Quine thinks that there is an essential difference between Holmes's belief and Watson's belief. Watson is inclined to believe the proposition that at least one spy is a murderer. But Holmes does more: he suspects about a particular spy that he is a murderer. So Holmes's belief, being about a particular individual, is *de re* and may be reported as 'Of A, who is a spy, Holmes believes that A is a murderer', while Watson's belief is *de dicto*, and his belief may be reported as 'Watson believes that a spy is a murderer'. This seems to suggest that a subject does sometimes have a belief which is essentially about an object and thus, is *de re*.

According to Quine the test which really helps us in identifying a belief to be of a particular kind is the test of substitutivity of co-referential singular terms. For example, suppose Ralph believes *de re* that Ortcutt is a spy. Then we can characterise Ralph's attitude by substituting any correct description of Ortcutt, like 'the man in the brown coat', regardless of whether Ralph could or would describe Ortcutt in that way. The intuition seems to be that our ascription relates Ralph to the individual in such a way that the particular description or conception that Ralph would use to represent Ortcutt plays no role in this sort of ascription. A belief ascription is *de dicto*, if at every place in the content clause, substitution of co-referring expressions fails.

Burge [1977] has tried to show that the Quinean criterion of substitutivity does not adequately draw the *de re/de dicto* distinction. In some cases (when, say, Tom is acquainted with the man in direct perception) we may attribute to Tom a belief like, 'Tom believes that the man in the brown coat is a spy', and may refuse unlimited substitution of terms denoting the man on the ground that Tom's belief involves thinking of the person as the man in the brown coat, and not, say, as the man who killed Smith. We may attempt to answer Burge here in the

following way. The criterion of substitutivity, as used by Quine, is a criterion for distinguishing between *de re* and *de dicto* belief-reports. *De re* belief reports, which presumably satisfy the criterion of substitutivity, are not complete. They are not complete in the sense that the report leaves one in the dark as to how the reported believer thinks of the object of his belief. But that does not mean that in a particular context they are not correct. Incompleteness of a belief-report should not be confused with the report being non-truth-preserving -- and this is the confusion that Burge seems to be making here.

Let us try to explain this with the help of an example. Suppose, Tom wants to tell me how his friend Ralph got into an argument with my sister at a party, and says,

Ralph thinks that your sister is rude.

However, it happens that Ralph himself does not know that the person with whom he got into this argument is my sister (he knows my sister by descriptions which he gathered by immediate social interaction with her at the party). The report is not a complete guide to Ralph's thought, but it is, nonetheless, correct. Tom could have used any other familiar description of my sister, and the report would have been correct. Contrary to what Burge says, co-referential expressions may be substituted in a correct *de re* belief report *salva veritate*, and Burge confuses the fact that such substitutions may result in belief reports which leave out information about how the believer being reported thinks of the object with the report's being non-truth preserving. So, it seems, that a Quinean substitutivity criterion can be applied to bring out a significant distinction between *de re* and *de dicto* belief reports, where the former is correct, and the latter is complete. *De re* belief reports are correct in the sense that in a report of this kind substitution of co-referential names do not fail to preserve truth. But in case of a *de dicto report*, we aim at completeness, that is, we want to report how the believer thinks of the object. When a report aims at being a complete guide to the believer's thought, substitution of co-referential names results in false reports. Therefore,

there does seem to be a way of using Quinean criterion of substitutivity to bring out a distinction between *de re* and *de dicto* ascriptions of beliefs.

### 2.1.3. Burge and *De Re* Belief

Apart from Quine's logical basis for distinguishing between *de re* and *de dicto* beliefs, Burge [1977] brings out an epistemic basis for distinguishing between these two kinds of beliefs. From an epistemic point of view a *de dicto* belief is

a belief that is fully conceptualised. That is, a correct ascription of the *de dicto* belief identifies it purely by reference to a 'content' all of whose semantically relevant components characterise elements in the believer's conceptual repertoire.<sup>68</sup>

For example, suppose Alfred believes that the most powerful man on earth in 1995 is a crook, without knowing who this particular man is. As Alfred's epistemic state depends completely on concepts in his repertoire, and not on his relation to a particular individual, his belief is *de dicto*.

In characterising *de re* beliefs as opposed to *de dicto* ones, Burge writes,

A *de re* belief is a belief whose correct ascription places the believer in an appropriate non-conceptual, contextual relation to objects the belief is about. The term non-conceptual does not imply that no concepts or other mental notions enter into a full statement of the relation. Indeed, the relation may well hold between the object and concepts, or their acquisition or use. The crucial point is that the relation not be merely that of the concepts' being concepts of the object -- concepts that denote or apply to it.<sup>69</sup>

---

<sup>68</sup>Burge [1977], pp.345-46.

<sup>69</sup>ibid, p.346.

What Burge seems to be saying here is that in a *de re* belief the subject is related to the object in a non-conceptual way. This does not mean that the subject's way of individuating an object is purely non-conceptual. Most of the time, perhaps always, the subject's thought about an object does involve some concept of the object. The point is that the object of a belief of this sort is not determined by the concepts which apply to it, but by some contextual relations between the subject and the object -- the believer's relation to the relevant object of belief is not merely that he conceives of it or otherwise represents it. This is often the case where the subject perceives the object. We can explain this point with the help of Burge's example. Suppose we see a man coming from a distance in the fog. We may believe about him that he is wearing a red cap. But it might very well be the case that we do not see the man well enough to describe him in such a way that we are able to individuate him fully. There is no purely conceptual means for individuating the object of our thought. According to Burge these are cases where the requirement of denotation in addition to the causal or contextual connection with the object of thought remains unfulfilled. The requirement of denotation is the requirement that the subject has some purely conceptual, non-contextual means of individuating the object of his or her thought. This requirement can be further explained by showing that it is a stricter requirement than is needed to understand cases of the above kind. Philosophers, for example Kaplan, who take *de re* belief to be a species of *de dicto* belief, contend that a singular term within a belief report can be said to represent an object if that name denotes the object. But for the name to denote in this way, that is, in a way which would help in showing that *de re* belief is only a species of *de dicto* belief, the name must pick out or individuate the object in a context-independent way. However, in our perception of a man coming from a distance in the fog and in having subsequent thoughts about him, we do not seem to have a purely conceptual means of individuating the object (or the individual), that the thought is a thought of. We may be able to pick out the man ostensibly with the help of a description that is available in this context (like, 'the man out there'). But there seems to be no reason to hold that we can always conceptualise the entities we rely on in our demonstration. Therefore,

These considerations indicate that there will often be no term or individual concept in the believer's set of beliefs about the relevant object which *denotes* the object. This is not to deny that the believer always has some mental or semantical instrument for picking out the object -- a set of concepts, a perceptual image, a demonstrative. But whatever means the individual has depends for its success partly but irreducibly on factors unique to the context of the encounter with the object, and not part of the mental or linguistic repertoire of the believer.<sup>70</sup>

So Burge's claim is that sometimes one's way of thinking about the object depends ultimately on one or other demonstrative or contextual factors. That is why we can have a *de re* thought about the man seen in the fog, and believe of him that he is wearing a red cap. Therefore *de re* thoughts are thoughts in which the relationship between the subject and the object is not just the application of concepts; the relationship between them is determined by the causal and contextual factors which connect them. If the relationship between the thinker and the object of thought is determined by a direct contextual relation of the above kind, then it seems to follow that the thinker's *de re* thoughts of this kind are essentially directed towards the object.

Burge takes a further step and argues that a *de re* belief is in some important ways more fundamental than a *de dicto* belief. He tries to argue for this in two ways. First, he tries to show that if an entity lacks *de re* propositional attitudes we cannot attribute to it the use or understanding of language. As Burge rightly points out, the first sentences that children actually use or understand are invariably related to their immediate and perceptually accessible environment. And so the attitudes accompanying such assertions are *de re*. An obvious objection to this view may be that, from the fact that our understanding of language necessarily involves indexical elements, it does not follow that understanding of language in general is of this kind. We can think of some other organisms or robots which are programmed in such a way that they are able to understand

---

<sup>70</sup>Burge [1977], p.352.

indexical-free languages. This objection, according to Burge, is misguided. Machines that are programmed to use indexical-free languages cannot be said to understand or use languages autonomously. For them manipulations of symbols are nothing more than mechanical or purely syntactic activities. To indicate the fact that symbols have some semantical or extra-linguistic significance they must be able, at least sometimes, to correlate symbols with which they symbolise -- correlate either through some non-linguistic or through some linguistic activities, or by a combination of both of them. When someone says that she wants a piece of cake, you might go and get it from the fridge, or tell her 'there's a piece of cake in the fridge', or do both -- that is utter those words and at the same time get the cake from the fridge. The case with subjects who are said to have propositional attitudes is similar. In having a propositional attitude, the subject must ultimately indicate some ability to correlate his thoughts with objects that those thoughts are thoughts of. Failure to do so would indicate that there is no adequate ground for attributing an understanding of language. And any propositional attitude accompanying such understanding of language must necessarily involve *de re* attitudes.

Apart from this argument from the understanding of languages, Burge tries to show that evidence or justification for purely *de dicto* empirical beliefs depend on support from some *de re* belief or other. He<sup>71</sup> says,

Consider our purely *de dicto* empirical beliefs, where all such beliefs in singular form are nonindexical and where the definite descriptions can be used attributively, ... Taken by themselves, these beliefs are clearly lacking in evidential support. The attributively intended singular beliefs have the force of 'the F, whatever object that is, is G'. Justification for the belief that there is an F or that it is G requires some more specific identification. ... Many of our *de dicto* beliefs are justified because they are based on authoritative hearsay from others. But then, at a minimum, the 'others' must have

---

<sup>71</sup>ibid, p.349.

some *de re* belief in order to ground their authority on the subject.

So even a purely *de dicto* empirical belief is based on some *de re* beliefs, and in this sense *de re* beliefs have a primacy over *de dicto* beliefs.

*De re* beliefs then are beliefs which are essentially object-directed. What the subject is thinking about is determined by immediate contextual connection and the subject's relation to the object is not just the application of concepts.

## 2.2. The Motivation for Admitting Irreducibly *De Re* Beliefs

What motivates philosophers to admit a class of beliefs which are irreducibly *de re*? We can begin by considering Quine once again. There are two insights involved in Quine's notional and relational senses of belief which are important and should be highlighted at this point. Firstly, there really seems to be a class of beliefs irreducibly about objects. That means that there are beliefs which relate the believer to an object, so when we say 'Tom believes that Cicero is a Roman', it is not only a fact about Tom (under the circumstances it is a fact about Cicero as well), it is a fact about Cicero that Tom believes him to be a Roman. Hence, the belief state intrinsically is a state concerning Cicero. Secondly, there is clearly a distinction between propositional attitudes which are directed at particular objects and those which are not. Quine's example<sup>72</sup> would bring out this point. Suppose someone says, 'I want a sloop'; now in a case like this we need to make a distinction between the desire that the man might have for a sloop, where any sloop would do (as Quine says, what he seeks 'is a mere relief from slooplessness') and the desire that a man might have which is directed at a particular sloop. The two desires are definitely not of the same nature.

One important point seems to be emerging from all these discussions: the ultimate motivation for admitting a class of beliefs which are *de re* or are about particular objects comes from our nature of thought

---

<sup>72</sup>Quine [1956]; reprinted in Linsky [1971], pp. 185-7.



and the relation that obtains between our thought and the world. Suppose we cannot have any *de re* thoughts. That would mean that all our thoughts about the world would be descriptive, that is, we could think of objects only by description, each merely as something belonging to a certain sort.<sup>73</sup> Now, if all our thoughts about things could only be descriptive, our total conception of the world would be merely qualitative. But our perceptual beliefs provide us with a class of beliefs where the thought involved is not just descriptive. To quote Kent Bach<sup>74</sup> here,

When we perceive something, we can think about it in a fundamentally different way than if we thought of it merely by description. To think of something by description is just to think of whatever happens to have the properties expressed by the description. But to perceive something is to be in a real relation to it, to be in a position to think that object in particular, no matter what its properties. ... Our thoughts about it are not DESCRIPTIVE but *DE RE*.<sup>75</sup>

Our perceptual beliefs do not always have associated with them some descriptions which individuate the individual completely. Burge's

---

<sup>73</sup>Without going into a detailed and intricate discussion surrounding the relation involved between the subject and the object of a *de re* thought, we can, following Bach [1987], point out one thing. According to Bach the object of a descriptive or *de dicto* thought is determined satisfactorily, that is, the fact that the thought is about that object does not require any connection between the thought and the object, and therefore the connection is not, what Bach would call 'a real or a natural' relation. Whereas, in the case of a *de re* thought there is an intimate contextual causal relation between the thinker and the object the thought is about.

<sup>74</sup>Bach [1987], p.12.

<sup>75</sup>Note that although the objects of perception make up the basic kind of *de re* thoughts, they are not the only kind. We may also have *de re* thoughts also about things which we have perceived before and now come to remember, and even about things others have perceived and informed us of. This will become clear in the course of the discussion. It is, however, correct to say that objects of our *de re* thoughts are essentially objects of perception, objects which we perceived now or have perceived previously or objects which have been perceived by someone else. This view, that is, a view where perceptual or demonstrative factors are essential in having belief about a particular object, despite applying to *de re* thoughts about concrete individuals other than oneself, does not apply to *de re* thoughts about abstract objects and about oneself. Whether it is at all possible to have *de re* thoughts about abstract objects is itself debatable -- it may be argued that our thoughts about particular abstract objects do not involve any causal or contextual relation, individuation of abstract objects being purely conceptual. This is a complicated issue which won't be addressed here.

example of seeing a man coming from the distance in the fog and forming the belief about him that he is wearing a red cap clearly brings out the *de re* nature of perceptual cases.

### 2.3. Evans and *De Re* Thoughts

#### 2.3.1. Preliminary Remarks

The view that to think of an object or make a judgement about it one must be in an intimate relation to the object has been argued for by Evans [1982]. In arguing for the Russellian status of what he calls information-invoking singular terms, Evans considers the nature of thoughts, in particular the nature of thoughts needed in order to understand sentences containing those terms. These are information-based thoughts, and are thoughts about objects in which they are grounded. In this sense information-based thoughts seem to correspond to the notion of *de re* thoughts that we tried to explain in the previous section. So, the main task of the rest of the chapter will be firstly to explain the nature of information-based thoughts and information-invoking singular terms, then to bring out the principles on which they are based, and finally to show in what way Evans's notion differs from ours. As Sainsbury [1985] points out, the intended upshot of Evans's argument is 'that for a wide range of singular terms the kinds of thoughts we must have to understand sentences containing them are thoughts that would be simply unavailable in the absence of a referent of the term.'<sup>76</sup> Therefore, thoughts expressed by utterances involving singular terms of this kind, thoughts which are called 'information-based thoughts' and which are grounded in information derived from objects referred to by Russellian singular terms, seem to provide us with a definite class of *de re* thoughts.

There are a wide variety of ideas that are being referred to in the previous paragraph which need unpacking. The questions that we need to answer to understand Evans's position concerning *de re* thoughts are:

(a) What are information-based thoughts?

---

<sup>76</sup>Sainsbury [1985], p.123.

(b) What are information-invoking singular terms?

(c) When do we say that an information-invoking singular term is Russellian?

These are all complicated questions involving a wide range of issues that Evans [1982] deals with. Most of them will remain undiscussed in this chapter. For our purpose of understanding the nature of *de re* thoughts, we will concentrate on his arguments for the Russellian status of information-invoking singular terms and the nature of information-based thoughts.

### 2.3.2. Evans on Frege and Russell

What does Evans mean when he says singular terms are Russellian? A singular term is Russellian in the case where the significance of the singular term depends upon its having a reference. Therefore, if a sentence containing a proper name of this kind is significant, that is, expresses something true or false, then the proper name in that context must stand for something. Evans, however, in an important way, distances himself from Russell's notion of logically proper names -- which, according to Russell, are the only kind of expressions that fulfil the requirement laid down. The two most important differences are the following:

(a) According to Russell, the connection between a logically proper name and its bearer is direct, that is, the connection is not mediated by the sense of the name. A Russellian singular term in Evans's sense has associated with it some way of thinking of the reference, and thus has a sense.

(b) Russell further wanted a logically proper name to have a guaranteed reference, the question of failure of reference does not arise in the case of a logically proper name.

In contrast, in Evan's framework we can attempt to use an expression as a Russellian singular term but fail to have a reference due to the unavailability of a suitable object.

An important point should be noted here. Though Evans thinks that a Russellian singular term is like any other term that has sense as well as reference, for him the reference of such an expression has a primacy over sense. In the case of a Russellian singular term its possession of sense depends upon its having a reference. This is a point where Evans departs from Frege as he is usually understood. That is why to understand what Evans means by the 'Russellian' nature of a singular term, it might be helpful to state, very briefly, Evans' understanding of the Fregean theory of sense.

As has already been mentioned, according to one familiar way of understanding the Fregean theory of sense, it is usually held that the understanding of an expression does not, in any way, presuppose the knowledge of the referent of the expression. The knowledge of a particular object is essentially indirect, because even so-called referring expressions require the mediation of sense to determine the reference. The relation between a thought and an object is also indirect. If this is the case then whether or not an object exists is irrelevant in determining the sense. Evans does not accept this interpretation of the Fregean notion of sense. He, following Russell, and opposing Frege, holds that it is impossible to understand a sentence containing a proper name, that is, to grasp the proposition it expresses, without knowing which object it stands for. According to Evans, Frege's theory of *Bedeutung*, or what he translates as meaning or semantic value, starts with the idea that the significance of a sentence consists in its being either true or false. Given this starting point, it seems natural for Frege to proceed by saying that the semantic value of a substantival expression consists in its power to affect the truth-value of the sentence in which it occurs. It is natural to think further that this power is determined by the expression's association with an extra-linguistic entity -- which may be called the referent of the expression in question. But Frege also claimed that a full account of the significance of an expression cannot be given solely in terms of the semantic value of an expression, it has to be given in terms of some further property, which he called 'sense'. Sense explains the difference in cognitive value of two sentences having the same semantic value, like, 'Hesperus is Hesperus' and 'Hesperus is Phosphorus'.

For Evans, the essence of the Fregean notion of sense consists in the way in which the semantic value is presented. The consequence of this way of understanding Fregean sense is that it seems that there can be no sense without reference. But in that case, this view conflicts with the usual Fregean view that an expression, like an empty singular term, can have sense while lacking reference. According to Evans, Frege's ascription of sense to empty singular terms should not be taken seriously. Though it seems that Frege ascribes sense to empty singular terms, this is, for Evans, 'equivocal, hedged around with qualification, and dubiously consistent with the fundamentals of his philosophy of language.'<sup>77</sup> Evans 'rejects Russell's obliteration of the distinction between sense and reference, yet he does not go to the other extreme of allowing sense without reference.'<sup>78</sup> So his strategy is to show that grasp of sense essentially requires identifying knowledge of the referent.

This way of interpreting the Fregean notion of sense leads Evans's Frege to be close to Russell. Evans quotes<sup>79</sup> Russell's criterion for testing terms which are classified as referring expressions,

Whenever the grammatical subject of a proposition can be supposed not to exist without rendering the proposition meaningless, it is plain that the grammatical subject is not a proper name, i.e., not a name directly representing some object.

Evans takes a singular term which passes this test to be Russellian. And the main task of the book is to establish the Russellian status of a large group of singular terms. It should be noted that Evans is not trying to show that all kinds of singular terms are Russellian. Names which are introduced by explicit stipulation (like his example of the name 'Julius'<sup>80</sup>)

---

<sup>77</sup>Evans [1982], p.38.

<sup>78</sup>Sainsbury [1985], p122.

<sup>79</sup>Evans [1982], p. 43.

<sup>80</sup>See Evans [1982], p.31. We might introduce a name into our language by some kind of reference-fixing stipulation such as, 'let us call whoever invented the zip "Julius"'. They are descriptive names and understanding a name of this kind does not require possession of information flowing from the object which is being referred to by the name. We will have occasion to come back to this example again.

are referring expressions but non-Russellian referring expressions. What he wants to argue for, is that for a wide range of singular terms, the kinds of thoughts we must have to understand sentences containing them are thoughts which cannot be had if the singular term failed to have a reference.

As Sainsbury remarks,

his [that is, Evans's] view lies between two extremes, ... At one extreme is Russell's view, on which the existence of Russellian thoughts is, of course, granted, but it is denied that there can be *two* such thoughts predicating the same property of the same object. At the other extreme is the view which some, though not Evans, attribute to Frege, on which there is no problem about allowing thoughts to be distinct, even though they predicate the same property of the same object, but it is denied that thoughts are Russellian. Let us call these, respectively, the Russellian and the Fregean poles. Evans, of course, has a view combining elements from each pole: Russellian status together with allowing the Fregean distinction.<sup>81</sup>

Frege held the view that for communication to be successful, the thought that the speaker and the hearer associates with the utterance must be the same. Evans thinks that this is too strong a claim to make. Though it is true that communication depends upon a certain overlap between the information possessed by the speaker and the information possessed by the hearer, a considerable difference may exist between their information, and so it is sufficient for communication that the speaker and the hearer think of the right object. It is not, in addition, required that they think of it in the same way. Therefore the Fregean condition of communicatively successful use of singular terms should be replaced by the requirement that for the hearer to understand the speaker, both must think of its referent. If there were no such object the utterance would not be understood, and nothing would have been said. So the nature of successful communication itself suggests that the terms be Russellian.

---

<sup>81</sup>Sainsbury [1985], p.130.

This is no doubt an important argument, but Evans uses it as a supplementary argument to establish the Russellian status of singular term. The main reason is that the same conclusion can be reached by considering the nature of the thought in which such singular terms occur. If we can, following Evans, show that thoughts of this kind are Russellian, then that would provide us with good grounds for admitting a definite and irreducible class of *de re* thoughts.

### 2.3.3. Russell's Principle and Information-Based Thoughts

According to Evans, our thoughts about particular objects must satisfy what he calls 'Russell's Principle'.<sup>82</sup> This Principle states

A subject cannot make a judgement about something unless he knows which object his judgement is about.

The Principle suggests that, in order to be thinking about an individual/object or making a judgement about him/it, one must oneself know which individual/object he or she is thinking about. What is it to have such knowledge? The knowledge which is required in this connection is, according to Evans, 'discriminating knowledge'. So, a subject cannot be said to make a judgement about something unless he has discriminating knowledge about the object of his judgement. Knowledge of this kind would enable the subject to distinguish the object of his judgement from all other things<sup>83</sup>. There are three ways in which a subject can come to know which object his judgement is about. They are descriptive, demonstrative and recognition-based, and they help us in the determination of the identity of the thought. Thus a sentence of the form 'that G is F' may express a thought involving a descriptive kind of mode of identification if the identification exploits the fact that the object is uniquely G. An utterance of the same sentence, in a different context, may also express a thought in which recognition-based identification is involved, that is, if we recognise that the currently perceived G is someone we have previously encountered. And an utterance of the very

---

<sup>82</sup>Evans [1982], p.89.

<sup>83</sup>ibid.

same sentence may express a thought involving a demonstrative identification if the relevant G is currently perceived by us. When an object is identified in any one of these kinds of modes of identification, it can be called the thought's object. So, according to Evans, thoughts about particular objects are governed by Russell's Principle, and therefore, a defence of this Principle is necessary. A defence of Russell's Principle would be helpful in two ways. In the first place, it would provide us with an account of what common thing a subject is able to do in the case of descriptive, demonstrative and recognition-based identification by showing us why it is that thought about a particular individual requires the subject to be able to do it. In the second place, it would help us in answering questions about the boundaries of demonstrative identification. Questions like, 'Does perception of an object always provide us with discriminating knowledge of it?' or 'Can we demonstratively identify an object seen in a photograph or heard on the radio, or must we rather think of them descriptively?', can be answered properly only when Russell's Principle is defended as an acceptable principle governing our thoughts about particular objects.

Evans initially defends Russell's Principle with the help of the example of two indistinguishable steel balls. The example goes like this,<sup>84</sup>

Suppose, ..., that on a certain day in the past, a subject briefly observed two indistinguishable steel balls suspended from the same point and rotating about it. He now believes nothing about one ball which he does not believe about the other. This is certainly a situation in which the subject cannot discriminate one of the balls from all other things, since he cannot discriminate it from its fellow. And a principle which precludes the ascription to the subject of a thought about one of the balls surely has a considerable intuitive appeal.

In this kind of case, if we try to think of just one of the two balls, we will try to do that by focusing on something which will help us in distinguishing it from the other ball. Now, if there is no distinguishing

---

<sup>84</sup>ibid, p.90.



mark which allows us to do so, we shall have to admit that we are incapable of thoughts about one of them, as distinct from the other, because, if the subject has no way of distinguishing between the two balls, his effort to think about one of the balls is bound to fail. We will come to a fuller discussion of Russell's Principle later on.

Thoughts that are about particular objects and are governed by Russell's Principle are called 'information-based thoughts' by Evans. Very often a thinker can entertain thoughts about an object because they are based on the information they have about the world, information which flows from the object itself. Perception, memory and testimony may all three provide this information link. To quote Evans<sup>85</sup>,

Our particular thoughts are very often based upon information which we have about the world. We take ourselves to be informed, in whatever way, of the existence of such-and-such an object, and we think or speculate about it. A thought of the kind with which I am concerned is governed by a conception of its object which is the result neither of fancy ... nor of linguistic stipulation ..., but rather is the result of a belief about how the world is which the subject has because he has received information (or misinformation) from the object.

Evans explains this point with the help of an example. Suppose A and B went for a hunting trip and came across a beautiful bird. Years later A might want to talk about that bird with B by using expressions which would invoke information in B's mind. A might say 'Do you remember the bird we saw on the hunting trip we went on?' and fail to make B remember the bird he was talking about. He might elaborate the description in different ways (like, mentioning the date, the place etc. of their trip, or show a picture of a bird similar to the one he was talking about). B, taking A to be trustworthy, may believe all that A is saying, but as Evans points out, 'I do not think that he can be said to have understood the remark, as it was intended to be understood, until he *remembers* the

---

<sup>85</sup>ibid, p.121.

bird -- until the *right* information is retrieved.<sup>86</sup> And once the hearer is able to identify the bird the speaker was talking about, he will be in a different information state than the one he was in.

The above example shows only one of the three ways in which the subject may provide an information-link. Information of the object would control the thought about the particular object if and only if the subject, due to his acquiring and retaining information, is disposed to evaluate and appreciate<sup>87</sup> thoughts about the object that it is so-and-so. For example, suppose a subject is looking at a black and white cat which he has never seen or heard about before. He may entertain different thoughts about that cat, but it is the content of his perception and no other information which controls his thought.

So there is a duality of factors involved in the notion of an information-based thought. On the one hand, the subject possesses information which he derives from the object and he regards this information to be germane to the evaluation and appreciation of the thought. On the other hand, the subject fulfils the requirement imposed by Russell's Principle, that is, he identifies (that is, has discriminating knowledge of) the object that his thought concerns. Therefore, in all cases, the overriding purpose of the subject's thinking consists in thinking about the object from which the information is derived. He aims at this object, which Evans calls a 'target'<sup>88</sup>, but like all other aiming he may miss it. Now a necessary condition for the existence of an information-based thought about the particular object is the following:

It is only when the procedure which determines the object and the procedure which determines the target locate the same object can the subject be credited with an information-based particular thought about that object.<sup>89</sup>

---

<sup>86</sup>ibid, p.308.

<sup>87</sup>We will be discussing more on evaluation and appreciation of a remark in the next section.

<sup>88</sup>ibid, p.138.

<sup>89</sup>See Evans [1982], p.139.

No such procedure governs the having of purely descriptive thought, for the notion of target plays no role in stating the conditions for having such a thought.

If this be the necessary condition for having an information-based thought, then if a mode of identification in fact fails to identify anything, it cannot figure in an information-based thought about an object. So, for an information-based thought to be about an object, had not the object existed, that thought could not have existed either. In this sense, information-based thoughts are Russellian. Evans insists that 'It is no part of this proposal that his mind is wholly vacant, images and words may clearly pass through it, and various ancillary thoughts may even occur to him.'<sup>90</sup> He may have general thoughts, but, as Sainsbury points out, this view of thought is perfectly consistent with the following view of thought-expression: where an attempt to express a Russellian thought fails because there is no appropriate object.

#### **2.3.4. The Main Argument for the Russellian Status of Singular Terms**

Having characterised the nature of information-invoking particular thoughts in this way, Evans tries to show that the role it plays in the main argument is the following: for many singular terms one must think an information-based thought in order to understand utterances containing them. Information-based thoughts are Russellian, that is, provided that if the particular object (the thought is said to be a thought about) did not exist then the thought itself could not have existed. Hence singular terms occurring in utterances whose understanding requires information-based thoughts are Russellian -- if they did not refer, there could be no thought sufficient for understanding utterances containing them. An information-invoking singular term is one which is typically intended, as used in an utterance, to make the hearer bring to bear, in understanding the utterance, information antecedently in his possession.

One may here wonder why understanding of an utterance involving information-invoking singular terms requires that the singular

---

<sup>90</sup>ibid., pp.45-6.

term refer? We can, at this point, state the argument very briefly. Having done that, we can discuss how Evans argues for each step in the argument. The argument proceeds in the following way:

In order to understand an utterance involving information-invoking singular terms, an utterance of the form 'A(t)', one must oneself believe that there is something to which the term 't' refers. Understanding any utterance is knowing a truth, that is, knowing what has been said. But understanding, being a species of knowledge, cannot be based on a false belief -- that is, the belief that 't' refers cannot be false. Therefore, 't', that is the information-invoking singular term, must have a reference.

Evans justifies the claim that to understand an information-invoking singular term, one must oneself believe that there is something to which the term refers, by first showing that for the hearer to understand an information-invoking singular term, some information already in his possession must be invoked. And the information that the hearer invokes and the speaker has are derived from the same object. Here we may refer back to the example of talking about a bird which two persons saw on a hunting trip. As has already been pointed out, the hearer cannot be said to understand the speaker unless he connects the speaker's use of the phrase 'that bird' with the information he himself has about the bird. Evans makes this point clear with another example.<sup>91</sup> Suppose a speaker makes a demonstrative reference to a man in an environment he shares with the hearer and says 'this man is F' -- now the hearer can be said to understand the remark only if he perceives the particular man and brings his perceptual information to bear upon his interpretation of the remark. Examples of this kind, therefore, show that there are many cases where understanding an expression requires activating antecedently possessed information. One may, however, wonder whether understanding of this kind (a) has to involve some belief, and (b) has to involve only belief which is true. In the following paragraphs we will see how Evans tries to

---

<sup>91</sup>ibid, p.305.

show that the notion of understanding of an expression in the relevant sense not only involves belief, but involves a true belief.

According to Evans, invoking information in this connection really means that the hearer must evaluate (that is, arrive at a provisional assessment of its truth and falsity) and appreciate (that is, think out what the consequences of the remark would be if it were true) the remark in accordance with the content of the relevant information. Invoking information, according to Evans is not merely a matter of calling the information to mind, it should be brought to bear upon the interpretation of the remark<sup>92</sup>. Evans here concentrates on the process of appreciation of the remark in the use of information.

Some might argue that although bringing information to bear in appreciation of an utterance involves the fact that one must oneself believe that there is something to which the term refers, it does not follow that the term really has a reference. Suppose someone says 't is F' where t invokes information which may be represented as ' $\theta_1, \dots, \theta_n$ '. Then understanding an utterance of this kind consists in nothing but realising that what the speaker said is true, if, and only if, something is both  $\theta_1, \dots, \theta_n$  and F. This example is analogous to the example of a descriptive name like, 'Julius'. Someone who understands the utterance involving a stipulative name like 'Julius', an utterance saying 'Julius is a genius', will come to believe that if what the speaker said was true then there is someone who invented the zip and who was a genius. But, none of these beliefs commit the hearer to the existence of something which is  $\theta_1 \dots \theta_n$  nor to the existence of someone who invented the zip. In answer to this objection, Evans tries to show that understanding is a species of knowledge. Then, with the help of this notion of understanding and the seamlessness principle (the principle that asserts 'there can be no truth which it requires acceptance of a falsehood to appreciate'<sup>93</sup>), he shows that knowledge cannot be based on false belief and this, in turn, shows that the information-invoking singular term refers.

---

<sup>92</sup>ibid, p.327.

<sup>93</sup>ibid, p.331.

Evans thinks that the picture is not as simple as the opponents take it to be. In appreciation of a remark we must try to find out a justification for the hearer's arriving at such a belief. Let us first take the example of a remark involving the name Julius. In cases like this, understanding such a remark on the part of the hearer requires being faithful to the speaker's intention, and the speaker's overriding intention is to convey his conception, which can be conveyed even in a case where there is no object. As Evans says,

..., the hearer's belief results from an attempt to be faithful to the speaker's conception of the object, if any, to which he is referring. Such a conception may be conveyed, and such a belief arrived at in the absence of any object it concerns.<sup>94</sup>

The belief arrived at by the hearer in understanding of utterances like 't is F' (where the hearer draws upon the properties of being  $\sigma_1 \dots \sigma_n$ ) cannot be given a similar kind of justification as the Julius case. In cases like this, although the speaker intends his hearer to bring information to bear, the information that the hearer brings to bear, honouring the speaker's intentions, may not figure in the content of the belief of the speaker about reference. So in bringing information to bear the hearer must draw upon his own resources in order to select appropriate information.

The only possible justification of the belief that, if what the speaker said is true, there is something which is  $\sigma_1, \dots, \sigma_n$  and F is that it follows from some belief of the form 'The speaker is referring to a', together with a view as to how things stand with a. So, unlike the belief that one might form on hearing an utterance of 'Julius is F', the appreciation-constituting belief in the case of an information-invoking remark is of the hearer's belief about the world -- about how things stand with one particular object in it.<sup>95</sup>

---

<sup>94</sup>ibid, p.329.

<sup>95</sup>ibid, p.329.

This, therefore, shows that even though it is possible to possess information in the absence of belief on the part of the hearer, concerning the existence of the relevant object to which the speaker is referring, it is not possible to bring this information to bear coherently upon the interpretation of the referential remark.

But it is not enough that the hearer believes that the speaker is referring to something. He can bring his information to bear on the basis of this belief, even if the belief is not true, so that there is nothing to which the singular term refers. The argument so far 'shows only that a certain belief is required on the part of those who understand the remark, not that the belief must be true.'<sup>96</sup> Here Evans provides the final argument. He says that understanding an expression amounts to the knowledge of what is said. That means, to understand an utterance *u* of a speaker *S* is to know what the speaker says by uttering *u*. Understanding is a kind of success -- it is knowing which thought was expressed. However understanding or knowledge of truth cannot be based on a falsehood. This is known as the seamlessness principle, which is expressed by Evans thus,

Truth is seamless; there can be no truth which it requires acceptance of a falsehood to appreciate.<sup>97</sup>

Therefore, understanding an utterance containing information-invoking singular term implies that a belief, on the part of the hearer, to the effect that the speaker is referring to an object by the use of that singular term has to be true. And for this belief to be true, the singular term must refer -- that is, it must be Russellian. As Evans concludes the discussion,

...thinking about the world, even if it consists in entertaining thoughts rather than judging them to be true, requires us to make intelligent use of the information that we possess. What we must realize is that using information in this way is not a neutral activity. One can intelligibly use information in this way only if one takes it to be veridical; ...<sup>98</sup>

---

<sup>96</sup>ibid, p.330.

<sup>97</sup>Ibid p.331.

<sup>98</sup>ibid, p.331-2.

This, then, is Evans' argument for the Russellian status of some singular terms -- singular terms that are information-invoking. By exploiting the special characteristic of understanding utterances involving information-invoking singular terms and by appealing to the seamless principle, he arrives at this conclusion. To understand utterances containing information-invoking singular terms one must think an information-based thought, which itself is regarded as having a Russellian status, and the argument also appeals to this property of information-based thought.

I do not want to question this main argument of Evans regarding the Russellian status of a wide variety of singular terms. What I want to look into, in more detail, is the nature of information-based thought -- thoughts which are required in order to understand utterances containing those singular terms -- and try to compare it with our notion of *de re* thought. On a closer scrutiny it will become evident that information-based thoughts are governed by Russell's Principle, and it is particularly this principle which I want to question.

#### 2.4. Russell's Principle Evaluated

It is essential, at this point, to try and see whether the analogy we drew between *de re* thoughts as we characterised it in section 2.1 and Evans's notion of information-based singular thoughts works. We need to see whether *de re* thought as we understood it is exactly the same as the notion of information-based particular thought. If they are not, we need to show where exactly they differ. Our aim in this section is to show how Evans's notion of information-based thoughts, though similar to our notion of *de re* thoughts, differs from the latter in an important respect and is a much stronger notion than ours. It will become clear that we do not need this stronger notion, and it does face some difficulties.<sup>99</sup>

Information-based thoughts are *de re* thoughts in the sense that they are of the objects from which information is derived, and in which they are grounded. As Evans remarks, '... according to my explanation of

---

<sup>99</sup>There is a detailed discussion of where Evans may have gone wrong at this point in Rozemond [1993] and in Sainsbury [1985], section II.3 .



the notion of information-based thoughts, such thoughts commit the subject to the existence of something as their object.'<sup>100</sup> But, according to Evans, it is not enough that a thought of this kind is grounded in an object. Over and above this the subject must satisfy Russell's Principle (the Principle that says, to repeat, that in order to have a thought about a particular object the subject must know about which object he is thinking) which would enable him to have discriminating knowledge about the object of his judgement, knowledge that will help the subject to distinguish the object of his judgement from all other things. One might object, at this point, that Russell's Principle seems to be too strong. One can think of something without being able to identify it by the process of discriminating it from all other objects, that is without knowing which object it is, at least, not in any useful sense of 'knowing which'. The distinction which may be drawn here is a distinction between identifying an object and merely thinking of one.

It should be noted that Evans defends Russell's Principle by arguing against counter-examples to it. Evans thinks that there are intuitions both in favour and against this Principle, and therefore, whether or not we are to accept it depends on theoretical arguments. He develops these arguments, and then uses this to deal with apparent counter-examples. Two main strategies can be distinguished in this connection. The first one depends on the application of his 'Generality Constraint' to the example of a child who, according to Evans's opponent, can think of an individual without having discriminating knowledge. The second strategy is to claim that in order to be able to think that *p* one must know what it is for *p* to be true and then apply it to the counter-example involving steel balls.

There are two examples which will be discussed here -- examples which, Evans claims, violates Russell's Principle and therefore prevent the subject to have thoughts about the particular object in question.

The first example concerns a child's thinking about Socrates by hearing merely that Socrates was a Greek philosopher.<sup>101</sup> In a case like this

---

<sup>100</sup>Evans [1982], pp.326-7.

<sup>101</sup>ibid, pp.73-4.

the child would violate Russell's Principle because she will not have discriminating knowledge.

Application of Russell's Principle in a case like this depends on the application of the Generality Constraint, -- a 'fundamental constraint that must be observed in all our reflections'.<sup>102</sup> According to this principle,

if a subject can be credited with the thought that *a* is *F*, then he must have the conceptual resources for entertaining the thought that *a* is *G*, for every property of being *G* of which he has a conception.<sup>103</sup>

According to Evans, a singular thought, that is, a thought which can be interpreted as having the content *that a is F*, involves the exercise of two separate capacities -- one being the capacity to think of *a* and the other being the capacity to think of *F*. Once a subject is credited with the exercising of these conceptual abilities, there is no conceptual barrier to his being able to entertain the thought that *a is G* or the thought that *b is F*. For example, someone who is able to think that John is happy, has the ability to think that John is sad or that Harry is happy. As Evans points out 'in order to overthrow Russell's Principle, one would have to show that this general capacity to think of an object, and grasp indefinitely many hypotheses about it, can be possessed entirely in the absence of any discriminating conception of the object.'<sup>104</sup> What Evans tries to show is that counter-examples to Russell's Principle involve examples of subjects having thoughts that violate the Generality Constraint, and thus these subjects cannot be credited with a singular thought.

What would a counter-example to Russell's Principle be like? Here is a case that Evans considers. Suppose a subject does not associate with a name anything which can be said to provide an individuating description of the person who is the bearer of the name. For example, suppose a child comes to acquire the use of the name 'Socrates' by hearing that Socrates is a Greek Philosopher. In a case like this the child has no discriminating

---

<sup>102</sup>ibid, p.100.

<sup>103</sup>p.104.

<sup>104</sup>ibid, p.75.

knowledge, no capacity to distinguish the object of her judgement (that is Socrates) from all other objects. Evans thinks that the child in this case is violating the Generality Constraint:

If the ignorant child has got hold of the widely disseminated piece of information (or misinformation) 'Socrates was snub-nosed', we might well be inclined to say that the child has a true or false belief about Socrates, or at least acquired information (or misinformation) about him. But the inclination to say that the child has, and is expressing, a belief about Socrates is far less strong when we envisage the child not merely repeating a widely disseminated piece of information, but uttering the words 'Socrates was fat' (say), perhaps as the result of some confusion.<sup>105</sup>

What Evans tries to do with the help of this example is to show that the child does not have the ability to think that Socrates is fat. In order to defend Russell's Principle against this counter-example Evans has to argue further that we will have to give up the view that the child has the ability to think that Socrates is snub-nosed. Suppose we agree that the child cannot have the thought that Socrates is fat. Now, if she could have the thought that Socrates is snub-nosed, she should be able to have the thought that he is fat. So we can say that she cannot have the thought that Socrates is snub-nosed. Let us therefore consider whether the child is indeed unable to think that Socrates is fat.

It is a hypothesis of the example that the child did say, in so many words, 'Socrates is fat'. So, we need to explain in the first place, how the child came to say 'Socrates is fat'. There may be two ways in which she might<sup>106</sup>:

- (a) she might have confused Socrates with someone else, or,
- (b) she does not confuse Socrates with anybody else, but comes to utter the sentence 'Socrates is fat' due to some other reason.

---

<sup>105</sup>ibid, p.75.

<sup>106</sup>For a detailed discussion see Rozemond [1993].

In the case of the second alternative, the child might have come to utter the words 'Socrates is fat' as a result of an inference. Maybe she thinks that all philosophers are fat, and came to know from her older sister that Socrates is a philosopher, and thus came to hold that Socrates is fat. In this case the child comes to think of Socrates as being snub-nosed, as well as being fat, and therefore seems to fulfil the Generality Constraint. Some might say here that this just postpones the question raised at the beginning. They may ask how does the child get to have the thought that Socrates was a philosopher as opposed to the merely general thought that there was once a philosopher called 'Socrates'? Therefore, this answer to Evans's objection may not work.

The other case is the one where the child confuses the philosopher Socrates with somebody else. We have to see whether she violates Generality Constraint and thereby cannot be credited with any thought concerning Socrates. It might very well appear that if the child is in a confused state as this we are disinclined to say that she is thinking of Socrates. In cases where we think that the child may be confusing Socrates with somebody else, we will say loosely 'she can't be thinking of Socrates'. What this remark amounts to is expressing our view that it is unlikely that she is thinking about Socrates. But this does not mean that she cannot think of Socrates. Let us further elaborate the example of this child to make this point clear. Suppose the child was told by her older sister that Socrates is a Greek philosopher and is snub-nosed; suppose, on another occasion the older sister wanted to tease her and, pointing to a guest in a party said that he was Socrates. This guest was fat. The child might later on say to her sister 'Socrates is fat'. Now her sister will of course realise that the child was talking about the guest at the party. It is also natural to say that she is thinking about the guest and not about Socrates, but we cannot say that the child can never think that Socrates is fat. If the child confuses Socrates with someone else then we may have to say that at one point she does think about Socrates and that at another she does not. But this is as close as we can get to a violation of the Generality Constraint. We can never judge that she can think that Socrates was snub-nosed, but cannot think that he was fat.

A second important point should be noted here. In order to explain our hesitation to ascribe to the child a thought about Socrates, we do not need to appeal to Russell's Principle. The hesitation can be explained by pointing out that there has been a confusion in the information chain -- the thought that Socrates is fat and the utterance 'Socrates is fat' was grounded in someone other than Socrates. So any problem in applying the Generality Constraint in examples of this kind does not immediately imply that we need Russell's Principle to explain it.

Finally we might grant that in one version of this example, the child is too confused to have thoughts about Socrates, but this concession is compatible with the fact that there are other possible cases that do pose problems with Russell's Principle. For example, imagine a situation where the child is not confused about Socrates, but that the knowledge she has is not discriminating knowledge. I guess here, Evans would say that the child lacks information-based thoughts. However, one can say that the child can have thoughts about Socrates by virtue of some causal link going back to the philosopher.

The best example in support of Russell's Principle comes from the steel ball cases. There are two cases that Evans considers. We will discuss them separately. In the first example, already mentioned, a subject sees two indistinguishable steel balls hanging from the same point. The subject has access to no facts which will help in discriminating the two balls. Therefore, Evans concludes that due to the unavailability of discriminating knowledge, he can think of neither of the two balls, and, so the example provides a strong case for Russell's principle.

Now, the observation that we cannot have any discriminating capacity in a case of this kind is quite correct. It seems to be quite correct to say that if we try to think of just one ball where we are aware of two, we will focus on one of them by virtue of something which will distinguish it from the other ball. If we are unable to recall anything that would help us in distinguishing one ball from the other, we will have to give up trying to do so and not seem to have any thought about one of the balls. However, the reason for this failure may not be due to the fact that the

subject is not able to distinguish the object from all other objects, as Russell's Principle requires. The reason might be due to the unfulfillment of a more modest requirement -- the requirement is, that in order to focus on an object when attempting to think about it, a subject must find a way of distinguishing the object from the other objects he or she is aware of at that time. And the reason why he or she cannot distinguish one ball from the other is due to the fact that 'there has been a merging of causal lines (whereas what is required, it may be said, for a thought-episode to concern an object, X, is that there be a single causal line running from X to the episode).'<sup>107</sup> It is not due to his or her lack of discriminating knowledge of the very exacting kind that Russell's Principle requires. This can be compared with the second point raised regarding the previous example of the confused child. Our hesitation to say that the child is thinking about Socrates is due to something being wrong in the causal line, similar to what is happening in this case

Evans now considers another example where the subject does not have a problem in distinguishing one steel ball from another. The story goes in this way<sup>108</sup>. Suppose a subject saw two distinct steel balls on two consecutive days, but due to some localised amnesia, forgets completely about the first episode. Now, suppose many years later she thinks about 'that shiny ball', now Evan's point is this,

If asked which ball he is thinking about, our subject cannot produce any facts which would discriminate between the two.

109

Therefore,

There is no question of his recognising the ball; there is nothing else he can do which will show that his thought is really about one of the two balls (about *that* ball), rather than about the other. The supposed thought -- the supposed

---

<sup>107</sup>Sainsbury, p. 133.

<sup>108</sup>See Evans [1982], p.90.

<sup>109</sup>ibid, p.90.

surplus over the *ex hypothesis* non-individuating descriptive thought -- is apparently not connected to anything.<sup>110</sup>

The difference between this example and the previous one is that the subject has no problem of distinguishing one ball from the other because he has memory of just one ball. The origin of the current thought is the ball which the subject remembers. He has no trouble focusing on the ball he remembers because he is aware of seeing only one ball, but, according to Evans, although the subject behaves as if he is subscribing to Russell's Principle, he cannot have thoughts about one of the balls. The point of formulating the steel ball example in the second way is two-fold. In the first place, in this case it seems that the subject satisfies the requirement laid down by Russell's Principle. In the second place, there seems to be no hesitation to say that the subject is thinking of the second ball. These are, no doubt, due to the fact that the subject has a loss of memory about one of the balls. But, as Evans argues, 'if asked which ball he is thinking about, our subject cannot produce any facts which would discriminate between the two.'<sup>111</sup> And, thus, the subject cannot be credited with thoughts about the second ball.

But someone might argue against Evans in the following way. It is an indubitable fact that in a case where a subject has encountered just one ball (without there being any further relevant circumstances), he can have subsequent thoughts about it. It is also without doubt that if a subject actually saw one ball and very nearly saw another (maybe he would have seen the other one unless it was removed from his sight just as he entered the room, he might even have been told that an exactly similar ball was removed from the room just a minute ago), he must be able to think about the particular ball he saw. The mere possibility of seeing a ball cannot in any way affect thought about the ball actually perceived. These are uncontroversial claims that Evans would have to accept, but if he accepts that we can have thoughts about the ball in the second case, then, 'how does this differ from the case under discussion, in which though two balls are seen, the memory of one incident is obliterated? Since the second

---

<sup>110</sup>ibid, p.115.

<sup>111</sup>ibid, p.90.

ball now impinges in no way upon your consciousness, its nullified impact can make no difference to whether or not you can think of the first one.<sup>112</sup> It should be noted that there is no qualitative difference in recognitional capacities between the case where only one ball is seen and the case where two balls are seen but the memory of one experience is obliterated. In both the cases the subject has low-grade recognitional capacities. Now, if the recognitional capacities are the same in both the cases, and if Evans accepts the uncontroversial claim that the subject can think of the ball in the first case, then why can we not say that the subject can think of the ball in the second case (that is, the case where he remembers perceiving just one ball) as well?

As Sainsbury remarks, 'the essence of the position he (Evans) has to defend, ..., is that having a particular-thought is knowledge-involving: you must know which object our thought concerns. ... Evans must therefore hold that a situation which would prevent any knowledge of an object would prevent any thought of that object.'<sup>113</sup> Knowledge in this case has to be discriminating knowledge. But it seems that the steel ball case (in either of its formulation) can be interpreted in a way which would support the claim that we can think of an object without having discriminating knowledge of it.

What we have tried to show by discussing these examples is that Russell's Principle is too restrictive a requirement for having *de re* thoughts. We agree with Evans in maintaining that to refer to an object, we must be able to think of that object. Information-invoking singular terms seem to have reference in this sense and information-based thoughts seem to be about objects in the above sense. But Evans's point is that information-based thoughts must further satisfy Russell's Principle. And it is here that they differ from *de re* thoughts.

One can think of something without being able to identify it, that is without knowing which object it is, at least, not in any useful sense of knowing which. The distinction which may be drawn here is a distinction

---

<sup>112</sup>Sainsbury [1985], p.133.

<sup>113</sup>*ibid*, p.134.



between identifying an object and merely thinking of one. Some examples may be given to make the point clear. We can think of perceptual objects by merely attending to them. It might happen that if you look away and then turn back, you need not be able to perceptually pick this object out of a crowd. Similarly you can think of an object which you have perceived previously merely by remembering it. That you remember something, and therefore, have the ability to think of it, does not require that how you remember it distinguishes it from others. And if someone refers you to something by name, you can think of it simply by the name. In all three cases the possibility remains that you can think of an individual without knowing which particular one it is. For our purpose of providing a viable explanation of *de re* thoughts, this weaker thesis, that is, thinking about an object or making a judgement about it without having discriminating knowledge about it, seems to be adequate. For, if some thoughts are of this nature, then they will be essential about an individual, and hence be *de re*.

In conclusion, we can say that Evans's information-based thoughts initially seem to bear an affinity to *de re* thoughts as characterised at the beginning of the chapter. They are similar in the sense that both of them are thoughts grounded in objects from which pieces information are derived. Information-based thoughts are dissimilar to *de re* thoughts insofar as they are supposed to fulfil the additional requirement of satisfying Russell's Principle. If we said that *de re* thoughts are exactly the same as Evans's information-based thoughts then we would have had to say that knowledge of objects of *de re* thoughts would have to be discriminating knowledge. But we do not think that knowledge of objects of *de re* thoughts has to be discriminating knowledge in Evans's sense.

## CHAPTER 3

### The Hybrid View of Belief Ascription

#### 3.1 Preliminary Remarks

Let me summarise briefly what I have tried to do in the last three chapters, and how the discussion of the Hybrid View of belief ascription becomes essential in the light of the conclusion reached in the previous chapter. After having given, in the introductory chapter, a general account of propositions as the content of belief and other propositional attitudes by showing that propositional attitude verbs are dyadic in nature -- that is, they refer to a relation between a believer and a proposition; and the puzzles that arise in contexts where an ascription of a propositional attitude, like belief, takes place, the next chapter attempts to answer some of the well-known Quinean objections to any notion of proposition. The main aim of the chapter on *de re* thoughts was to show that there is a genuine class of beliefs which are *de re* as opposed to *de dicto*, by taking clues from Gareth Evans's notion of a singular (or a Russellian) thought as developed in his book *Varieties of Reference* [1982].

The strategy taken here is that the distinction between the *de re* and the *de dicto* reports of belief depends upon the nature of the proposition occurring within the two reports. In fact, the two kinds of belief reports relate the believer to two different kinds of propositions. In the case of *de re* reports, the proposition involved is a broadly Russellian one, where the reference of the 'that'-clause is the singular proposition involving the individual and the property itself. Whereas in the case of *de dicto* belief reports, the proposition involved is broadly Fregean, where the 'that'-clause is constituted by Fregean senses or modes of presentation. All these discussions lead to the conclusion that,

**If the distinction between *de re* and *de dicto* reports is genuine, and the propositions occurring within these two kinds of reports or the content of the two reports are essentially different, then a single account of belief**

reports cannot be given. We need two different semantical accounts to explain the difference in content between *de re* and *de dicto* belief reports.

Now, if this be the conclusion of our discussion, it can very well be challenged by philosophers who would prefer to give a unified account of belief reports, an account which would be able to explain any belief report whatsoever. A number of philosophers<sup>114</sup> have tried to do so, and their type of account of belief ascription is what I would like to call a 'Hybrid View' of belief ascription<sup>115</sup>. The reason why I call accounts of this kind 'hybrid' will be explained in due course.

There are three things that I would like to do in this chapter. In the first place, I would like to see what motivated philosophers to develop a semantics of belief ascription of the hybrid kind. This can be understood only if we compare it with other accounts of belief ascriptions and the reasons why the hybrid theorists think that they do not work. The second part will be concerned with explaining and clarifying the hybrid view itself following mainly the discussions of Schiffer [1992], and of Crimmins [1992]. Finally I would like to discuss some of the specific objections raised against accounts of this kind and, furthermore, a particular incoherence involved in any account of this kind.

### 3.2. A Hybrid View of Belief Ascription

What would be the correct way of analysing belief reports, such as, 'Tom believes that Cicero was a Roman orator'? How should things stand in

---

<sup>114</sup>See Crimmins and Perry [1989]; Crimmins [1992]; Mark Richard [1990]; Fodor [1990]; Schiffer [1992].

<sup>115</sup>The kind of hybrid view that I am talking about is different from the hybrid view that Richard Heck [1995] talks about. According to his characterisation of the hybrid view, the content of a belief report is a Fregean thought, where some notion of sense is needed in a proper account of belief, but no such notion is needed in a proper account of meanings of sentences outside the belief context. So, the contribution of the expressions in the sentence 'Cicero is a Roman orator' occurring outside the belief operator are just their references. But when the same sentence is used to report a belief, that is, when someone says 'Tom believes that Cicero is a Roman orator', the expressions within this report refer to senses, and the 'that'-clause refers to the Fregean thought. His kind of hybrid view differs from mine on the point that it does not seem to take the content of belief itself to be of a hybrid variety -- consisting of both a Russellian singular proposition and some kind of mode of presentation or sense.

relation to the believer Tom in order for the report to be true? It is a fact of the matter that people do believe things and we very often report their beliefs correctly, but problems crop up when we want to be clear about what it is that makes the report of Tom's belief a correct report. Quine's dissatisfaction with vagueness and circumstantiality<sup>116</sup> of belief reports have led him to think that although belief reports are a part of our language it is doubtful whether they make any real sense at all. But many philosophers think that the fact of circumstantiality and the resultant variations in truth-values should not be taken as a mark of semantic weakness. Far from being a weakness these are the merits of such reports, enabling us to explain why belief reports involving co-referential singular terms and co-referential predicates differ in truth-value. Belief reports exhibit a context sensitivity analogous to a use of the sentence 'it is raining' or of the term 'you'<sup>117</sup>. Frege's introduction of the notion of mode of presentation to account for a difference in truth-value between 'Tom believes that Cicero is a Roman orator' and that 'Tom believes that Tully is a Roman orator', given the fact that the two names 'Cicero' and 'Tully' refer to the same individual, is a way of explaining away the apparent contradiction arising from the peculiar circumstances of the utterance of the two sentences. The two names 'Cicero' and 'Tully', when occurring within belief reports, refer to senses, and insofar as the sense Tom attaches to the name 'Cicero' is different from the sense he attaches with the name 'Tully', then the two belief reports will differ in their truth-value. The fact that the two names refer to the same individual does not pose any problem in this case as names go through a shift in their reference when occurring within the scope of an attitude verb. So a coherent semantics of belief reports must accommodate explanations of these nuances involved in belief reports.

To understand what a Hybrid View of belief reports is, let us first try to be clear about the overall picture of the philosophical discussion centring round the semantics of singular belief reports like, 'X believes that *a* is *F*', where X is the believer who is related to the proposition referred to by the 'that'-clause. A survey of the philosophical literature on

---

<sup>116</sup>By the 'circumstantiality' of a belief report we mean the context of the utterance of the report.

<sup>117</sup>See Crimmins [1992], pp.141-2.

the semantics of belief reports will show that there are three main possible ways in which philosophers have tried to provide an account of ascriptions of this kind. They are:

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| (a) The Direct Referential<br>Accounts of Belief Reports<br>(Sometimes called the<br>'naive view' <sup>118</sup> ). | (b) The Hybrid Account<br>of Belief Reports. | (c) The Fregean<br>Account of<br>Belief Reports. |
|---|--|--|

To highlight the differences between these three accounts, let us begin by giving a familiar kind of story. Tom, who goes jogging every morning to the West Sands, meets a very friendly dog whom he names 'Fido' and whom he believes to be male. When he goes shopping every evening, he also meets a very friendly dog that is waiting for its master in front of the grocers. Tom calls this dog 'Fi Fi' and thinks that Fi Fi is female. Unbeknownst to Tom, Fido and Fi Fi are the same dog. Now, when we ascribe to Tom the beliefs 'Tom believes that Fido is male', and 'Tom believes that Fi Fi is male', our intuition is that one of them is a true ascription, while the other is false; though 'Fido' and 'Fi Fi' are co-referential singular terms, they cannot be substituted in belief contexts without changing the truth-value of the whole sentence.

According to the Direct Referential Theory of belief ascriptions, or the naive view, uses of the two sentences 'Fido is male' and 'Fi Fi is male', express the same proposition, both being about the same dog. They further suppose that this equivalence holds even within a belief report, and so the following two sentences about Tom express the same claim, in spite of our intuition that due to Tom's ignorance about the identity of Fido and Fi Fi the sentence

- (1) Tom believes that Fido is male  
is true, while the sentence
- (2) Tom believes that Fi Fi is male  
is false.

---

<sup>118</sup>ibid, chapter 1.

In fact they claim that both of these attributions are true attributions. So on the Direct Referential account, the role of the singular term and the predicate within a belief context is nothing more than introducing the object/individual referred to by the singular term and the property referred to by the predicate. So the logical form of a sentence like, 'Tom believes that Fido is male', may be represented as

B ( Tom, < Fido, being male > ),

where the ordered pair of the object and the property represents the proposition expressed by the 'that'-clause; and the occurrences of the terms within the corner brackets are transparent, that is, they can be substituted for terms having the same reference without changing the truth-value of the sentence which is arrived at as a result of the substitution.

Salmon<sup>119</sup> has defended this kind of account of belief ascription. Defenders of this kind of analysis focus on the distinction between semantic and pragmatic facts about statements. Semantic facts are facts about meaning, reference, content, truth and falsity. While the pragmatic facts include those about propriety, purpose and intended effect of the statement. Now, what the naive theorists want to point out is this: it is not controversial that it would be wrong to use (2) to describe Tom's belief. What is controversial is to pinpoint wherein lies this incorrectness. Is the incorrectness a semantic fact about the use of (2), or is it only a pragmatic fact? Is the report false or is it only misleading or inappropriate? To reveal the pragmatic inappropriateness in using (2) to describe Tom's belief, Salmon has argued that although belief is a two-place relation between a believer and a singular (or a Russellian) proposition, it is also the 'existential generalisation' of a three-place relation 'BEL' whose third place represents the guise or the way of believing. Though (1) and (2) involve the same proposition, it is only by pragmatic implicature that they indicate the way in which it is believed. But the guise or the way of believing does not enter into the truth-conditions of belief report -- it is not the semantic content of the belief report. It is true that there seems to be a strong intuition to hold that (2) is false. Suppose we were to ask

---

<sup>119</sup>See Salmon [1986a], [1986b] and [1989].

someone, 'Does Tom believe that Fi Fi is male?', the correct answer obviously would be 'no'. However, the naive theorists think that our intuition that the assertion of (2) is incorrect cannot, by itself, decide the issue of its truth -- it is not always clear whether our intuitions of incorrectness are really intuitions about truth or about propriety.

The naive theorists support their view by developing arguments that lead us to question the truth intuitions that we have about these reports. Four main sorts of arguments have been provided:

- (a) Support from Above
- (b) Cancellability
- (c) Translation
- (d) Richard's Steamroller.

It might be worth outlining them very briefly here.<sup>120</sup> According to the first argument the naive theory is supported by some independent semantical principles, mainly the principle of articulated compositionality and direct reference. A principle of compositionality tells us that the content of a complex expression is made out of the content of its component expressions. Component expressions of a complex expression are taken to be those which are overtly used in the complex expression. So the principle of articulated compositionality tells us that the content in a statement of any complex expression depends only on the contents in the statement of its overt component expressions. The principle of direct reference, on the other hand, says that the statement of a simple predication, like 'P(a<sub>1</sub>...a<sub>n</sub>)', expresses the proposition that a certain property holds among certain objects. The name refers to the object, and the predicate refers to the property or the relation. The naive theorists identify the principle of direct reference with the principle of direct contribution of an expression, which says that the contribution of a name to the content of a containing statement is simply the object it denotes. By appealing to this principle, they argue that if all that the name contributes to the content of the statement is its referent, then the names with the same referent would make the same contribution. This is the case even

---

<sup>120</sup>For a detailed discussion see Crimmins [1992], chapter 1, pp.5-34.

within a belief report. So, we can substitute 'Fi Fi' for 'Fido' in (1) and (2) without any change in their truth-conditions.

Another reason for supporting the naive analysis is provided by the fact of cancellability of extra information. It is true that one of the main interests in semantics is grounded in the assumption that communication involves statements in which what is expressed is a big part of what is stated. But in a typical statement there may be propositions that are 'conveyed' apart from what is literally said. An assertive use of a sentence may convey non-expressively the information which is the primary goal of the sentence. For example, in the case of making an ironical remark the speaker intends to convey a proposition which is directly contrary to the proposition expressed. Following Grice, propositions that are thus conveyed non-expressively are called 'pragmatic implicatures'. In cases like these it is impossible to tell what proposition is being expressed by a statement: it could be the proposition the statement is primarily intended to convey, or the proposition it typically conveys, or it could be a proposition that the statement is conventionally understood to convey. Accepting this phenomenon, the naive theories agree that in a particular context, sentences (1) and (2) convey different propositions -- (1) is typically used to convey something true, while (2) is used to convey something false. But from this we cannot conclude that (1) and (2) express different propositions. In fact the principles of articulated compositionality and direct reference definitely imply that in both (1) and (2) the 'that'-clauses refer to the same proposition. According to Grice, these conveyed propositions or the implicatures, as he calls them, can be cancelled -- that is,

we have devices by which we can use the sentence to express its semantic content without conveying the usually implied information. We can, in this case, say "Caius believes that Hesperus is Hesperus. So, though he would not say 'Hesperus is Phosphorus', he really did believe that *Hesperus* is *Phosphorus* . . . The observation that the "extra" information is cancelable provides an instance of the predictive success of the hypothesis that this information,



when conveyed, is conveyed through pragmatic implicature.<sup>121</sup>

Therefore, there is no semantical difference between the sentences 'Caius believes that Hesperus is Hesperus' and 'Caius believes that Hesperus is Phosphorus'.

There are two other arguments in support of the naive view. One is that the facts of translation show that the two sentences 'Caius believes that Hesperus is an evening star' and 'Caius believes that Phosphorus is an evening star' have the same truth-value, as both the reports would receive the translation 'Caius believes that Venus is an evening star'. Mark Richard<sup>122</sup>, with the help of an example, tries to show why our ordinary truth-intuitions about belief reports are incorrect, and this example also provides a support for the naive account of belief report. Suppose A is talking on the telephone to B, and while talking sees a steamroller about to crush a telephone booth. B does not realise that the person inside the booth and the person on phone are the same. Reporting the whole thing to B, A says,

(i) I believe that she is in danger.

But, surely A cannot not say,

(ii) I believe that you are in danger.

So, ordinarily we think that while (i) is true (ii) is false, but Richard argues that (i) and (ii), in the described context, can be shown to be true at the same time. Suppose, B watching A's panicked behaviour, says,

(iii) The man watching me believes that I am in danger.

B's use of (iii) in this context is true, just as A's use of (i) is. Hearing B, A can now say,

(iv) The man watching you believes that you are in danger.

Now, as (iii) is true so is (iv). But in the described context the sentence 'I am the man watching you' is also true. But from this sentence and (iv) we can immediately derive (ii). And as both (iv) and the sentence 'I am the man watching you' are true, so is (ii). Therefore, both (i) and (ii), which

---

<sup>121</sup>Crimmins [1992], p.23.

<sup>122</sup>Richard [1983] and [1990] discusses this example. We will come back to this example in detail later on in the dissertation, and so it will just be outlined here.

appeared to have different truth-values, are true. This seems to be a clear counter-example to our truth-intuitions about belief ascriptions. Such are the different arguments put forward by the naive theorists in support of their claim.

Apart from the Direct Referential analysis, another way of analysing belief reports is the traditional Fregean way. According to the orthodox Fregean approach, if we take the 'that'-clauses within belief reports to be referential singular terms, then the entire 'that'-clause would refer to a structured proposition made up of modes of presentation of objects and properties. Therefore, the reference of the 'that'-clause, 'that Fido is a dog' in 'Tom believes that Fido is a dog', is a combination of the mode of presentation of the reference of 'Fido' and the mode of presentation of the reference of 'dog'. According to this account, the belief report 'Tom believes that Fido is a dog' can be represented in the following way:

$$B (\text{Tom} < m_f, m_d >),$$

where  $m_f$  is the mode of presentation of Fido and  $m_d$  is the mode of presentation of being a dog. This account provides a straight forward answer to the question as to why is it that the report 'Tom believes that Fido is male' is true while the report 'Tom believes that Fi Fi is male' is false, by appealing to the difference in the mode of presentation of the dog in both cases.

The Hybrid View of belief reports is fundamentally different from these two previous accounts in the sense that it does not think that the semantic content of a belief report consists merely of a Russellian singular proposition, nor merely of a Fregean thought. According to philosophers adhering to this kind of analysis, the content of belief is both a singular proposition referring to particular objects and properties and 'implicitly referred to and contextually determined types of mode of presentation.'<sup>123</sup> The sentences used to make belief reports are like sentences containing indexicals, not true nor false simpliciter but only with respect to the

---

<sup>123</sup>Schiffer [1992] , p.503.

context of utterance. On Schiffer's view, the logical form of an utterance of the sentence 'Tom believes that Fido is a dog' may be represented as

$$(\exists m) (\emptyset^*m \ \& \ B \ ( \text{Tom}, \langle \text{Fido}, \text{doghood} \rangle, m)),$$

where  $\emptyset^*m$  is the type of mode of presentation.<sup>124</sup>

The reason why such an account can be said to be an Hybrid account is that the analysis of belief report involves both a Russellian proposition and some kind of mode of presentation. This will become clear in discussing in detail Crimmins's view. As Schiffer points out, the representation of 'Tom believes that Fido is a dog' as

$$(\exists m) (\emptyset^*m \ \& \ B \ ( \text{Tom}, \langle \text{Fido}, \text{doghood} \rangle, m))$$

implies the following things: <sup>125</sup>

(a) It implies that 'believes' is a three-place relational predicate relating a believer to a Russellian singular proposition and modes of presentations of those propositions.

(b) The 'that'-clause in the belief ascribing sentence is a referential singular term referring to the singular proposition  $\langle \text{Fido}, \text{doghood} \rangle$ , and the referents of the two expressions 'Fido' and 'dog' are Fido and doghood respectively.

(c) It further implies that an utterance of the sentence requires reference to a type of mode of presentation, so that an utterance of 'Tom believes that Fido is a dog' is true just in the case where  $(\exists m) (\emptyset^*m \ \& \ B \ ( \text{Tom}, \langle \text{Fido}, \text{doghood} \rangle, m))$  holds.

---

<sup>124</sup>According to Schiffer, a type of mode of presentation is a property of modes of presentation.  $\emptyset^*$  might be a property that a propositional mode of presentation has 'when and only when it requires thinking of Fido as being the dog who appears in the morning and requires thinking of doghood as a property shared by such-and-such similar-looking creatures.'

<sup>125</sup>ibid, p.504.

(d) It also tells us that this contextually determined reference to a mode of presentation is by a 'hidden indexical' as there is no actual indexical in the belief ascribing sentence to refer to it.<sup>126</sup>

### 3.3. Motivation for the Hybrid View

There are two kinds of considerations which have tended to motivate a view of the Hybrid variety. The first motivation comes from the inadequacies that the proponents find in both the orthodox Fregean view as well as the Direct Referential view. The second, more positive, motivation is the desire for generality, that is, the desire to develop a semantics of belief ascriptions that would account for *all* kinds of belief attribution.

We can, at this point, mention some of the difficulties that philosophers like Crimmins, Richard and Schiffer find in the Fregean and the Russellian account of belief ascription. We have noted that the reason for Frege's view of reference shift of terms in belief contexts is to provide an explanation for the difference in truth-value of reports like 'Caius believes that Hesperus is the evening star' and 'Caius believes that Phosphorus is the evening star'. But the concept of a mode of presentation itself has difficulties. In the first place, as Schiffer points out,<sup>127</sup> there are different ways in which the notion of a mode of presentation may be understood and we need to give well-motivated arguments for choosing one among them.<sup>128</sup> Furthermore, whatever we take modes of presentation to be, Schiffer gives an example of a general belief report to show why modes of presentation cannot be regarded as the content of the belief report. Suppose someone says

---

<sup>126</sup>The reference to a type of mode of presentation is contextually determined in the sense that different types may be referred to on different occasions of utterance, and therefore the word 'indexical' is used. This indexical is hidden because there is no word occurring in the belief report which refers to that type of mode of presentation.

<sup>127</sup>See Schiffer [1992]; Schiffer [1987b], chapter 3; and Schiffer [1990].

<sup>128</sup>Note that this is not only a problem with the traditional Fregean account of belief ascription but any account, and also the hybrid view under consideration, which takes belief reports to include modes of presentation. This is an issue which will be discussed in detail in the subsequent chapters -- particularly the chapter on Fregean analysis of belief ascribing sentences. But it should be noted that Schiffer, in fact, cannot use this objection to the Fregean view if his aim is to make a case for the hybrid view. So it seems that this objection really does not help Schiffer in any way.

(3) Everyone who has ever known Wittgenstein believes that he is a genius.

According to Schiffer, the Fregean proposal suggests that there is a particular mode of presentation *m* of Wittgenstein and a mode of presentation *m'* of a particular property of being a genius such that whoever knows Wittgenstein believes the proposition  $\langle m, m' \rangle$ . But as the well-known argument against the Fregeans goes, this is really too strong a requirement on the truth of (3). It is impossible for everyone who has ever known Wittgenstein to share a single mode of presentation of him. There are different ways in which different people think of Wittgenstein, and further arguments are needed to show why we pick out a single mode of presentation and claim that anybody who knew him believed him to be a genius under that particular mode.

Even if we are able to make this choice, Schiffer points out another difficulty in the general Fregean account of belief ascriptions which takes modes of presentation to be the content of belief reports. In the first place, the belief that Fido is a dog may truly be ascribed to different people even if they think of Fido and doghood in radically different ways. Hence 'this shows that 'that Fido is a dog' makes no context-independent reference to a mode-of -presentation containing proposition.'<sup>129</sup> Moreover, the 'that'-clause does not make any context-dependent reference to modes of presentation of Fido and doghood either. One may correctly report someone's belief even if not in a position to specify the modes of presentation that person has for Fido and for doghood in that particular context. And, 'if it makes neither a context independent nor a context dependent reference to such a proposition, then it makes no reference at all.'<sup>130</sup> The point of making this objection against the Fregeans is to show that there can be no specific mode of presentation involved -- context dependent or otherwise. So if modes of presentation come into the semantics of belief ascription at all, they must be mentioned non-specifically (that is, by existentially quantifying over them) as it is done in Schiffer's variety of the hybrid view. Hence, one of the motivations for

---

<sup>129</sup>Schiffer [1992], p.508.

<sup>130</sup>ibid, p.508.

giving a hybrid analysis of belief ascription is due to the problems that a Fregean account faces. Instead of taking a thought (in the Fregean sense) to be the only reference of a 'that'-clause within a belief ascription, they think that its partial contribution consists in referring to a singular proposition made out of the references of the constituent expressions and which is fixed in a particular context.

Like the Fregean proposal, the naive view of belief ascription, according to these philosophers, is inadequate for providing us with an acceptable semantics of belief report. Crimmins, Schiffer and others<sup>131</sup> think that it is unacceptable even with the refinements suggested by Salmon. Crimmins rebuts the four arguments (mentioned in the previous section) by showing that the naive view is neither an inevitable consequence of broad semantic principles, such as direct reference and compositionality, nor does it get good enough support from Grice's criterion of cancellability. The naive view seems to depend heavily on the principle of articulated compositionality and direct reference of the expressions occurring in the belief report. But there are counter-examples to both full articulation and direct contribution. Cases where full articulation fails, involve those where some constituents are unarticulated and are to be determined by context. When we say 'it is raining', it is obvious that the verb 'to rain' must have as arguments at least a time and a place -- it must have, as Crimmins says, 'more parameters' in it than we explicitly think it to have. The principle of direct contribution, on the other hand, is defeated by cases like Quine's example 'Giorgione was so-called because of his size'. In this example the name 'Giorgione' does not stand simply for the person but its contribution consists in referring to the name itself. Therefore, both these principles are insensitive to the variations in belief reports due to variations in contexts. Both these points will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

So, as Schiffer sums up the position of a Hybrid theorist:

Here, then, is our situation. We are motivated to see [1]'s (that is 'Fido is a dog') 'that'-clause as a referential singular

---

<sup>131</sup>See Schiffer [1987a], and Crimmins [1992], chapter 1.

term whose reference is the proposition that Fido is a dog. ..., we must hold the reference of this 'that'-clause to be determined by its syntax and the semantic values of the words in the 'that'-clause have in it. Those semantic values -- cannot be modes of presentation, and the only viable option is that they are Fido for 'Fido', and doghood for 'dog'. At the same time we cannot accept the representation of [1] as [4] (that is, 'B (Ralph, <Fido, doghood>)', for we also want to allow that Ralph does not believe that Fido is a shmog.<sup>132</sup>

These, then, are the reasons which motivate philosophers to take a hybrid approach. On the one hand, these philosophers do not want to face the difficulties that a Fregean faces as to the unavailability of the particular mode of presentation to the ascriber. On the other hand, they think that the truth intuitions about belief ascriptions, being genuine, need to be explained by bringing in modes of presentation, in an important way, into the semantics of belief ascribing sentences themselves. The way these philosophers introduce modes of presentation into the semantics of belief ascribing sentences is by existentially quantifying over them. This helps them to avoid the difficulties the Fregeans face as it eliminates any reference to any specific mode of presentation.<sup>133</sup>

---

<sup>132</sup>Schiffer [1992], p.509. Even the predicate position in a belief ascription is taken to be opaque. Suppose Ralph comes across a race of creatures which he thinks he has not encountered before. He introduces the term 'shmog' to refer to individual members of this species. Unbeknownst to him, however, schmoghood is doghood. He has not come across a new species but only a new race of dogs. In a case like this we would want to say that Ralph does not believe that Fido is a schmog, though, in fact doghood is shmoghood and Ralph does believe that Fido is a dog.

<sup>133</sup>There is a prima facie way to avoid the difficulties centring around modes of presentation and yet not accept an hybrid analysis of the kind suggested by Schiffer. This analysis would avoid the introduction of a structured Russellian proposition into the semantics of the belief ascribing sentence like, 'Ralph believes that Fido is a dog'. It is a proposal of roughly the following form:

(∃m)(∃m') (m is a mode of presentation of Fido & m' is a mode of presentation of doghood & B (Ralph, <m, m'>)).

This proposal is very different from the Hybrid View, as the proposition representing the content of belief is made out of modes of presentation, and therefore, is not Russellian. Against suggestions of this kind, Schiffer's argument is that it has devastating problems in cases where we say 'Ralph says that Fido is a dog'. If we say that in uttering 'Fido is a dog', Ralph really made a proposition containing modes of presentation of Fido and doghood, then 'there would be a specification of what he said that is other than 'that Fido is a dog' and that refers to a mode-of-presentation-containing proposition. But it is clear that there need be no such alternative specification of what he said.'(Schiffer [1992],

Before going on to the discussion as to what may be taken to be wrong with giving a semantics of belief report of this general kind, it is worth looking into one of the Hybrid Views in more detail, and worth trying to bring out the general features of this kind of account. I shall here concentrate on the semantics of belief reports provided by Crimmins [1992], which is a further development of the semantics proposed by Crimmins and Perry [1989], and is a special version of the hidden indexical theory proposed by Schiffer [1992].

### 3.4. Mark Crimmins on the Semantics of Belief Reports

According to Crimmins, the two features which we should keep in mind when giving semantics of belief reports are:

- (a) the fact of context sensitivity of belief reports, and,
- (b) the way in which expressions occurring within a belief report function.

A belief report exhibits the context sensitivity analogous to a use of the sentence 'it is raining' or a use of the term 'you'. As has just been mentioned, when, in a context, we utter the sentence 'it is raining', some additional argument or parameter is required in order for the utterance to express a complete proposition, which can be regarded as true or false, and, therefore, we tacitly refer to these additional facts. These can be regarded as the unarticulated constituents of the proposition that are provided by the particular context of an utterance. In a similar way, the proposition expressed by a belief report contains an unarticulated constituent -- the unarticulated constituent being the way the believer is said to believe the proposition. So a tacit reference is made to the way of believing in the case of a belief report. Let us take two examples of belief reports where the names occurring within the 'that'-clause refer to the same person.

- (4) Lois Lane believes that Superman can fly.
- (5) Lois Lane believes that Clark Kent can fly.<sup>134</sup>

---

p.506) A special form of this view is found in Graeme Forbes's writings. It will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

<sup>134</sup>Let us, as indicated earlier, take the Superman story to be true.



There must be some relevant difference between 4 and 5 which would enable us to explain how 4 can be true while 5 is false. As Bach remarks,

In Crimmins' view the relevant difference does not meet the eye (or ear): the proposition expressed by a belief report contains an 'unarticulated constituent', namely, the way the agent is being said to believe the specified proposition. The occurrence of 'believes' determines that *some* way of believing is being tacitly referred to, but which way of believing this is, like any provision of an unarticulated constituent, is determined pragmatically ...<sup>135</sup>

Furthermore, proper names and other expressions that occur within the belief report have a double role:

- (a) the semantic role which they play in simpler sentences; and,
- (b) the pragmatic or contextual role that helps to determine the constituent of the claim made.

Their function can be explained by using Quine's example again,

- (6) Giorgione was so called because of his size.

As Quine points out, (4) should be paraphrased as,

- (7) Giorgione was called 'Giorgione' because of his size.

The reason for paraphrasing (6) in the above way is that the name 'Giorgione', which occurs in the 'so-called' construction, not only picks out the reference of the name, that is the painter Barbarelli, but also the name 'Giorgione' itself -- the name which was used to refer to the man because of his size.<sup>136</sup> Crimmins claims that the same kind of thing

---

<sup>135</sup> Bach, [1993], p.432.

<sup>136</sup>It should be noted that Crimmins makes a slight change in the way 4 is paraphrased into 5. He thinks that it is better to paraphrase 4 as 'Giorgione was called that because of his size', where 'that' functions as a demonstrative which picks out a particular name in a relevant context. It accommodates cases where the artist is called by a name, apart from 'Giorgione', say, 'Mr. Big' because of his size.

happens in cases of proper names occurring within a belief context. Names within a context of this kind play a dual role as well. There are two features exhibited by a 'so-called' construction' which Crimmins wants to attribute to belief reports. One is that the claim made with the help of a belief report depends on the total circumstances of the report, because tacit reference is made to contextually determined objects. The other feature is that names and other expressions in a belief report can play two roles -- both a semantic as well as a pragmatic role (just like the name 'Giorgione' in the so-called construction). The reason why the report 'Tom believes that Cicero is a Roman' is true, while the report 'Tom believes that Tully is a Roman' is false is due to the fact that though the two names refer to the same individual, they contribute differently to the utterances.

In cases of belief reports like, 'Tom believes that Cicero is a Roman', Tom has to think of Cicero and the property of being a Roman, that is he must believe the singular Russellian proposition, represented as <Cicero, being a Roman>, and he must, at the same time, have some representation of Cicero and some representation of being a Roman. Among the representations that figure in belief contexts, representations of things are what Crimmins calls 'notions', and representations of properties and relations are what he calls 'ideas'. The 'way of believing' is composed of the particular representations<sup>137</sup> employed by the agent to represent objects and properties or relations that the proposition is about. What we claim in a belief report is that 'the agent believes a certain proposition in a way such that certain ideas and notions are responsible for representing certain constituents of the proposition.'<sup>138</sup> And these ideas and notions constitute the unarticulated constituents of a belief report. In reporting beliefs of this kind we should keep in mind what Crimmins calls a thought map. A thought map, according to him, is

... a structural type such that a particular belief is of that type just in case the belief involves certain actually existing

---

<sup>137</sup>Part of what distinguishes Crimmins's account from the hidden indexical theory introduced by Schiffer is that the way of believing is composed of particular representations rather than types of modes of presentation.

<sup>138</sup>Crimmins, [1992], p.152.

representations (notions and ideas) in a certain structural arrangement. [my underline]

Beliefs involving notions and ideas are given by thought maps. So, if an agent at a particular time  $t$  believes a proposition  $p$  involving particular notions and ideas, then he believes  $p$  in a way given by a thought map. An example would make the point clear. Suppose I report a belief of Susan's as

(8) Susan believes that Smith fired Tom.

According to Crimmins' view of the semantic structure of belief reports, it is claimed that Susan has a belief in a proposition which is about two individuals Smith and Tom and about the relation of firing, with particular notions and ideas associated with this content. Therefore, the content of the utterance of 8 can be represented in the following way:

$(\exists r) [ \text{Believes} ( \text{Susan}, t, \langle \text{Fired}, \langle \text{Smith}, \text{Tom} \rangle \rangle , r ) \ \& \ \text{Involves} ( r, n_{\text{Smith}} ), \text{Involves} ( r, n_{\text{Tom}} ), \text{Involves} ( r, i_{\text{Fired}} ) ]$ .<sup>139</sup>

This says that there is a thought map such that Susan believes the singular proposition under that thought map, and this thought map involves a particular notion of Smith, a particular notion of Tom, and a particular idea of being fired that Susan attaches to the respective names and the predicate. In simpler terms, the claim is that Susan at a particular time  $t$  believes a proposition  $p$  in a way that involves her representations  $n_{\text{Smith}}$ ,  $n_{\text{Tom}}$ , and  $i_{\text{Fired}}$ . So, in a proposal of this kind we existentially quantify over thought maps which, however, involve particular notions and ideas. But this representation does not capture the whole of the claim made in the belief report 8. The report not only takes into consideration the particular notions and ideas associated with Susan's belief, but it also tells us which particular notions and ideas are responsible for determining the relevant contents of belief. As Crimmins says, "The "how" information expressed in belief reports includes information of this kind, about which representations are (allegedly) responsible for which roles in

---

<sup>139</sup>ibid, p.153.

the proposition (allegedly) believed.<sup>140</sup> In 8 the notion  $n_{Smith}$  is responsible for determining the firer,  $n_{Tom}$  is responsible for determining the firee, while  $i_{fired}$  is responsible for determining the property firing. This is what Crimmins calls the responsibility clause of a belief report. A better way of representing the content of the utterance of 8 would thus be,

$$(\exists r) [ \text{Believes} ( \text{Susan}, t, \langle \text{Fired}, \langle \text{Smith}, \text{Tom} \rangle \rangle, r ) \& \\ \text{Responsible} ( n_{\text{Smith}}, r, \text{Smith} ) \& \\ \text{Responsible} ( n_{\text{Tom}}, r, \text{Tom} ) \& \\ \text{Responsible} ( i_{\text{Fired}}, r, \text{Fired} ) ] .$$

According to Crimmins the responsibility clause adds to the semantics of belief reports in two ways:

First it places some internal requirements on the alleged belief; it must involve certain notions and ideas. Second, it places relational requirements on the belief with respect to its content: the notions and ideas in the belief must be appropriately related, via ties of responsibility, to the roles in its content. This belief report specifies three things about the agent's alleged belief: its component, its content, and the connections between its component and its content.<sup>141</sup>

This is, in brief, the account of belief reports given by Mark Crimmins. The above semantic account, and any account essentially of this kind, depends heavily on the phenomenon of unarticulated constituency. The responsibility clause, as brought forward by Crimmins, is really the unarticulated constituent of the propositional content which has no overt expression in the sentence mentioning it explicitly. It is, however, used by the semantics as an essential building block of the statements' content. As we have noted earlier (see section 3.2) the Direct Referential account of belief report is supported by the principle of articulated compositionality. But Crimmins tries to show that there are obvious counter-examples to

---

<sup>140</sup>ibid, 154.

<sup>141</sup>Ibid, p. 155.

full articulation, like the unarticulated reference to the place in an utterance of the sentence 'It is raining'. According to Crimmins

To assume that the principle of articulated compositionality applies to belief reports is to assume that belief reports are not underarticulated; and we have no reason to make this assumption. The claims made in belief reports may well be sensitive to parameters that are fixed in context, yet are not contributed semantically by any overt expressions.<sup>142</sup>

Crimmins is of the opinion that, apart from the fact that full articulation is not a general principle governing the semantics of uses of sentences, there is a strong reason to believe that belief reports have unarticulated constituents. This is provided by our having conflicting intuitions about truth-values of uses of belief-ascribing sentences composed of parts which have the same referents. So he says, 'If there is no differences in what the expressions provide , where can the difference in propositional content come from? Only from what no expression provides.'<sup>143</sup> Articulated constituents, therefore, are not always the only things that statements are about. We will discuss more about the working of unarticulated constituents in belief reports in the section which is to follow.

If notions and ideas are, in this way, tacitly referred to, how does a belief ascriber manage to communicate which of these notions and ideas he is talking about? The answer to this question is that they are provided by the context of the utterance of the expression -- by the total circumstances under which the sentence has been uttered. Very often when someone's belief about a particular object is reported, it is contextually determined which notion of that object the belief involves. It is, therefore, possible for the speaker to ascribe a belief content which includes that notion without explicitly specifying the notion in question, simply because the context supplies it. In this framework, what is explicitly stated by a belief report like, 'Ralph believes that Fido is a dog' is that the believer Ralph believes a certain singular proposition -- the proposition

---

<sup>142</sup>ibid, p.19.

<sup>143</sup>ibid, p 19.

which the embedded sentence expresses. But the statement also includes something which is not explicitly articulated and nevertheless belongs to what is said.

In the case of an ordinary belief report, we take for granted that the believer has some normal notions and ideas which are the constituents of a belief report. A notion or an idea is normal just in case the agent represents the object and the property in the usual way -- with the normal beliefs and recognitional capacities which are essential for having that notion or idea. Though it is true that what counts as normal depends on the intent and the purpose of the discourse and the community among which the agent is being considered, it is not impossible to see what the normal notion or idea would be in the particular context of an utterance. For example, if we report the belief of a person P about John Major, then we assume that P has a normal notion of John Major. Again when we report a belief of P involving the property of being tall, then we assume that he has a normal understanding of what tall is, when to apply this predicate to a person etc. Let us consider Crimmins' own example.<sup>144</sup>

Sarah believes that Jackson will be the President

In reporting this belief it is evident that the reporter is talking about Jesse Jackson and that by 'the President' she means the President of The United States of America. She assumes that Sarah has a normal notion of Jackson and a normal notion of what constitutes the property of being the President of America. Therefore, 'it is an extremely good bet that she has a normal notion of Jackson in the sense just described. And when all parties to the dialogue know that it is an extremely good bet that a certain notion exists, and such a notion is relevant, then it can be talked about with a belief report. Of course, we can imagine an example in which, through a series of coincidences, Sarah has never heard of Jackson. In that case there would be a presupposition failure leading to the failure of reference.'<sup>145</sup> As it has already been pointed out, the normality requirement varies from context to context. In cases where the speakers are not involved in

---

<sup>144</sup>ibid, p.158.

<sup>145</sup>ibid, p.159.

discussing American politics, the normal notions and ideas associated with individuals and properties would vary. Suppose the reporter, in a gathering consisting of persons working in a particular company, where both she and Sarah work, utters the same sentence. In that case Jackson may be someone holding an important position in the company and the property of being a president is the property of being the president of that company. In cases like this the same sentence may involve different normal notions and ideas.

Crimmins's account is, no doubt, very similar to the hidden indexical account of belief report provided by Schiffer. Believing is not a two-place but a three-place relation between a believer, a structured proposition consisting of objects and properties, and ways of believing provided by the responsibility clause. However, there is an important respect in which Crimmins's view differs from the hidden indexical view as found in Schiffer. The hidden indexical view introduces ways of believing into the semantics by existentially quantifying over them and therefore avoiding reference to particular modes of presentation. For Crimmins a way of believing is composed of particular representations; that is, belief reports are taken to refer literally to particular notions and ideas. Someone might say that, contrary to what I claim, Crimmins's account is a quantificational account. But, as has been emphasised earlier, Crimmins's account, though it quantifies over thought-maps, claims that the thought map involves particular notions and ideas of the believer and makes reference to them.

Crimmins account is not the same as Salmon's naive view. Having rejected the arguments put forward by the naive view against truth intuitions about belief reports, he shows that ways of believing enter into the truth conditions of belief reports, and, thus, are an integral part of the semantics of belief report. Crimmins sums up the essential features of his semantic analysis of belief ascribing sentences in the following way:

In reporting what someone believes, I argue, we refer *explicitly* to the structured proposition that allegedly is the content of her belief and also *tacitly* to internal

representations that allegedly are involved in the belief. In general, I argue that our ways of talking about thought are in one way extremely direct and in another shot through with pragmatic subtleties. When we say what someone thinks about or believes, the *objects* of thought or belief we attribute are determined by the referents of our words. But we add tacit provisos about *how* they think about the alleged objects of thought or belief. <sup>146</sup>

Hopefully it is clear by now that Crimmins's account of belief ascription is a version of the Hybrid View, as it involves both a structured Russellian proposition and some ways of thinking about the objects and properties. The hybrid nature of these reports may be made clearer if we consider the entities with which such an account deals. There are three things to be taken into consideration in case of a belief report:

- (a) The proposition expressed by or the semantic content of the embedded sentence of a belief report;
- (b) The reference of the 'that'-clause within the reported belief; and,
- (c) The ascribed belief content. <sup>147</sup>

In Crimmins's framework, a belief report like, 'Tom believes that Cicero is a Roman', explicitly states that the believer John believes a certain proposition. This proposition is the same as the proposition expressed by the embedded sentence 'Cicero is a Roman'. The proposition expressed by the embedded sentence is constituted by the object referred to by the name 'Cicero' and the property referred to by the predicate 'Roman'. The reference of the 'that' clause is the same as the reference of the embedded sentence, whereas, the content ascribed to the believer is

---

<sup>146</sup>ibid p.ix.

<sup>147</sup>We can here note that there might be two different version of the Hybrid View depending on whether we equate or distinguish a and b. According to Crimmins and Schiffer the proposition expressed by the embedded sentence and the referent of the 'that'-clause are the same -- that is, they take the 'that'-clause to refer to what the embedded sentence expresses. But there might be another possible version of the Hybrid View which can maintain that the embedded sentence in a belief report refers to a Russellian proposition, while the 'that'-clause refers to something richer -- the embedded sentence together with some kind of mode of presentation. However, for our understanding of Crimmins's account we don't have to separate a from b.



much more complex -- it includes relevant modes of presentation of objects and properties. Hence there are two different kinds of things involved in a belief report and thus, the view can legitimately be called a Hybrid View. But analysing belief reports in this way, which avoids certain difficulties of the Fregean and the Russellian accounts, is not without difficulties of its own.

### 3.5. The Hybrid View Evaluated

One of the very first problems with the Hybrid View, concerns the logical form of the belief report. According to a theory of this general kind 'believing is a three-place relational predicate (or a four-place relational predicate if we take into consideration the time of utterance) one of whose arguments is the way of believing itself. So the report 'Ralph believes that Fido is a dog' should be paraphrased and expanded in the manner of, 'Ralph believes that Fido is a dog in a way *w* or under the mode of presentation *m*'. But from the mere fact that to believe something, one must believe it in some way or other, it does not follow that the way of believing or the mode of presentation should be regarded as a third argument of the relation of believing. It looks more like a two-place relation with an adverbial qualifier<sup>148</sup>. For example, someone might walk at one pace or another, but that does not make walking a relation between the walker and the particular pace at which he walks. Perhaps a way of believing is like pace with respect to walking. Its three-place form is not at all explicit as the three-placedness of the verb 'gives' is. If we say 'She gave the car', the sentence remains incomplete till we specify to whom she gave it, e.g. 'She gave the car to her son', and is an answer to the question 'to whom did she give it?', but no one, in an ordinary context in which he reports Ralph's belief, is asked the question 'under what mode of presentation does Ralph believe that Fido is a dog?'

In answer to this objection, a proponent of the Hybrid View might say that it is precisely due to this peculiarity of the belief relation that his account says that belief reports make tacit references to modes of presentation. In fact, the complexity of a belief report can be revealed by

---

<sup>148</sup>This has been suggested by Schiffer [1992], and by Bach [1993]...

bringing out the complex logical form of the sentence ascribing the belief, and therefore, this should not be taken as a serious objection to the analysis in question. I am inclined to agree that this is not a serious objection to the Hybrid View. But it may be that one way to press the point a bit further is to argue that only if ways of believing are constituents of the proposition which the belief is about, can it be supposed that a belief report must refer to them. Only then would failing to refer, even tacitly, to a way of believing the thing believed, entail that the belief report did not express a complete proposition. But for the Hybrid View, as the 'that'-clause in a belief report expresses a Russellian proposition, the belief being ascribed must also be a belief in a Russellian proposition. So, in no way does the mode of presentation tacitly referred to enter into the proposition believed.<sup>149</sup> And therefore, one might argue that the mode of presentation does not constitute a third argument in the relation of believing. Hybrid theorists might come back and say that I am missing their point altogether here. The very fact of tacit reference to a mode of presentation indicates that the mode of presentation does enter into the proposition believed. Maybe I am. So, I might as well leave this point of controversy and move to those others where there seem to be some more definite and philosophically interesting problems involved.

Before going into the more serious difficulties that the Hybrid View seems to face, two distinctive features of this view need highlighting. One, which has already been mentioned, is that it takes both the singular Russellian proposition and some kind of mode of presentation to be the semantic or truth conditional content of a belief report. Recall that according to philosophers adhering to this view, there is a difference between the reference of the 'that'-clause on the one hand, and the content of the ascribed belief on the other. The mode of presentation that is included in the content of the belief report is the unarticulated constituent provided by the context of the utterance, and this shows the context-sensitivity of the report analogous to the context-sensitivity of utterances like 'It is raining', 'It is 2 o'clock' etc. The sentence 'Cicero is a Roman' in the belief report 'Tom believes that Cicero is a Roman' refers

---

<sup>149</sup>Note that this problem does not occur in case of a Fregean analysis of belief report because they take the mode of presentation to be a constitutive part of the proposition believed.

to a Russellian proposition. The terms 'Cicero' and 'Roman' in the embedded sentence 'Cicero is a Roman' makes no contribution other than referring to the individual in question and the property of being Roman which the individual is supposed to instantiate. In this respect there is no difference between 'Tom believes that Cicero is a Roman' and 'Tom believes that Tully is a Roman'. The difference in their truth-value, however, is due to the difference in their unarticulated constituents provided by the contexts of the utterances of the respective sentences. That is why it is the unarticulated constituents that are regarded as full-fledged truth-conditional constituents of sentences like 'Tom believes that Cicero is a Roman'. This, then is the picture of the Hybrid View.

The second feature of the Hybrid View consists of how modes of presentation are introduced in to the semantics of belief reports. There are two alternative ways in which they may be introduced. One way is by specifically referring to them, and the other way is by existentially quantifying over them. In the case of the first alternative, which seems to be one way of interpreting Crimmins's account -- as he seems to say that specific notions and ideas are involved in a belief report -- an objection similar to the one against the Fregean account can be raised. It is the problem concerning how we are to know which particular mode of presentation is being referred to. To avoid this problem (which really seems to be an important one) philosophers have tried to introduce modes of presentations in a different way. According to the second alternative, in an ordinary belief report we really existentially quantify over modes of presentation or the unarticulated constituents. So we can say that a report like, 'Tom believes that Fido is a dog', in general, is to be paraphrased along the following lines: There is a mode of presentation such that Tom believes that Fido is a dog under that mode of presentation. The advantage of this way of analysing belief reports lies in the fact that by avoiding reference to a particular mode of presentation, this analysis can avoid the difficulties that a traditional Fregean account faces.

This way of introducing unarticulated constituents into an account of belief reports, however, implies a marked difference in the functioning of unarticulated constituents in an utterance like, 'It is raining' and the

functioning of unarticulated constituents in an utterance like 'Tom believes that Fido is a dog'. The context of an utterance of 'It is raining' helps us in fully specifying the unarticulated constituent -- in this case, the particular place, date and time, where and when it is raining. And it is only after we completely articulate the unarticulated constituents that we are able determine whether the sentence 'It is raining' in the particular context of the utterance is true or false. But this kind of full articulation of modes of presentation is not allowed in that version of the Hybrid View which existentially quantifies over modes of presentation. The unarticulated constituent is articulated, but articulated in a more non-specific way.

I would now like to mention a type of difficulty afflicting any general analysis of this sort. The main difficulty with the Hybrid View involves a tension between claims made by the theory itself. Note that the hybrid theorists emphasise the context-sensitivity of belief reports but, at the same time, when dealing with sentences embedded within belief reports, they seem to play down the factor of context-sensitivity. They insist that the semantic value of the embedded sentence in a sentence like, 'Ralph believes that Fido is a dog', is a singular proposition that does not include the unarticulated modes of presentation which are contextually provided. For them the unarticulated constituent is a constituent of the proposition expressed by the belief report but not a constituent of the singular proposition expressed by the embedded sentence. One may find a tension between these two claims -- the general claim about unarticulated constituency, which provides the basis for their account of belief reports, and the particular claim that the embedded sentence in a belief report refers to a singular proposition uncontaminated by unarticulated constituents. The obvious question that arises is that if unarticulated constituents can contextually enrich the interpretation of an utterance such as 'It is raining', why can we not say that they enrich the embedded sentence 'Cicero is a Roman' in 'Ralph believes that Cicero is a Roman'? Furthermore, the fact that the sentence 'Cicero is a Roman' in a belief report, making reference to a singular/Russellian proposition, suggests that, at the level of an embedded sentence, these philosophers accept the principle of strict compositionality --that is the reference of the whole

sentence is determined completely by the references of its parts which are, or can be, fully articulated. But the principle of strict compositionality should be abandoned for belief sentences since the semantic value of the report depends upon unarticulated constituents which are not parts of the embedded sentence. Their claim that strict compositionality should be rejected for belief reports, and not in general, is an ad hoc one and seems to be at odds with the great importance they give to context sensitivity of expressions.

A Hybrid theorist might point out here that, contrary to what I say, unarticulated constituents can and do enrich the embedded sentence in certain contexts. Let us take an example:

Tom believes that it is raining.

In this case it is quite obvious that the unarticulated constituents determine both the semantic value of the embedded sentence and that of the whole report. What the speaker means is that Tom believes that it is now raining in a certain contextually determined place . On a Hybrid View, this would mean that the Russellian proposition, to which the embedded clause refers, is determined, at least in part, by an unarticulated constituent. And on this view, the semantic value of the whole report (but not that of the embedded clause) will be a function of certain other unarticulated constituents -- a mode of presentation of the place and the mode of presentation of raining. By appealing to examples of this kind, the hybrid theorists might answer my worries about strict compositionality as well as about contextual enrichment.

The first step towards attempting an answer to the Hybrid theorists here would be to remind ourselves of the feature of unarticulated constituents in the context of an ascription of belief which distinguishes them from unarticulated constituents in the context of an utterance of a sentence having an indexical expression. Let us try to look at the point in more detail. By separating the unarticulated constituents of a belief report -- that is, modes of presentation -- from the proposition believed and then providing them in the analysis of the belief report by quantifying over them, these philosophers seem to introduce modes of presentation as

having quite different functions from the unarticulated constituents in an utterance of 'It is raining'. This point might be made clearer with the help of an example. Suppose I ring up my Mother in India and she asks me 'How is the weather?' and I answer by saying (as usual) 'It is raining'. She, of course, understands that it is raining in St. Andrews from the context. She puts down the phone and tells my Father, who is also quite eager to know what the weather is like in St. Andrews (hoping that he is going to hear something new this time), 'M said that it's raining'. What I want to emphasise here is that in a conversational situation like this, the place of utterance cannot be separated from the proposition expressed by the sentence 'It is raining'. The unarticulated constituent of the sentence 'It is raining', that is, the place, is an inseparable part of the proposition that the sentence expresses. This feature will be accepted by the Hybrid theorists as well. Why do I think so? I think that it follows from their analysis of the propositional attitude ascribing sentence itself. The analysis of a belief report like,

Tom believes that it is raining

along the line of an hybrid account, would be that Tom believes a Russellian proposition involving the place and raining under a mode of presentation of the place and the mode of presentation of raining. Therefore, the singular proposition, even in a belief report of the above kind, would essentially involve the place which is the unarticulated constituent of the sentence 'It is raining'. By contrast modes of presentation as unarticulated constituents of belief reports are not part of the proposition expressed by the embedded sentence. They constitute the third argument of the relation of believing.

So the analogy that the Hybrid theorists draw between unarticulated constituents of a sentence like 'It is raining' and the unarticulated constituents of a sentence like 'Tom believes that Cicero is a Roman' fails. There seems to be very little similarity in the working of the two kinds of unarticulated constituents. I fail to see what significant role an unarticulated constituent of a belief report can play once it is separated from the proposition expressed by the embedded sentence

Having noted this, we can formulate our problem in the form of a dilemma. To do this let us state Crimmins's version of the Hybrid View once again. According to Crimmins, we can represent the content of a belief report, like 'Tom believes that Cicero is Roman' in the following way:

$$(\exists r) [ \text{Believes} ( \text{Tom}, \langle \text{Cicero}, \text{Roman} \rangle, r ) \ \& \\ \text{Responsible} ( n\text{Cicero}, r ) \ \& \\ \text{Responsible} ( i\text{Roman}, r ) ]$$

Let us note, in the first place, that the positions of the singular term and the predicate expression in the structured Russellian proposition  $\langle \text{Cicero}, \text{Roman} \rangle$  are open to substitution and are, therefore transparent. Now the question is as follows: are the modes of presentation of Cicero (notion of a) and of being Roman (idea of F) specifically mentioned in the responsibility clause or are they introduced by existentially quantifying over them? The first case, that is the case where reference to particular notions and ideas are made, is nothing but a version of the Fregean view of attitude attribution, and therefore, the problem as to how the belief-ascriber may know these particular modes of presentations, and the problem as to whose modes of presentation are being referred to, the believer's or the ascriber's, etc. still remain. If, on the other hand, notions and ideas are quantified over, then the occurrence of the singular term in the responsibility clause (that is, the position of 'Cicero' in 'nCicero') would be transparent -- it is the same Russellian proposition which is presented in one way or the other. If this position is transparent, then the whole project of explaining failures of substitutivity of co-referential expressions in belief contexts by providing a correct analysis of belief reports fails. In this case we have to say that both 'Tom believes that Cicero is Roman' and 'Tom believes that Tully is Roman' are true.<sup>150</sup> It seems, however, impossible to suggest that the occurrence of 'Cicero' in 'nCicero' is opaque, because in that case we have to explain why it is opaque. The problem of explaining opacity still remains, it is only shifted to another level, and there are no resources available to explain it at this level.

<sup>150</sup>This same dilemma can be shown to occur in the generalised version of the Hybrid View, which represents a belief report of the form 'X believes that a is F' in the following way:

$$(\exists m) ( B ( x, \langle a, F \rangle, m ) \ \& \ m \text{ presents } \langle a, F \rangle )$$

These difficulties, I think, arise from separating the proposition believed from the way it is believed. Once modes of presentation are not taken to be a part of the proposition believed (the proposition believed being a Russellian proposition), and are provided as a third argument of the belief report, we have to say that different modes of presentation present the same Russellian proposition. In that case, modes of presentation will have no role to play in the explanation of the failure of substitution of co-referential names in a belief context. The Hybrid theorists have either to say that the embedded sentence refers to something more complex, or give up the claim that in all cases of belief report there is a tacit reference to a mode of presentation. So, the Hybrid View, whether it be of Schiffer's type or of Crimmins's type has some intrinsic difficulties. The main aim of this chapter was to bring out these difficulties. To do that we needed to fully characterise the Hybrid View, show how it differs from the Russellian account on the one hand and the Fregean account on the other, and examine the general assumptions on which it depended. The first major part of the chapter was engaged in doing that. Having, hopefully, raised cogent doubts about the hybrid view, we can now move on to the discussion of the Fregean account and the Russellian account of belief ascriptions in the following two chapters.



## CHAPTER 4

### On the Fregean Account of Belief Ascription

#### 4.1. Preliminary Remarks

We have seen, in the previous chapter, that the Hybrid View of belief ascription -- an account which takes both a Russellian proposition and some kind of Fregean notion of sense to be the content of belief ascriptions and thus essential in providing a semantics of belief reports -- does not work, due to some inherent difficulties of the account. We should also note that an account of this general kind, is given by someone who does not take the *de re/de dicto* distinction between beliefs seriously, and therefore, thinks that a single account of belief ascription would be able to bring out the nature of any kind of belief whatsoever<sup>151</sup>. But we have tried to show, in an earlier chapter, that there is a genuine *de re/de dicto* distinction, and therefore whatever semantics we give of belief ascribing sentences must capture this distinction. Whether a belief ascription is *de re* or whether it is *de dicto*, very importantly, depends on the context of the utterance of the sentence ascribing belief -- the context which, in turn, determines the nature of the proposition referred to by the 'that'-clause. Now, what I am trying to say here is that the kind of belief involved on one side of the distinction can be shown by thinking of belief as a relation between a thinker and a Russellian proposition, while the kind involved on the other side of the distinction can be captured by thinking of belief as a relation between a thinker and a Fregean proposition. Neither approach to the semantics of belief ascribing sentences by themselves bring out the distinction. The Fregean view of attitude ascription can be said to correspond to the *de dicto* cases, whereas the broadly Russellian view can be said to correspond to the *de re* cases. Thus we are left with the orthodox Fregean account and the Russellian account of belief ascription.

---

<sup>151</sup>For example, Richard [1990] and Crimmins [1992] both of whom advocate some form of Hybrid View of belief ascriptions, try to show that the *de re/de dicto* distinction does not hold -- either at the level of belief or at the level of ascriptions of belief. One of the reasons for their rejection of the distinction at the level of belief ascriptions may be due to the fact that they reject the distinction at the level of belief itself.

Our aim in this chapter is to closely analyse the views of Frege and his later followers; in particular we should be looking at how they take some kind of modes of presentation or senses to be the content of a 'that'-clause. A discussion of the semantics of propositional attitude ascriptions, like ascription of belief, is, no doubt, incomplete without a thorough discussion of Frege's account of attitude attribution. Though comparatively familiar, it is complicated and is subject to various interpretations depending on what role one assigns to the sense of an expression occurring within an attitude ascribing context. However, his view is regarded by philosophers as one of the best ways of understanding attitude ascriptions, and solving some of the important puzzles that arise in these contexts. As we all know, according to Frege, in a belief ascribing sentence like, 'Sarah believes that Mark Twain is the author of *Tom Sawyer*', the 'that'-clause picks out a thought, a thought being the sense of a sentence -- a sense which is composed of senses of constituent expressions. So the thought that is expressed when Sarah says 'Mark Twain is the author of *Tom Sawyer*' is the result of combining a sense associated with the name referring to the individual Mark Twain and a sense associated with the predicate referring to the property of authoring *Tom Sawyer*. To understand Frege's position, it is essential to provide answers to the following two questions:

- (a) What exactly does Frege mean by the sense of an expression?
- (b) How is the notion of sense used in understanding sentences ascribing propositional attitudes?

It will become clear, in the discussion which is to follow, that the above two questions are very much inter-related. An explanation of what Frege takes to be the sense of an expression, in good part, depends upon how it is used in explaining some puzzling phenomena in propositional attitude ascriptions. Therefore, it is almost impossible to separately answer the two questions.

It should also be noted that, although Frege takes a thought to be the sense of a complete assertoric sentence and the reference of a 'that'-clause

in a propositional attitude context, our discussion here, will mainly concentrate on his account of the sense of a subsentential expression. A thought associated with a sentence, being composed of senses of the constituent expressions of that sentence, will have whatever characteristics the senses of expressions, which are its components, have.

## 4.2. Frege's Account of Sense

In the very first three paragraphs of his article 'On Sense and Reference' [1966], Frege introduces the notion of the sense of an expression -- a notion essential for the understanding of an expression. In explaining what Frege takes to be the sense of an expression, we may proceed by doing two things. In the first place, we will mention some of the main functions that Frege assigned to the sense of an expression (this will constitute an answer to the second question mentioned above). In the second place, we will compare the notion of sense with that of reference (which will, in turn, constitute an answer to the first question) and try to point out his reasons for introducing the sense of an expression over and above its reference.

### 4.2.1. Sense and its functions

Frege [1966] starts his discussion by pointing out why we need sense over and above reference. Understanding his reasons for introducing senses of expressions will help us in understanding what exactly he means by the sense of an expression. One of the main reasons for introducing sense over and above reference, is for him to allocate to the sense of an expression various kinds of functions.

The first function that Frege allocates to the sense of an expression is to explain the difference in cognitive values between pairs of identity statements. In trying to bring out the difference in cognitive values between a statement of equality like ' $a=a$ ' and one like ' $a=b$ ', Frege says:

$a=a$  and  $a=b$  are obviously statements of different cognitive value;  $a=a$  holds *a priori* and, according to Kant, is to be labelled analytic, while statements of the form  $a=b$  often

contain very valuable extensions of our knowledge and cannot always be established *a priori*.<sup>152</sup>

'a=a' and 'a=b' correspond schematically to pairs of identity statements<sup>153</sup> like 'Hesperus is Hesperus' and 'Hesperus is Phosphorus'. The difference in their cognitive values is due to the fact that the terms 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus', in spite of having the same reference, differ in sense. Differences in what two words are rightly understood to say is due to attaching different senses to them. And he demonstrates the need to recognise such a feature of understanding by pairs of identity statements of the above kind. His purpose is to exhibit that pairs of statements which agree in reference, that is, they speak about the same object and the same property/relation, must nevertheless be recognised to differ in what each is rightly understood to state. That is why he says

It is natural, now, to think of there being connected with a sign (name, combination of words, letter), besides that to which the sign refers, which may be called the reference of the sign, also what I should like to call the *sense* of the sign, wherein the mode of presentation is contained. In our example, accordingly, the reference of the expressions 'the point of intersection of a and b' and 'the point of intersection of b and c' would be the same, but not their senses. The reference of 'evening star' would be the same as that of 'morning star', but not the sense.<sup>154</sup>

So we may say that the sense of a word, like 'the morning star', is whatever it is about understanding of a word which accounts for differences in cognitive value between the two pairs of identity statements

---

<sup>152</sup> Frege [1966], p.56.

<sup>153</sup> There are two things about pairs of identity statements of this kind which should be mentioned here. In first place, Frege's choice of contrasting pairs of identity statement made it impossible for him to say that they each differed from the other in having different truth-conditions. As the corresponding parts of the two sentences referred to the same things there could not be conditions in which one of them is true and the other false. Furthermore, the names occurring on either side of the identity predicate, like 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus', referred to an extra-linguistic thing, like the planet Venus, and not to the names themselves.

<sup>154</sup> Frege [1966], p.57

in which that word and its co-referential expression occur -- it is that which is needed to identify the way things are to be understood to be. The way in which the referent<sup>155</sup> is understood by a person, when he knows a point as the point of intersection between a and b, is very different from the way he knows it as the point of intersection between b and c. As Dummett points out,

... [the] understanding which a speaker of a language has of a word in that language .... can never consist merely in his associating a certain thing with it as its referent; there must be some particular means by which this association is effected, the knowledge of which constitutes his grasp of its sense.<sup>156</sup>

About the notion of sense, it should also be pointed out that associated with a particular word, there may be many senses which determine the referent of that word, otherwise there would be no argument for introducing sense in the first place. For Frege, words cannot share a sense but differ in reference. So, though the notion of sense was introduced to correspond to all the features of understanding over and above reference, in fact, senses that words bear, fully identify their proper understandings. Once the sense of a word on a particular understanding is identified, the reference is not needed to distinguish one understanding from another. This is very much in conformity with Frege's idea that a well-formed grammatical expression representing a proper name can have sense but lack any reference. We will come back to this point in our discussion of the relationship between sense and reference.

The second function of the Fregean theory of sense is that senses, or more precisely, the senses of complete assertoric<sup>157</sup> sentences, which Frege calls 'thoughts', are regarded as objects of propositional attitudes like

---

<sup>155</sup>We will, here, use the terms 'referent' and 'reference' in the same way as standing for the object/individual the name is a name of. So we are overlooking the stipulation made by Dummett [1981], saying that 'reference' stands for the relation of referring, whereas 'referent' stands for the object referred to by the expression.

<sup>156</sup>Dummett [1981], p.93.

<sup>157</sup>See Dummett, [1981] pp.364-65. An assertoric sentence is one which is used to make an assertion, and it is complete, as a complete utterance is the smallest linguistic unit with the help of which a linguistic act, like assertion, can be performed.

belief. This particular function is assigned to thoughts to solve a puzzle involved in propositional attitude ascriptions. The problem, as it will become clear, and as it has already been mentioned in the introduction, can be taken to be a generalisation of the problem concerning identity statements. It is the puzzle concerning the apparent failure of substitutivity of co-referential singular terms in certain contexts, particularly in propositional attitude ascribing contexts, that is, in reports of the form 'X believes that p'. Contexts where the principle of substitutivity of co-referential expressions fail (these are known as 'opaque contexts'). To be clear about the role a Fregean thought plays in this kind of context, we need to know what is meant by the principle of substitutivity of co-referential singular terms, and how this principle fails in attitude ascribing contexts.

To understand the substitutivity principle, we can start by reminding ourselves of Leibniz's Law or the Indiscernibility of Identicals. According to this Law, if x and y are the same objects then x and y have the same properties. So, if 'St. Petersburg' and 'Leningrad' refer to the same place, the city they refer to will have the same property, like the property of having a population of over one million; or if Twain and Clemens are the same person then they have the same property, like, the property of being the author of *Huckleberry Finn*. This Law allows us to substitute one expression for another expression standing for the same object in a sentence without any change in truth-value of the whole sentence. This is what is known as the principle of substitutivity of co-referential expression, and can be schematically represented<sup>158</sup> in the following way:

Given that  $t_1$  and  $t_2$  are singular terms and  $S ( )$  is a sentential context in which  $t_1$  occurs,

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 t_1=t_2 & & S(t_1) \\
 \hline
 & & S(t_2/t_1)
 \end{array}$$

<sup>158</sup>See the introduction to the Section on 'Opacity and Attribution of Belief' by Forbes in Harnish [1994], p.323

$S(t_2/t_1)$  is obtained from  $S(t_1)$  by the replacement of  $t_1$  by  $t_2$ .  $t_1$  and  $t_2$ , being co-referential, are talking about the same object, and we know that according to Leibniz's Law, if  $x$  and  $y$  are identical then whatever is true of  $x$  is true of  $y$  and vice versa. Now given that  $t_1$  and  $t_2$  are identical and that  $S(t_1)$  is true, we can immediately infer that  $S(t_2/t_1)$  is true as well. Therefore, Leibniz's Law, though a principle of metaphysics, is implemented in formal systems of deduction by the rule of substitutivity of identity. We can take a simple example of an inference using the principle of substitutivity of co-referential expressions.

A. George Orwell = Eric Blair

George wrote *Animal Farm*

Therefore, Eric Blair wrote *Animal farm*.

This principle seems to be intuitively plausible. If one can use a sentence containing a particular name to say something true about the object specified by that name, then surely, we can use some other name standing for that same object in the sentence to say something true. Given the fact that the two names 'George Orwell' and 'Eric Blair' refer to the same person and the fact that George Orwell wrote *Animal Farm*, we can quite legitimately infer that Eric Blair wrote *Animal farm*. But it seems<sup>159</sup> very easy to show that the principle of substitution of co-referential expressions does not preserve truth in many cases. These are cases where sentences like 'George Orwell wrote *Animal Farm*' lie within the scope of a propositional attitude ascribing verb like 'believes', as in 'Tom believes that George Orwell wrote *Animal Farm*'. The fact that the principle of substitutivity fails in these cases can be shown with the help of examples of inferences where sentences of this kind occur. They are inferences like the following:

B. George Orwell is Eric Blair

Tom believes that George Orwell wrote *Animal Farm*

Therefore, Tom believes that Eric Blair wrote *Animal Farm*

---

<sup>159</sup>I use the word 'seems' here, because I will go on to explain below that, if Frege is right, then the apparent failures are merely apparent.

B is an unsound inference.<sup>160</sup> Consider the situation where Tom is unaware of the fact that George Orwell is Eric Blair. In that case, we cannot substitute the name 'George Orwell' for "Eric Blair" and arrive at a conclusion which is true.<sup>161</sup> This is quite evident if we consider the Superman story. As the story goes, Lois Lane doesn't know that Superman and Clark Kent are one and the same person, and therefore, though she believes that Superman can fly, she doesn't believe that Clark Kent can. So the following is an invalid argument:

c. Superman is Clark Kent

Lois Lane believes that Superman can fly

Therefore, Lois Lane believes that Clark Kent can fly.

One of the most important problems in the Philosophy of Language is to give a satisfactory account of these cases. A satisfactory account would consist in giving a semantics of belief ascribing sentences by showing how the expressions within the embedded sentence work. The Fregean notion of sense helps in explaining away this failure of substitutivity of co-referential expressions in attitude contexts of the above kind by arguing that subsentential expressions (like names) occurring within 'that'-clauses in attitude attributions refer to something of a very different kind from the reference of those expressions occurring outside the attitude verb. Whereas the expression 'Hesperus' customarily refers to the planet Venus, when it occurs in a sentence like, 'John believes that Hesperus rises in the evening' the name 'Hesperus' refers to its customary sense. This validates the substitution of any expression having the same

---

<sup>160</sup>The failure of substitutivity of identity occurs, as it is well known, in modal contexts as well. One example due to Quine is the following. Though the two sentences 'the number of planets is 9' and 'it is necessary that  $9 > 7$ ' are both true, from them it does not follow 'it is necessary that the number of planets is greater than 7', since it is only a contingent fact that number of planets is 9.

<sup>161</sup>Taking the inference to be unsound, in a way, presupposes that the truth-condition of the belief ascribing sentence depends upon the believer's acceptance of the truth of the sentence. Someone might say, that both the belief ascribing sentences in the inference B are true, though Tom doesn't assert them to be so. One explanation might be that B and any inference of that general kind, are not invalid or unsound inferences, but they are pragmatically incorrect -- a view to be discussed later.



customary sense as 'Hesperus', but it does not validate the substitution of an expression merely having the same customary reference. <sup>162</sup>

#### 4.2.2. Sense and Reference

We can now turn to the consideration of the relationship between the sense and the reference of expressions in trying to understand the notion of sense. Sense, for Frege, is one of the most important ingredients of meaning, the two others being tone and force. According to Dummett's interpretation of Frege, the sense of an expression is that part of meaning which is relevant to the determination of the truth-value of the sentence in which the expression occurs, and this can be made clear if we consider how Frege distinguished between the tone and the sense of an expression. The words 'dead' and 'deceased' do not differ in sense, that is, they do not possess anything which would lead to the difference in truth-value between sentences in which they occur. Insofar as they differ in meaning at all, their difference lies in having different tones. Another example given by Frege is the difference in meaning between the connectives 'and' and 'but'. The replacement of one by the other does not change the truth value of the sentence, but the tone might change completely.<sup>163</sup> But this way of differentiating the notion of sense from other ingredients of meaning, as Dummett points out<sup>164</sup>, 'serves to distinguish sense from

---

<sup>162</sup>Frege deals with quotation contexts in an analogous way. The name 'Hesperus', when occurring within quotation marks as in the sentence ' "Hesperus" is an eight letter word' refers to itself.

<sup>163</sup>It is an interesting question whether the change in tone within the scope of an attitude verb would result in a change of truth-value in attitude ascriptions. Suppose Ralph reports Tom's belief about Harry as 'Tom thinks that Harry is a nigger'. Hearing this Tom might protest by saying that 'I think that Harry is a black but not a nigger'. According to a Fregean, the two sentences 'Tom thinks that Harry is a nigger' and 'Tom thinks that Harry is a black' do not differ in truth value, but they differ in the tone conveyed by the two sentences. They can say that both the ascriptions are true, but misleading -- and this misleadingness is due to adding something more to the belief report. This can be compared with reports which are misleading in the sense of being incomplete. (An example of this kind of report has been discussed in Chapter 4.) So, it seems that true reports can be misleading in two ways -- one is where it is misleading because it does not say all that is required to capture the reported believer's belief, the other is where it is misleading because it says more than is required to capture the reported believer's belief. The report 'Tom believes that Harry is a nigger' is misleading in the latter sense. Unfortunately we cannot enter into a detail discussion on this issue, and will confine ourselves to the traditional way of understanding the notion of sense by comparing it with the notion of reference.

<sup>164</sup>Dummett [1981], p.89.

other ingredients in meaning: but, for the rest, it is, in itself, purely programmatic.' The only way in which we can understand the Fregean notion of sense is by comparing it with his notion of reference. Frege himself tried to that as well.

About the notion of reference of an expression, Dummett says that it should not be regarded as an ingredient of meaning in Frege's system. What does Dummett mean when he says this? The claim that the notion of reference is not an ingredient of meaning does not, for Dummett, mean that reference has nothing to do with meaning. This claim about reference is a claim that 'our understanding a word or an expression never consists, even in part, merely in our associating something in the world with that word or expression.'<sup>165</sup> Here again the notion of understanding of an expression comes in. As it is known, for Dummett, a theory of meaning is a theory understanding. So,

what we have to give an account of is what a person knows when he knows what a word or expression means, that is, when he understands it.<sup>166</sup>

In giving a description of how someone comes to understand a word or an expression, our aim is to give a clear account of what this ability, when acquired, consists in. And once we are in a position to give a general account of what it is to know the meaning of a word or an expression, we will be able to derive, as a consequence, what it is for two expressions to have the same meaning or for an expression to have a meaning at all. So, when Dummett says that reference is not an ingredient of meaning in the context of discussing Frege, what it means is that someone who does not know the reference of an expression does not thereby show that he does not understand or partially understand the expression. The understanding which a speaker of a language has of a word in that language, can never consist of his associating an object/individual as its referent: there must be a particular means through which a reference is associated, and that means constitutes its sense. But in the determination of the truth-value of

---

<sup>165</sup>Ibid p.93.

<sup>166</sup>Ibid p.92.

a sentence the references of the constituent words are essential, and the sense of a word, by providing conditions for determining the reference, helps us in determining the truth-value of the whole sentence.

If sense is characterised in the way that Dummett characterises it-- that is, as that ingredient of meaning which is relevant to the determination of the truth-value of the sentence in which the expression occurs -- then someone might wonder why we need the notion of sense over and above the notion of reference. If we consider the way in which Frege treats the notion of reference it would seem that once the reference of words in a sentence is determined, the truth-value is also determined. Frege does hold that the replacement of one expression in a sentence by another co-referential expression leaves the truth-value of the whole sentence intact. So the sense of an expression will coincide with the reference, or, at least, there would be an one-to-one correspondence between the sense and the reference of an expression. But Frege certainly thinks that we associate many senses with one reference. Finding our way out of this dilemma, according to Dummett, lies in recognising the fact that reference is not the ingredient of meaning. To quote Dummett here,

If reference were an ingredient of meaning, then indeed the reference of a word would exhaust -- or determine -- its senses, since nothing more would need to be known about its meaning in order to fix the truth-value of any sentence in which it occurred... There would then genuinely be no room for a notion of sense to be squeezed in between reference and tone. But reference is *not* an ingredient of meaning, and so sense can still be explained as constituting that part of the meaning of a word or expression which needs to be grasped in order to decide the truth-value of sentences containing it; and this means : that part of its meaning which determine its reference.<sup>167</sup>

Having noted this let us again come back to the way in which Frege himself introduces the distinction between sense and reference. In 'On

---

<sup>167</sup>ibid p.91.

Sense and Reference', Frege starts his discussion by considering expressions that are regarded as singular terms, that is, proper names and definite descriptions.<sup>168</sup> The reference of a proper name is the object that the proper name stands for. Hence, it is the planet Venus which is regarded as the reference of the name 'the morning star'. Then he introduces the notion of sense to explain the property of informativeness that some identity statements possess, which cannot be explained in terms of their references.

As Dummett points out<sup>169</sup>, the sense of a proper name cannot just be its having the reference it has. If the sense of a name merely consists in its having the reference that it has, then the fact of informativeness of identity statements cannot be explained either. Dummett spells out the argument as follows<sup>170</sup>:

If the sense of a name consisted just in its having a certain reference, then anyone who understood the name would thereby know what the object it stood for, and one who understood two names which had the same reference would know that they stood for the same object, and would know the truth of the statement of identity connecting them, which could therefore not be informative for him.

There are many identity statements we encounter about whose truth-values we are unsure. But if sense is explained in the way it is, the understanding of an identity statement would immediately lead to the recognition of its truth or falsity, which, therefore, would not be informative any longer. That is why, Frege, in explaining what the sense of a name is, introduces the notion of the mode of presentation or the way of identifying the object. What Frege wants to say is that in grasping the sense of a name we come to connect the name with the mode of identifying the object, so, two co-referential names can have different senses by having different modes of identifying the reference associated

---

<sup>168</sup>As it is well known, unlike Russell, Frege takes definite descriptions to be on a par with proper names.

<sup>169</sup>Dummett [1981], pp. 94-6.

<sup>170</sup>Ibid, 95.

with them. The different conditions of identification that are associated with the different expressions, provide what Frege calls different 'routes' to the reference. The two names, 'Afla' and 'Ateb', though have the same reference, their reference is arrived at by two different routes. The sense of an expression, therefore, can be regarded as the conditions that anything must satisfy in order to be the reference of the expression. It should be noted at this point that there is a difference between taking senses to be modes/ways of identifying an object and taking them to be conditions that anything must satisfy in order to be the reference of a name. The first way of interpreting the notion of sense has the consequence that there cannot be any sense without there being reference, because the very idea of means/ways of identifying an object makes no sense unless there is an object which can be identified -- senses of this kind are called '*de re* senses'<sup>171</sup> in recent literature. Whereas, according to the second interpretation, where a sense is taken to be the conditions that anything has to satisfy to be the reference, there can be sense without there being any reference. If sense is a condition that anything must satisfy in order to be the reference, then there can very well be conditions which, in fact, is not met by anything.

Frege himself thought that an expression can have sense without having any reference. According to Frege, every well-formed grammatical expression representing a proper name has sense, but that does not mean that a reference always corresponds to such a sense. Furthermore, the sense of a complex expression is composed out of the senses of its constituent expressions. Therefore, the grasp of the sense of a complete sentence requires the grasp of the senses of its constituents. And the sense of a declarative sentence is what Frege calls a thought. A thought, as understood by Frege, plays the role of what is traditionally taken to be a proposition. This would become clear once we point out the characteristics that Frege associates with thought. These three features are the following:

(a) thoughts are bearers of unrelativised truth-value;

---

<sup>171</sup>This kind of interpretation is found in Evans [1982], and has been developed by John McDowell [1984].

- (b) they are the objects of propositional attitude and hence are psychologically real; and
- (c) the existence of the thought, in no way depends upon the existence of the object the thought is about, that is the objects that are determined as referents of constituent expressions.<sup>172</sup>

If the notion of sense is understood in this way, then a straight forward answer can be given to the substitutivity problem as it is brought out in inference B. The reason why the two sentences

1. Tom believes that George Orwell wrote *Animal Farm*
2. Tom believes that Eric Blair wrote *Animal Farm*

differ in truth-value is that the 'that'-clauses in 1 and 2 refer to two different thoughts. Due to the peculiarity of the context, the expressions embedded inside the content do not refer to their normal referents but refer to their normal sense. The sentence 'George Orwell wrote *Animal Farm*' and the sentence 'Eric Blair wrote *Animal Farm*' express two different thoughts for Tom, since the first has the sense of 'George Orwell' as a constituent, while the second has the sense of 'Eric Blair' as a constituent. What happens in a belief context is that these expressed senses become the referents of the two 'that'-clauses, that is, in a context of this kind the two names 'George Orwell' and Eric Blair' do not refer to their customary referent.

#### 4.3. Intersubjective Variations in Sense and the Resultant Problem

The Fregean approach seems to give us a neat and easy solution to the apparent problem of substitution in the propositional attitude ascribing contexts. But let us now see whether the notion of sense as used by Frege is itself without any difficulty. A problem that may be raised is due to the fact of intersubjective variations in senses. One of the most natural ways of understanding the sense of a proper name is the association of concepts<sup>173</sup> or descriptions that the user connects with the name. These

---

<sup>172</sup>See Noonan [1984], p.21.

<sup>173</sup>'Concepts' here does not refer to Frege's technical notion of concepts, which roughly, for Frege are referents of predicate expressions in sentences.

concepts may be given by one or two descriptions that the user associates with the name. Frege seems to accept this when he uses the example of 'Aristotle' and says that how opinions as to what senses are to be associated with the name might differ. For some, the associated sense might be 'the most talented pupil of Plato', whereas, for some others it might be 'the teacher of Alexander the Great who was born in Stagira'. As Forbes says, 'if there are ever two names with the same sense for you and different senses for me, then the sense of one name varies intersubjectively'<sup>174</sup>. So it is quite plausible that the senses that different people associate with co-referential names may very well differ. About this intersubjective variations in senses Richard remarks,

..., given the fact that our concepts tend to differ, as does our education, culture, and general *Weltanschauung*, it will be a common occurrence that the senses we associate with our words differ, even though their reference does not.<sup>175</sup>

In the discussion which is to follow, it will become evident that intersubjective variations do pose problems in attitude attributions which a Fregean should answer. The problem can be brought out with the help of a familiar example that has already been mentioned several times. Suppose the Superman story is true, that is, suppose Lois Lane doesn't know that Superman and Clark Kent are one and the same person. Now, suppose Ralph reports

3. Lois Lane believes that Superman can fly.

If Frege's analysis of reference shift of expressions in opaque contexts is applicable, and if we grant the fact of intersubjective variations in sense, then we can legitimately ask, which sense of the name 'Superman' are we talking about in this case? Does the name 'Superman' refer to

- (a) the sense Lois customarily attaches to the name? or,
- (b) the sense Ralph customarily attaches to the name? or,

---

<sup>174</sup>Forbes [1990], p.545.

<sup>175</sup>Richard [1990], p.65.

(c) does it perform some other function?

Generally, if A utters a sentence of the form 'B Øs that S', does 'S' refer to B's sense or does it refer to A's sense? The first kind of view can be called a 'believer-oriented' account of the phenomenon of reference shift, while the second can be regarded as the 'ascriber-oriented' account of the same phenomenon.<sup>176</sup> According to the believer-oriented view, the name 'Superman' and the predicate 'can fly', in the above-mentioned belief ascribing sentence refer to the mode of presentation of Superman and the mode of presentation of the property of the ability to fly that the believer Lois associates with the expressions respectively. The ascriber-oriented view says that it is the reporter's or the ascriber's modes of presentation that are to be associated with the expressions occurring within the belief context.

Both Forbes [1990] and Richard [1990] have tried to argue that none of the two views work. So let us try to see what their arguments are. We can start with the believer-oriented view. The believer-oriented view suggests that in ascribing a belief to a person the ascriber must refer to the senses that the believer associates with the expressions within the 'that'-clause, but this view seems to face two problems. The first objection, is that, if it is the believer's senses which are being referred to in our ascription of a belief, then the fact of false ascription to the believer cannot be explained in many cases. Forbes<sup>177</sup> gives an example of Ralph ascribing a belief to Lois by using the following sentence

4. Lois believes that Matti Nykaenen can fly.

Suppose Lois does not know that Matti Nykaenen is the great Finish ski jumper and does not even know that there is a sport like ski jumping. In this case there is no sense that Lois associates with the 'that'-clause that can be referred to by Ralph, then intuitively 4 seems to be a false ascription-- we are ascribing to Lois a certain proposition that she does not believe. This is quite clear if we consider the truth-value of the negation of

---

<sup>176</sup>A discussion of these two kinds of accounts are found in Forbes [1990] Richard [1990]

<sup>177</sup> Forbes [1990], p.551.



4. The negation of 4, that is, 'It is not the case that Lois believes that Matti Nykaenen can fly' or 'Lois does not believe that Matti Nykaenen can fly' is obviously true. But if we take the Fregean analysis of the believer oriented view, then this negation cannot be regarded as true.

Why can we not regard the negation of 4 to be true in a Fregean account of the believer-oriented view? The reason is as follows. The believer oriented analysis has to say that there is no proposition to which the 'that'-clause in 4 refers, as Lois does not have any sense associated with the expressions within the 'that'-clause. Now we know that, for Frege, if a subexpression of a complex expression (in this case it is a sentence) fails to refer the whole expression (that is the sentence) would fail to refer as well. Given this, if the 'that'-clause in 4 fails to refer to any proposition, 4 itself fails to refer and is, therefore, devoid of any truth-value. And if 4 fails to have a truth-value the negation of 4 would fail to have any truth-value as well. But our ordinary intuition surely is that both 4 and its negation 'it is not the case that Lois believes that Matti Nykaenen can fly' have definite truth-values -- 4 is a false ascription, while its negation is a true ascription. The consequence of the believer-oriented view -- that the negation 4 is truth-valueless -- is, surely, counter-intuitive. Far from taking the negation of 4 as truth-valueless we take it to be definitely true. Therefore, Forbes concludes, 'it is unclear that the believer-oriented view could find a well-motivated way of ascribing the truth-value *True* to the negation of 5.<sup>178</sup>

The second problem with the believer-oriented view is a general one. The view seems to require that in ascribing a belief to someone, the ascriber must know the exact way in which the believer thinks about the objects referred to by the expressions within the content-clause. In reporting a belief like 'Lois believes that Superman can fly' the reporter has to know Lois's senses for Superman and the property of flying. But it is quite unlikely that in every case of a belief report, the reporter would know the exact way in which the believer represents the objects of her belief. One might, at this point, say that this objection is based on a strong presupposition that in referring to something we must have identifying

---

<sup>178</sup>Ibid, p.548. (by 5, Forbes means the sentence 'Lois believes that Matti Nykaenen can fly'.)

knowledge of the thing which is being referred to. But the believer-oriented account need not make such a strong claim. In many cases we can refer to a person/thing without knowing exactly who/which he/it is. Suppose we say 'Smith's murderer is insane' without knowing who this person is. In order to refer to Smith's murderer we need not have identifying knowledge of Smith's murderer. In a similar way, we can refer to the believer's modes of presentation in the belief report without knowing what exactly those modes of presentations are. So the more general worry about the believer-oriented view seems to be misplaced.

One may try to reformulate his worry about the believer-oriented view without making the strong presupposition. It might be argued that when we claim (as the believer-oriented account does) that it is Lois's sense which is being referred to in the report 'Lois believes that Superman can fly', the ascriber must at least aim at referring to Lois's sense for Superman, though he may not have identifying knowledge of that particular sense. And the problem is to explain how or by what mechanism the believer comes to hit on to Lois's senses so that we can say that the report is a true report. As Forbes says, 'How is the reference (to the believer's sense) accomplished? After all Ralph (the reporter) may not have stood to Lois's sense for either name (either 'Superman' or 'Clark Kent') in any of the familiar relations which bestow a capacity to think of an object; for example, he need not have demonstratively identified either sense. But without a mechanism, the capacity to refer to a sense seems like magic.'<sup>179</sup>

Even if the second objection does not work, the first objection against the believer-oriented view provides us with adequate grounds for rejecting it. We, therefore, can agree with Forbes that a belief ascription like 4 would not be able to refer to the senses that the believer possesses. So, do we then accept the ascriber-oriented view, that is, do we say that the 'that' clause in a belief ascription refers to the senses that the ascriber associates with its constituent expressions? It seems, for reasons I shall now set forth, that if the believer's sense for a name occurring within attitude ascriptions is different from the ascriber's/reporter's sense, then

---

<sup>179</sup>Forbes [1990], p.547.

the reporter would not speak truly if he tries to ascribe the belief by referring to his sense for the expression. The ascriber-oriented view, according to Forbes, may be ruled out by considering ascriptions where Ralph, who is aware of the identity of Superman and Clark Kent, says,

5. 'Lois believes that Superman can fly but Clark Kent cannot'.

Suppose that Ralph associates the same sense with the expressions 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent'. In a case like this, the proposition expressed by the sentence 'Superman can fly' for him is contradictory to the proposition expressed by the sentence 'Clark Kent cannot fly'. So, according to the ascriber-oriented view, that is, according to the view which claims that it is the ascriber's sense for 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent' that is being referred to in 5, in ascribing the belief to Lois by uttering 5, Ralph is ascribing Lois an explicitly contradictory belief. But surely Lois does not possess any contradictory beliefs when she sincerely says, 'Superman can fly but Clark can't', and, furthermore, there seems to be a clear intuition that Ralph can utter 5 to say something true about Lois's state of mind. Therefore, Ralph cannot be said to be referring to his own senses for the constituent expressions of the content clause.

The above example cannot be challenged by saying that if the names 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent' express the same sense for Ralph, he cannot use 5 truly. In this particular context, the whole point of Ralph making a report of a kind like 5 is to bring out the fact that Lois is ignorant about the identity of Superman and Clark Kent. To do that, Ralph needs to use 5 to express a truth about Lois's belief.

When Ralph uses a sentence like 5 to report Lois's belief, the truth of the belief report is really based on what might be called the 'Echo Principle'.<sup>180</sup> The principle says that if both A and B use a sentence S in such a way that its constituents, when they use it, refer to the same things, then if A can express a belief using S, then B can use S to ascribe the belief to A. So having heard Lois say 'Superman can fly but Clark Kent cannot', Ralph can use 5 to report Lois's belief. But in this case the believer's way

---

<sup>180</sup>Richard [1990]p. 80.

of expressing her belief becomes important in the belief ascription, and therefore it is the believer's way of understanding which becomes more important.

A similar example has been discussed by Salmon [1986, p.121] Suppose Smith, a Police Surgeon, is determined to apprehend a jewel thief called Jones. Before setting out on his mission he scrutinises the FBI's file on Jones thoroughly, looks at pictures, interviews people who knew Jones and so on. From studying the file Smith comes to believe that Jones is dangerous. Suppose further, having learned that Smith is on his trail, Jones changes his appearance altogether (maybe goes through plastic surgery). He, however, does not change his name, since it is such a common name. Now, on his search, Smith comes across Jones, is completely fooled by him, concludes that he is another man, and becomes quite a good friend of Jones. But one day he overhears a conversation between Jones and another man, and notices that the man is extremely frightened of Jones. From this he concludes 'Jones, my new-found friend, is dangerous'. Now, suppose someone who definitely knows Jones to be the jewel thief (and associates the description 'the infamous jewel thief whom Smith wants to capture' with the name 'Jones') ascribes the following belief to Smith,

Smith believes that Jones is dangerous.

According to the ascriber-oriented view 'Jones' refers to the sense the reporter associates with the name 'Jones'. With the use of the above sentence we are attributing to Smith a belief to the effect that the crafty jewel thief named 'Jones' whom he wants to capture is dangerous. But, it seems obvious that Smith has no such belief.

The above discussion seems to suggest that neither the ascriber-oriented nor the believer-oriented view is satisfactory. However, that does not imply that belief ascriptions never refer to senses. One suggestion might be that attitude attributions are ambiguous between the believer-oriented and the ascriber-oriented views. Whether, in a particular utterance, we should take the ascriber's mode of presentation or the

believer's mode of presentation depends upon the context in which it is uttered. This might be a way of understanding sentences of the above kind -- it might be that belief ascriptions are ambiguous in this way. There is, however, an account of belief ascription which is neutral between the believer and the ascriber-oriented view, but, at the same time, sensitive to the inter-subjective variations in sense.

The fact of intersubjective variations in senses and the resultant ambiguity should not lead one to reject the Fregean account of attitude attribution altogether. Graeme Forbes, who develops a semantical account on Fregean lines, says,

... the moral I draw from this<sup>181</sup> is not that Frege's account of intentional contexts is fundamentally flawed. It is rather that when we drop the idealization of intersubjective constancy of linguistic senses, the basic elements of the Fregean approach have to be deployed in a less straight-forward way to get plausible semantic analyses of belief attributions.<sup>182</sup>

In the next section we will discuss how exactly Forbes uses the notion of senses to account for the semantics of belief reports.

#### 4.4. Forbes on a Modified Fregean Account

In the light of our previous discussion, it should be noted that Forbes's semantics of attitude ascriptions must,

- (a) use some kind of notion of sense analogous to Frege's;
- (2) be sensitive to the intersubjective variations in sense,
- (b) try to accommodate the 'echo principle', and
- (c) avoid the problems that a ascriber oriented and a believer oriented account of belief reports face.

---

<sup>181</sup>that is, from the unsatisfactoriness of both the believer-oriented and the ascriber-oriented views.

<sup>182</sup>Forbes [1990] p.546.

Before going into the discussion of Forbes's account, let us consider another response, a response very similar to Forbes's, here. The reason for considering this response is to show how this response tries to avoid the difficulties resulting from intersubjective variations in sense and still use the notion of sense in providing a semantics of attitude attributions. A Fregean can say that a way forward might be that in cases where Ralph says, 'Lois believes that Clark Kent can't fly', he is referring to neither Lois's nor his own sense of Clark Kent. He is referring to senses in a very general way by quantifying over them, and not by specifically referring to his or the believer's sense. What he is saying in uttering the sentence 'Lois believes that Superman can fly', can be represented in the following way:

$(\exists m)(\exists m')(m \text{ is a mode of presentation of Superman and } m' \text{ is a mode of presentation of flying \& } B(\text{Lois, the proposition that } m \text{ has } m'))$ .

An account like this would not require to specify which and whose sense is being referred to in a belief ascription, and at the same time, retain the Fregean spirit. What it is saying, is that for some way of thinking of Superman and some way of 'can fly', Lois believes the proposition consisting of those two ways of presentations. A semantical account of this kind helps the Fregean in giving an analysis of problematic cases like the one discussed in the previous chapter,

6. Everybody who knows Wittgenstein believes that he is a genius.

On the above suggestion we are not referring to individual modes of presentations at all. So 6 can be paraphrased as:

$(\forall x)(x \text{ knows Wittgenstein} \rightarrow (\exists m)(\exists m')(m \text{ is some mode of presentation of Wittgenstein and } m' \text{ is some mode of presentation of the property of being of genius \& } x \text{ believes } \langle m, m' \rangle))$ .

One obvious objections to a proposal of this kind should be discussed here. It is a similar objection to that which was raised against the hybrid view at the end of last chapter. The proposal suggests that a belief ascription of the form

X believes that a is F

should be paraphrased in the following way,

A.  $(\exists m)(\exists m')(m \text{ presents } a \ \& \ m' \text{ presents } F \ \& \ B(X, \langle m, m' \rangle)$ .

In other words, this suggests, that for some way of thinking of a, X believes the proposition consisting in that way of thinking of a in conjunction with the way of thinking of F. But this analysis makes the position of 'a' within the 'that'-clause transparent. It seems that we can replace 'a' by any co-referential expression, like 'b', without changing the truth-value of the whole sentence. So from A we will be able to derive

B.  $(\exists m)(\exists m')(m \text{ presents } b \ \& \ m' \text{ presents } F \ \& \ B(X, \langle m, m' \rangle)$ .

From this we can get

X believes that b is F.

According to this analysis, from the sentence 'Lois believes that Superman can fly' we can get the sentence 'Lois believes that Clark Kent can fly', and both the sentences turn out to be true. But this is surely not what we wanted. One thing that seems to be emerging from the above discussion and from the use of what is known as the 'echo principle' is that the actual name (which occurs within the belief operator) that the ascriber uses in reporting someone's belief, plays a very crucial role. For example, when Ralph says 'Lois believes that Clark Kent can't fly' the use of the name 'Clark Kent' by Ralph is very important, because that is the name that he heard Lois using in reporting her own belief.

The moral which should be drawn from the above mentioned problem is that, in an analysis of certain cases of belief ascriptions, we need to provide some further restrictions which would preclude this kind of substitution. We have seen that the hybrid view fails to provide us with any restriction of that kind. Forbes [1990] tries to avoid this problem by bringing in a contextual factor that is, in many cases, extremely important

in reporting a person's belief so that communication between the reporter and the hearer can take place. What the report should do, is to specify how the believer would express his or her belief, and that can be done by specifying the very name that the person would use in expressing his or her belief. Forbes, in summarising his own proposal, says,

Reflection ... indicates that the *actual name* the ascriber uses in making his ascription plays a role that none of the proposals canvasses so far has managed to capture. ...when Ralph comes out with (6)<sup>183</sup>, he is surmising something roughly to the effect that for Lois there is some body of classified conditions concerning Clark Kent ... *which she associates with the name "Clark Kent"* and which includes the condition of "can't fly" classified "believed to be true". ... In other words, these ascriptions must be represented as adverting in some way to the name the believer would use in expressing the belief.<sup>184</sup>

This proposal suggests that the sense of an expression is labelled by the name the believer and the ascriber uses. There are three important observations we can make here. In the first place, by associating the particular name the believer would use had she expressed her belief, Forbes avoids the problem that endangered the quantificational account. Furthermore, by indicating that there is some body of classified condition that Lois has concerning Clark Kent, he avoids the problem referring to Lois's or the ascriber's particular sense for Clark Kent. The last point is about which name the reporter should use in his report of someone else's belief. Is Forbes saying that, in order correctly to report someone's belief, we must use the very name actually used by the reported believer? Surely that cannot be the case, for two reasons:

(a) the reported believer may not have actually expressed her belief at all by using that name, she may have expressed her belief by using some other name; or

---

<sup>183</sup>'(6)' refers to the sentence 'Lois believes Clark Kent can't fly'.

<sup>184</sup>Forbes [1990], p.549.



(b) the reported believer may not have expressed her belief at all.

Forbes accepts these points, and in a footnote<sup>185</sup> gives an example where a believer might actually refrain from using the name that the ascriber uses in reporting his belief. She might have religious prohibition against uttering or even writing a name. That may be the reason why he later formulates the condition by the name the believer would use in expressing his belief. That is, in order correctly to report someone's belief, we must use a name that the reported believer would have used had she expressed her belief. It need not be a name she actually uses. Having clarified this preliminary point, let us now turn to his main proposal. The first two points would become clearer in the course of the discussion which is to follow. However, we should note that there are further problems regarding which name the reporter should use in a belief report, and we will get back to them after having explained Forbes's account of the semantics of belief report. To understand this we can start by explaining his notion of dossier of information, because he takes a sense of a name to be very much the same as dossiers of information labelled by a name. It is a notion that he borrows from Gareth Evans.

According to Forbes, senses of expressions are 'theoretical entities with explanatory properties, entities posited by the semantic theorist to explain the semantic intuitions of language understanders. For example, Frege arrives at the notion of sense by elaborating his intuitions about certain identity sentences. The property of a sense which explains our intuitions about propositions of which it is a constituent I call its cognitive significance. It is the cognitive significance of a thought which determines that the believer will take a particular attitude to it, ...'<sup>186</sup> He further holds, in the Fregean spirit, that thoughts *p* and *q* can be said to have the same cognitive significance if and only if it is *a priori* that a rational being who grasps both takes the same attitude towards them at the same time. So what is needed is an account of the cognitive significance of the sense of a name 'which can replace the name in the context "it is *a priori* that" without affecting truth value.'<sup>187</sup>

---

<sup>185</sup>See Forbes [1990], footnote 18, p.549.

<sup>186</sup>*ibid*, p.537-8.

<sup>187</sup>*ibid* p.538.

Forbes's explains the notion of a cognitive significance of a name in terms of the metaphor of a dossier. When we receive information about particular objects and want to save those pieces of information, we create a dossier in which these information are stored. If we gather any new information about the object or the individual, we take it that, that too will be stored in the dossier. That is, to use Forbes's words, we file 'classified conditions'. What is a classified condition? In answer to this question Forbes says,

a condition is something an object can satisfy, and the classifier is what specifies the subject's attitude to a certain related proposition. Possible classifiers for conditions are "believed to be true" and "hoped to be true." The role of a name is to identify a file for a particular object -- as I shall put it, we use names to "label" dossiers.<sup>188</sup>

So, when we come to hear a new name which we take to stand for a particular individual, a dossier is created with that particular name as its label in which the classified conditions are stored. The hypothesis about the cognitive significance of a name that this metaphor brings out is that 'the sense of a name "NN" has the cognitive significance "the subject of this dossier," where the dossier referred to is the one labelled "NN": our way of thinking of NN is as the subject of this dossier.'<sup>189</sup>

One might here ask whether the notion of cognitive significance that Forbes advocates fare with the test of substitutivity within the scope of 'it is *a priori* that'? It seems correct to say that for any subject who understands the name "NN", it is *a priori* that NN is NN. But can we say that it is *a priori* for any such subject that NN is the subject of this dossier, in case where "NN" refers to B's "NN"-dossier? There seems to be an obvious counter-example to the claim. Suppose, you come to know a piece of information about someone called 'Jim', and create a dossier to store that information and label it by that name. Suppose, further, that later you

---

<sup>188</sup>ibid, p.538.

<sup>189</sup>ibid, p.538.

come across someone whom you take to be Jim and start storing pieces of information you gather into the dossier labelled 'Jim'. But, after a while, you come to know that the person is not Jim but he is Tom. In a situation like this, it seems reasonable for you to say 'Jim is not the subject of this dossier', and in saying this you do not seem to be contradicting an *a priori* truth. Forbes has two alternative solutions to this problem, and as both of them are equally acceptable he doesn't argue for one over the other.

The first solution is as follows. Surely, before you discovered your error of identification, 'Jim is the subject of this dossier' was *a priori* for you. However, once you learn that the person is not Jim but Tom, relabelling of the dossier takes place -- that is, you relabel with 'Tom' the dossier previously labelled 'Jim'. Furthermore you create a new dossier labelled 'Jim' into which you transfer the original information for which the now relabelled dossier was first created. Now when you say 'Jim is not the subject of this dossier', the demonstrative refers to the old dossier which has been relabelled 'Tom'. Therefore you are not really contradicting the proposition that you previously expressed with 'Jim is the subject of this dossier'.

The alternative solution doesn't require any change of sense in 'NN'. According to this account the original introduction to the name 'NN' is sufficient to secure its public reference. Now, whenever you receive new information about MM and enter that into your 'NN' dossier, you really file a piece of misinformation about NN in your 'NN' dossier. When you come to know that MM and NN are two different people, you transfer all the misinformation from your 'NN' dossier to a newly created dossier labelled 'MM'. Now, you can truly say 'NN is not the subject of this dossier' so long as 'this dossier' refers to the newly created 'MM' dossier. Both these proposal explains why 'NN is the subject of this dossier' is *a priori* for you, though you can truly say 'NN is not the subject of this dossier'.

When can we say that two names have the same sense? -- Forbes says that two names can be said to have the same sense only when they name the same dossier. This he explains with the help of an example.

Suppose Ralph is someone who has never heard of Superman or Clark Kent, and suppose he comes to meet Superman, who tells him, 'I am known both as 'Superman' and as 'Clark Kent''. Hearing this Ralph creates 'a single double-labelled dossier'<sup>190</sup>, because the system which creates the dossiers is governed by the constraint that 'in setting up new ones for new names it should aim for a one-one correspondence with the purported objects'.<sup>191</sup> The same thing happens when we are introduced to someone by both her real name and her nick name. If the person is called by the names 'Elizabeth' and 'Beth', and we come to know that they are, we create a single dossier labelled by both the names. In situations like these, the two names label the same dossier and can be said to have the same sense.

Having briefly explained how Forbes understands the notion of sense, we can now explain how this notion of sense is used in giving a semantics of belief reports. An important point should be noted here. If a dossier is labelled by a name, then the sense which a name expresses will be labelled by that name as well, since in articulating the cognitive significance of a sense we make reference to the dossier labelled by the name. Having explained the sense of an expression in this way, Forbes puts forward an analysis of belief ascriptions which would avoid the problem faced by the analysis mentioned in the beginning of this section. In providing his analysis of belief ascriptions in terms of the sense of an expression, Forbes says,

Within the context of a use of a name "NN" by A in a belief ascription to B, a sense is then said to be *so labelled* if and only if the articulation of the cognitive significance of that sense demonstratively identifies a dossier of B's labelled by a name which is a linguistic counterpart<sub><B,A></sub> of "NN".<sup>192</sup>

What is a linguistic counterpart of a name within a belief report? According to Forbes, for a name *t'* to be a linguistic counterpart of *t*, it is required that they have the same reference, and the notion is always

---

<sup>190</sup>ibid, p.544.

<sup>191</sup>ibid p.544.

<sup>192</sup>ibid, 550.

relativised to a pair of thinkers -- the believer and the ascriber. A sense may be said to be labelled by any name which is a linguistic counterpart of the name used by the ascriber in specifying the proposition.

Using this notion of sense of an expression we can understand a *de dicto* belief report. In a *de dicto* belief report the linguistic counterpart of the name in the ascription is the name itself -- the name which is being used by both the believer and the ascriber. This would prevent any substitution within the content clause of a belief report to take place. For example, when Ralph hears Lois utter 'Clark Kent can't fly' and on that basis says, 'Lois believes that Clark Kent can't fly', the analysis which Forbes proposes says that Clark Kent is such that for Lois's so-labelled way of thinking of him, Lois believes that he can't fly. As Forbes points out, from this we cannot infer that Lois believes Superman can't fly because Lois does not possess a dossier labelled 'Superman' containing 'can't fly' classified 'believed true', though she possesses such a dossier labelled Clark Kent. It is in a *de dicto* belief report that the names behave in the way that 'Giorgione' does in Quine's example 'Giorgione was so-called because of his size'. Both in the so-called construction and a *de dicto* belief report the words that are being uttered themselves are salient and relevant. That is why substitution fails to preserve truth. Therefore, in a *de dicto* singular belief report the reporter specifies the dossier by using the word that the agent would himself use to express the alleged belief.

We might here come back to the problem that we left behind sometime ago. It is this question: In order to correctly report another's belief which name should we use? We said that the reporter must use the name which the reported believer would use had she expressed her belief. But this requirement may seem to be too exacting. There might not have been a unique name that the reported believer would have used -- there might be a range of names associated with the same dossier, and the reported believer might have used any one of these names. To accommodate this kind of situation the requirement should not be so strict. It might be only that the reporter should use one of the names that the reported believer would have accepted if she heard what is being reported. But what happens if the reporter is using another language to

report someone's belief? What happens if the believer is a monolingual speaker, say a French speaker, whose belief we want to report in English and we use an English equivalence of the name he uses in French? There is no way that the believer can accept this foreign name, because it is not a member of the believer's accepted class. According to Forbes in this kind of cases a less trivial application of the linguistic counterpart relation takes place. So, the English name that the ascriber uses has as the linguistic counterpart the name, say the French name, that the believer uses. Therefore, the analysis of the English sentence ascribing belief to the French speaker would ascribe the right truth-value since the English and the French names are each other's linguistic counterparts relative to the English-speaking ascriber and the French-speaking believer.

However, the obvious question here is, what are the conditions that need to be satisfied in order for a name N' to be a linguistic counterpart of N? Forbes is not very clear in answering this question. He thinks that for N' to be a linguistic counterpart of N, it is required that they have the same customary reference, and are always relativised to a pair of thinkers : the ascriber and the believer. But linguistic counterpart relation cannot be explained in terms of just having the same reference. And, I think that it is here that the notion of dossier comes into play. So the proposal is as follows: in order for N' to be a linguistic counterpart of N, N and N' should label the same dossier. But is this not a too stringent requirement? Does it not preclude the possibility that the believer's and the ascriber's dossiers might diverge about the same person? These questions seem to legitimately threaten Forbes's analysis of belief ascriptions.

We can try to answer the above questions broadly within Forbes's framework, but with a modification. The suggestion is that for N' to be a linguistic counterpart of N, it is not necessary that they label exactly the same dossier. What is required is that N' and N label two dossiers which belong to the same type, that is, the dossier that the ascriber associate with N' and the dossier that the believer associate with N, though distinct, are instances of the same type of dossier. When someone thinks of an object through some dossier of information, the thought is about the object from which the

information is derived, and is true iff the object in question possesses whatever property the thought ascribes to the object. In a case where the ascriber and the believer both think of the reference through some dossier, the dossiers can be said to belong to the same type iff they contain overlapping information, and the ascription is true iff these overlapping information are true of the object. This proposal seems to overcome the difficulties that Forbes's account of linguistic counterpart faces. By interpreting the notion of dossiers of information in this way, this account reveals the importance of the notion in ascriptions of a class of beliefs. Therefore, it can be regarded a genuine way forward in accounting for *de dicto* belief ascriptions.

## CHAPTER 5

### On the Russellian Account of Belief Ascription

#### 5.1. Contrasting Frege and Russell

We have noted, in the previous chapter, how a *de dicto* belief report can be provided on the Fregean line. We have also, in the course of the discussion, comparing the different semantical accounts of belief ascriptions with the Russellian. Now it is time to see what are the philosophical motivations for developing a semantics in this line. Our own reason is prompted by the fact of trying to capture *de re* beliefs -- beliefs where the relation between the believer and the object of belief is not mediated by modes of presentation. The difference between Frege and Russell on attitude ascriptions is clear in the following correspondence between the two philosophers.

Frege writes to Russell,

Dear Colleague,

... Mont Blanc with its snowfields is not itself a component part of thought that Mont Blanc is more than 4,000 metres high . ... The sense of the word 'moon' is a component part of the thought that the moon is smaller than the earth. The moon itself (i.e. the denotation of the word 'moon') is not part of the sense of the word 'moon'; for then it would also be a component part of the thought. We can nevertheless say: 'The moon is identical with the heavenly body closest to the earth'. What is identical, however, is not a component part but the denotation of the expressions 'the moon' and 'the heavenly body closest to the earth'. ... The identity is not an identity of sense, nor part of the sense, but of denotation. ....

In reply Russell writes,

Dear Colleague,

... Concerning sense and denotation, I see nothing but difficulties which I cannot overcome. ... I believe that in spite of all its snowfields Mont Blanc itself is a component part of what is actually asserted in the proposition 'Mont Blanc is more than 4,000 metres high'. .... we assert ... a certain complex (an objective proposition, one might say) in which Mont Blanc is itself a component part. If we do not admit this, then we get the



conclusion that we know nothing at all about Mont Blanc. .... In the case of a simple proper name like 'Socrates', I cannot distinguish between sense and denotation; I see only the idea, which is psychological, and the object. ....<sup>193</sup>

The contrasting thoughts that are expressed by Frege and Russell about what a proposition is, brings out the modern dispute between the Fregeans and the Russellians in analysing the content of propositional attitude ascribing sentences like, 'Ralph believes that Cicero was a Roman orator'. As we might recall, for a Russellian<sup>194</sup> the contribution of a proper name in a sentence is nothing more or less than what the name refers to. This is the case even in cases where the name is embedded in a propositional attitude ascribing context. Therefore, 'Cicero' in the sentence 'Cicero is a Roman orator' not only refers to the individual, it does so even when it occurs in the sentence 'Ralph believes that Cicero is a Roman orator'.

The Russellian account can be regarded as involving the following views regarding the nature and function of propositions, names and predicates:

(a) According to the Russellians,<sup>195</sup> propositions are, to be taken as structured entities composed of the individual referred to by the subject term of the sentence and the property or relation referred to by the predicate. So, the sentence 'Fido is a dog' expresses a structured proposition whose structure can be presented as the ordered pair <Fido, doghood>. As Nathan Salmon says<sup>196</sup>

... the proposition that is the information content of a declarative sentence (with respect to a given context) is

---

<sup>193</sup>Excerpts from the correspondence between Frege and Russell in 1904. Taken from Frege [1980], pp.163, 169

<sup>194</sup>It should be noted that Russell himself changed his view about proposition and what their relation is to sentences. His view on proper names like, 'Socrates' went through major revisions as we all know.

<sup>195</sup>There is a very clear exposition of the Russellian account of propositional attitude ascribing sentence in Richard [1990], pp. 108-28. Salmon [1986] and [1990] defends this kind of account. Similar arguments are found in the writing of Donnellan [1990], and Soams, [1987].

<sup>196</sup>Salmon [1990], pp. 215-6.

structured in a certain way, and that its structure and constituents mirror, and are in some way readable from, the structure and constituents of the sentence containing that proposition.

(b) Accepting the view expressed by Russell in reply to Frege, the Russellians hold that the content of an ordinary proper name, like 'Mont Blanc', 'Fido', 'Cicero' etc., is simply its reference. They take a similar view regarding the content of uses of demonstratives and indexicals. Again, we can quote from Nathan Salmon<sup>197</sup>.

'... the contribution made by an ordinary proper name or other simple singular term to securing the information content of, or the proposition expressed by, declarative sentences (with respect to a given possible context of use) in which the term occurs ... is just the referent of the term, or the bearer of the name (with respect to that context of use). In the terminology of *Frege's Puzzle*, I maintain that the information value of an ordinary proper name is just its referent

(c) Russellians assign contents to other expressions in a similar way to that of proper names, so that predicates are said to refer to properties or relations.

(d) The Russellians take propositional attitude ascribing verbs like, 'believes' to be a relation between an individual and a proposition having the characteristics stated in a.

What are the philosophical implications in accepting the above characteristics of propositions? -- One seems to be evident. If someone accepts (a) and (b) -- that is, a proposition is a structured entity and the content of a proper name is simply its referent -- then it leads him to saying that the replacement of a name with a co-referential name in a sentence doesn't affect the proposition expressed by the sentence, and

---

<sup>197</sup>ibid, p.216.

therefore if one of them is true so is the other. From this it immediately follows that the content of the two names 'Eric Blair' and 'George Orwell' is the same, because their content is exhausted by their referent, and the two names are co-referential. If the proposition expressed by the sentence

(1) 'George Orwell wrote *Animal Farm* '

is structured out of the referents of the constituent expressions, (so that it has the structure like, <George Orwell, being the writer of *Animal Farm* >) then the proposition expressed by the sentence

(2) 'Eric Blair wrote *Animal Farm* '

is the same as the one expressed by (1).

The Russellians extend their view about proposition and the function of a proper name to belief ascriptions as well. According to them the contents of beliefs formulatable using ordinary proper names, demonstratives, indexical and other simple singular terms are singular structured propositions directly about some individual which occurs as a constituents of the proposition. Given the way in which Russellians take proper names to occur in belief attribution and given that the 'that'-clauses are two names of one and the same proposition, they have to admit that the two sentences,

(4) Tom believes that George Orwell wrote *Animal Farm*

(5) Tom believes that Eric Blair wrote *Animal Farm*

cannot differ in truth value. So substitution of one name by the other co-referential name would preserve truth. Most of us find this position to seem to be obviously incorrect. Intuitively, it seems obvious that due to Tom's ignorance about the identity George Orwell and Eric Blair, he will assent to (1) but dissent from (2). In that case it will be true to report Tom's belief with the use of (4), but false to report his belief with the use of (5). So, substitution of one name by another in the pair (4) and (5) doesn't seem to preserve truth. This goes against the Russellian account and

therefore, it is absurd to adhere to a Russellian analysis of belief ascription. This makes it essential to understand why philosophers have opted for an account of this kind at all.

## 5.2. Motivations for Russellianism

There are various reasons which have prompted philosophers to embrace some form of Russellianism. We can point out three reasons. The justification or evidence for Russellianism comes from the role that propositions are said to play in contexts other than the propositional attitude ascribing ones, the way we usually ascribe attitudes and how, in certain contexts, propositional attitude attributions are taken to be *de re*.

### 5.2.1. The Role of Proposition outside Belief Ascriptions

As has been pointed out, singular propositions, composed of individuals and properties, are regarded as objects of propositional attitudes by the Russellians. But, apart from having an important role as objects of propositional attitudes, propositions are traditionally taken to be the bearers of truth and falsity as well as necessity and possibility. Let us concentrate on the role of propositions outside the propositional attitude ascribing contexts. It can be argued that the best way of understanding the role of propositions in these contexts is by way of taking the content of proper names, demonstratives and indexicals to be simply referring to an object or an individual so that co-referential names make exactly the same contribution to a proposition.<sup>198</sup> An example would make the point clear. In an utterance or an use of the sentence

(6) He (pointing to Tom) is happy,

the content of 'he' in this particular context is the individual Tom, and the reference of 'he' would change according to the context of the utterance of (6). So a use of the sentence 'he is happy' is true in a particular context *c* iff the individual determined by the use of 'he' is happy in that

---

<sup>198</sup>This point has been discussed by Richard [1990], pp.112-14. It is also a consequence of Kripke's argument that proper names are rigid designators.

(6) to be true at a particular context it seems necessary and sufficient that the person referred to by 'he' in that context be happy. Therefore, 'if the contribution of 'he' to the proposition is simply something that determines a reference in the way mentioned above, then the content of 'he', and other such terms, seems to be nothing more or less than the individual named ....'<sup>199</sup> This way of understanding the working of proper names and demonstratives helps in our uses of statements of necessity and possibility. Suppose someone utters the sentence

(7) It is possible that Tom is happy.

(7) is true iff the proposition expressed by the sentence 'Tom is happy' is possibly true. And any sentence of the general form 'It is possible that S' is true iff the proposition expressed by 'S' is possibly true. Consider a sentence similar to 7:

(8) There is someone who is not happy but could have been happy.

A natural partial symbolisation of 8 can be

(8)'.  $(\exists x)(x \text{ is not happy} \ \& \ \text{it is possible that } x \text{ is happy})$ .

Now this sentence can be regarded as true when there is an individual such that 'It is possible that x is happy' is true when the variable 'x' is assigned the individual i as its value . This way of understanding quantified sentences like 8' seems to commit us to Russellian proposition. If an open sentence like 'x is happy' expresses a proposition only when 'x' is assigned an individual , such propositions are to be individuated simply in terms of the individual assigned to the variable as its value.<sup>200</sup> Therefore quantification into modal contexts provides us with an important ground for positing Russellian propositions. It gives us prima facie reasons for supposing that the content of some terms are nothing more than their reference.

---

<sup>199</sup>Richard, [1990], p.113.

<sup>200</sup>Quantifiers are treated objectually here -- one of the natural way of reading quantifiers.

Having noted this, let us consider belief reports like the following:

(9) There is someone who isn't happy, he could have been happy and Lucy believes that he is happy.

A plausible way of symbolising 9 would be,

(9)'.  $(\exists x) (x \text{ is not happy} \ \& \ \text{it is possible that } x \text{ is happy} \ \& \ \text{Lucy believes that } x \text{ is happy})$ .

If we think, following the above argument, that a Russellian proposition is assigned in case of 'It is possible that x is happy', then it seems natural to assign a Russellian proposition to 'Lucy believes that x is happy'. As Richard points out<sup>201</sup>, if the two 'that'-clauses refer to two different propositions then it becomes difficult to explain why (9) seems to correctly imply David believes something which is contingently true.<sup>202</sup>

So what follows from this discussion is that the proposition that Hesperus is rising just is the proposition that we get by assigning Hesperus to 'x' in 'x is rising'. Now, the Russellians contend that the same is true of the proposition that Phosphorus is rising, since assigning Hesperus to 'x' is the same as assigning Phosphorus to 'x'. This immediately leads us to admitting a Russellian proposition as the objects of belief ascriptions, like 'David believes that Hesperus is rising.

---

<sup>201</sup>Richard [1990], p.115.

<sup>202</sup>A Russellian account of propositional attitude ascribing sentence would help us in explaining some problematic cases which the Fregeans cannot. Consider the sentence

Tom believes that Paul is happy and he surely is happy.

As Segal, [1989] points out, 'he' is straightforwardly anaphoric to 'Paul'. One of the most plausible way of understanding sentences of the above kind is to take the content of 'Paul' and 'he' to be the same -- and the sameness lies in their having the same referent.

The same may be said about ascriptions like,

Everybody who knows Wittgenstein believes that he is a genius,

whose quasi-regimentation might be,

$(\exists x) (x = \text{Wittgenstein} \ \& \ (\forall y)(y \text{ knows } x \rightarrow y \text{ believes that } x \text{ is a genius}))$ ,

the variable 'x' takes the individual referred to by the proper name to be its value.

### 5.2.2. Considering the Way Beliefs are Ascribed

One very important consideration that leads philosophers to take Russellianism seriously comes from the general way in which we ascribe a belief to someone. Very often we are indifferent to what indexical, demonstrative or proper name we use in reporting a belief, so long as the reference is preserved.<sup>203</sup> As Richard<sup>204</sup> remarks

...if I point at Twain and say, 'He's happy', any of the following seem correct report of what I say: MR said that Twain is happy, MR said that Clemens is happy, MR said that you (we are addressing Twain) are happy, MR said that I am happy (Twain is speaking). This certainly suggests that the terms are making exactly the same contribution to the proposition determined by the embedded sentences.

We can with the help of an example show that our ordinary truth-intuitions (the intuition that 'X believes that a is F' is true while 'X believes that b is F' is false even when 'a' is co-referential with 'b') are incorrect. Richard has shown that if a person can say 'I believe that a is F' and if 'a' and 'b' are co-referential names, demonstratives or indexicals, then the person can also truly say 'I believe that b is F'. This follows from the way we reason about attitude attribution.<sup>205</sup> This example has already been mentioned in the chapter on the Hybrid View. I think that it is necessary to repeat this example so that it becomes clearer as to why a Russellian account is needed in some contexts.

Suppose a person A is talking to someone, say B, through the telephone. She also sees a woman across the street in a phone booth and a steamroller is about to crush that booth. She does not realise that the

---

<sup>203</sup>Here it should be noted that this kind of indifference is essential in some contexts. In case of a belief report, it is not only the believer and the reporter who are important, the hearer -- the person to whom the report is conveyed-- is important as well. For the success of our communication in a context which is sensitive to this factor, what we require, at most, is to get the reference right.

<sup>204</sup>Richard [1990], pp. 116-7.

<sup>205</sup>This argument is developed in Richard [1983] and [1990].

person with whom she is talking is the very same person who is in danger. She reports the whole thing to B and says

(10) I believe that she is in danger.

But, surely A does not say,

(11) I believe that you are in danger.

Given our intuitions about attributions of beliefs, it would seem that while (10) is true (11) is false. Richard, however, argues that contrary to our intuitions, (10) and (11) in the described context, are both true. In fact, the truth of (11) follows from the truth of (10). To show this let us simplify the situation by assuming that A is the unique person watching B. Suppose that B is watching A's panicked behaviour and says,

(12) The person watching me believes that I am in danger.

Since (10) is true, so is (12). Since B's utterance of (12) heard by A through the telephone is true, A would speak truly if he were to utter through the phone to B the following sentence,

(13) The person watching you believes that you are in danger.

If B's use of (12) is true, then so is A's use of (13). But then (11), that is, 'I believe that you are in danger' follows from (13) and the further premise

(14) I am the person watching you.

As (13) and (14) uttered by A in this context is true, (11) will also be true. Therefore, Richard<sup>206</sup> concludes,

The upshot of all this is that there is support in the way we talk and reason about attitudes for the Russellian's claim that substituting one name of a thing for another in a sentence

---

<sup>206</sup>Richard [1990] pp. 118-9



doesn't change the proposition the sentence determines. The objection above -- that someone who denies that so and so is almost invariably correct -- should not by itself move one to reject Russellianism, for we seem to be committed to certain patterns of reasoning that belie this objection.

### 5.2.3. Considering *De Re* Attributions of Beliefs

Another reason which has prompted philosophers to think that singular terms are used referentially in propositional attitude ascription is the *de re* propositional attitude attributions.<sup>207</sup> A *de re* attribution of belief can be expressed in colloquial English as,

(15) Tom believes of Mary that she is happy.

Or, more formally,

(16)  $(\exists x)(x = \text{Mary} \ \& \ \text{Tom believes that } x \text{ is happy})$ .

Now the argument that follows is an argument by analogy, an analogy between individual constants and individual variables. It proceeds by showing that individual constants play a very similar role as individual variables and pronoun, differing from them only in their constancy.

The most important characteristic of a *de re* attribution is that it does not specify how Tom conceives of Mary in believing her to be happy. Someone, like a Fregean, might say that this lack of specificity results from the fact the name 'Mary' occurs outside the scope of the opaque or oblique context created by the 'believes that' operator, where it is open to substitution and existential generalisation. Though the factor that the Fregeans refer to is true, there is another fact which they ignore. It is the part that the last bound occurrence of the variable 'x' play in (16) and the occurrence of 'she' in (15). As it has already been noted in the discussion in A that 15 is true if and only if its component open sentence 'Tom

---

<sup>207</sup>A discussion of this is found in Salmon [1990], pp. 223-7, and [1986] pp3-7.

believes that  $x$  is happy', in a particular context of its utterance, is true under the assignment of Mary as the value for the variable ' $x$ '. But the open sentence 'Tom believes that  $x$  is happy' is if and only if Tom believes the proposition that is the content of the complement open sentence ' $x$  is happy' under the same assignment of Mary as the value of  $x$ . Now, as Salmon points out<sup>208</sup>, 'the fundamental semantic characteristic of a variable with an assigned value, or a pronoun with a particular referent, is precisely that its information value is just its referent.' The content of ' $x$  is happy' and 'she is happy' under the relevant assignment of the referent can only be the singular proposition about Mary that she is happy.

If this is true of variables and pronouns, then it is true of the individual constants, at least in cases where a *de re* attribution takes place. In case of a *de re* attribution, the contribution of the proper name to the content of the belief report is just its referent. There is another way in which the similarity between a proper name and a variable is brought out by Salmon<sup>209</sup>.

All of us are accustomed to using special variables or pronouns that have a restricted domain over which they range. In ordinary English, the pronoun 'he' often ranges only over males, the pronoun 'she' only over females. .... The domain over which a variable ranges ... can be quite small in size. ... Could there be variables whose range is a unit set? Of course there could.

Now, the value of this kind of variable being restricted to a single object, we could call them 'invariable variables'. And proper names and demonstratives can be seen as invariable variables. Note that for the purpose of the argument to work we do not need the premise that proper names are variables of a special kind, a more weaker premise that names are sufficiently analogous to a variable would do.

---

<sup>208</sup>Nathan Salmon, 'A Millian Heir Rejects the Wages of Sinn', p.224.

<sup>209</sup>ibid, pp225-7.

These three, then are the considerations which lead philosophers to adhere to Russellianism in at least, some cases of attitude attributions. We can say that, if our arguments for *de re* beliefs are correct, then *de re* beliefs can be best ascribed in a *de re* way -- that is, by not bringing in any modes of presentation. In cases like this substitution of co-referential names within belief-reports would preserve truth. Therefore, in providing a semantics of *de re* beliefs, we specify singular propositions, consisting of objects and properties the beliefs are about. As substitution of co-referential names do not make any difference to the truth-values of the relevant sentences, we do not need any complicated device to account for the failure of substitution.

## CONCLUSION

It is now time to recapitulate the main line of argument that has been developed and argued for in the dissertation. In order to do that we can start by highlighting two important points. The first point concerns the overall structure of the discussion, while the second concerns the general philosophical framework within which the discussion takes place.

A closer scrutiny of the pattern of discussion reveals that it has a negative and a positive part. The negative part consists of two lines of arguments:

(a) Firstly, I tried to answer the sceptical arguments raised against proposition from Quine's thesis on the indeterminacy of translation. His denial of meaning facts poses an immediate threat to the existence of propositions, which are taken to be objects of propositional attitude ascriptions. Finding a way of rebutting this kind of sceptical challenge is essential for our purpose, because in the Introduction we argue that a propositional attitude ascribing verb, like 'believe', can be taken to stand for a relation between the person who has that attitude and the proposition towards which that attitude is directed.

(b) Secondly, I evaluated some recent proposals of the semantics of belief ascriptions of the 'Hybrid' variety -- proposals which take both a Russellian proposition and some kind of mode of presentation to be the content of a belief report. The motivation for the proponents of a Hybrid View is two-fold: (1) these philosophers think that neither the Fregean or the Russellian (or the Direct Referential) accounts are correct in providing a semantics of belief report, and (2) they want to provide semantics which can apply to any kinds of belief whatsoever. However, I argued that, not only do the proposals get the truth-conditions of belief ascriptions wrong, they are unable to distinguish between *de re* and *de dicto* beliefs -- a genuine distinction that needs capturing in an analysis of belief-ascribing sentences.

The positive part of the discussion lies in arguing for the existence of a class of beliefs that are *de re*, and, furthermore, in showing that the *de re/de dicto* distinction can be accounted for by distinguishing between two different types of propositions as their contents -- a Russellian proposition corresponding to a *de re* belief, while a Fregean proposition corresponds to a *de dicto* belief. Having done this, we develop two distinct semantics of belief ascriptions. A semantics advanced on the Fregean line and another advanced on the Russellian line helps in understanding the distinction between *de dicto* and *de re* beliefs respectively.

It must be clear by now that the general philosophical framework within which the discussion takes place is provided by the tradition of Frege and Russell. We can contrast their views on attitudes broadly in the following way. Frege was of the opinion that attitudes cannot be characterised simply in terms of the objects and properties that they are intuitively taken to be about. Whereas, Russell, or more precisely, philosophers belonging to the Russellian tradition, hold that attitudes can be characterised by specifying the objects and properties they are about. This difference is reflected in their views of the behaviour of expressions occurring within belief reports. According to Fregeans, expressions occurring within an attitude verb shift their references and refer to their customary senses. For Russellians, however, expressions within the scope of attitude verbs behave in exactly the same way as they do outside the scope of such verbs.

These then are some observations on the general structure of the dissertation and the foundation on which the discussion is based. Now, let me summarise the view of attitudes and their ascriptions that has been argued for. In certain respects, the view that has evolved through the arguments agrees with the analyses given by both Frege and Russell. After having argued for a dyadic relational structure of propositional attitude attributions, it has been shown that a semantical distinction still needs to be made between *de re* and *de dicto* propositional attitudes. However, if the *de re/de dicto* distinction is genuine, no single account can capture this distinction. Thus, one of the reasons for the failure of the Hybrid View is over generalisation.

In certain contexts a belief is such that the semantic analysis of its report requires the specification of modes of presentation in order for the analysis to be correct. In a case like this substitution of co-referential expressions within the report fails. These are contexts which give rise to *de dicto* beliefs and a Fregean analysis of belief ascription is needed. In certain other contexts, our belief is such that the semantic analysis of the report does not, in any way, require any specification of the mode of presentation, because the relation between the believer and the object of belief is contextual. These reports allow for substitution of co-referential names within the attitude verbs, and can be taken to be contexts giving rise to *de re* beliefs. The importance of the proposal -- a proposal that take the semantical distinction between *de re* and *de dicto* beliefs seriously -- is as follows: Our thoughts about particular objects of the world are, in certain contexts, essentially direct, that is, they involve merely the objects and the properties. However, there are contexts in which the relationship between our thought and object is essentially indirect, involving some modes of presentation of the object. Any semantics of attitude ascription should be sensitive to the different ways our thoughts relate to the world. The view argued for in this dissertation does try to be sensitive in this respect, and therein, I hope, lies its merit.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anderson, C.A. and Owens, J. (ed.)** [1990], *Propositional Attitudes: The Role of Content in Logic, Language and Mind*, CSLI, Stanford.
- Bach, K.** [1987], *Thought and Reference*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Bach, K.** [1993], 'Sometimes a Great Notion: A Critical Notice of Mark Crimmins' *Talk About Beliefs*', *Mind and Language*, Vol.8, No.3, pp.431-41.
- Bach, K.** [1994], 'Conversational Implicature', *Mind and Language*, Vol.9, No.2, pp.124-62.
- Barwise, J. and Perry, J.** [1983], *Situations and Attitudes*, MIT/Bradford Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Bealer, G.** [1982], *Quality and Concept*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Blackburn, S.** [1975], 'The Identity of Proposition', in S. Blackburn (ed.) *Meaning, Reference and Necessity*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Blackburn, S.**, [1984], *Spreading the Word*, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Bogdan, R.J.** [1986], *Belief: Form, Content and Function*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Broackes, J.** [1986], 'Belief *De Re* and *De Dicto*', *The Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol.36, No.144, pp.374-83.
- Burge, T.** [1973], 'Reference and Proper Names', *The Journal of Philosophy* 70, pp.425-39.
- Burge, T.** [1977], 'Belief *De Re*', *The Journal of Philosophy* 74, pp.338-62.
- Burge, T.** [1979a], 'Individualism and the Mental', *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 4, pp.97-120; reprinted in R. M. Harnish (ed.) [1994].
- Burge, T.** [1979b] 'Sinning Against Frege', *The Philosophical Review* 88, pp.398-432.
- Carnap, R.** [1947], *Meaning and Necessity*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Church, A.** [1954], 'Intensional Isomorphism and the Identity of Belief', *Philosophical Studies* 5, pp.65-73; reprinted in N. Salmon and S. Soams (eds.) [1988].

- Crimmins, M. and Perry, J.** [1989], 'The Prince and the Phone-booth: Reporting Puzzling Beliefs', *The Journal of Philosophy* 86 , pp.685-717.
- Crimmins, M.** [1992], *Talk About Belief*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Davidson, D.** [1969], 'On Saying That', in D. Davidson and J. Hintikka (eds.) *Words and Objection: Essays on the Work of W. V. Quine*, , Reidel, Dordrecht.
- Donnellan, K.** [1966], 'Reference and Definite Description'. *Philosophical Review* 75, pp.281-304; reprinted in R. M. Harnish (ed.) [1994].
- Donnellan, K.** [1990], 'Belief and the Identity of Reference' in C.A. Anderson and J. Owens (eds.) [1990].
- Dummett, M.** [1978], *Truth and Other Enigmas*, Duckworth, London.
- Dummett, M.** [1981], *Frege: Philosophy of Language* (2nd Edition), Duckworth, London (1st edition published in 1973).
- Dummett, M.** [1982], *The Interpretation of Frege's Philosophy* , Duckworth, London.
- Evans, G.** [1982], *The Varieties of Reference*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Evans, G.** [1985], 'Identity and Predication', in his *Collected Papers*, Clarendon Press, Oxford
- Fodor, G.** [1990], 'Substitution Argument and the Individuation of Belief' in his *A Theory of Content*, A Bradford Book, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Forbes, G.** [1987], 'Indexicals and Intensionality: A Fregean Perspective', *The Philosophical Review* 96, pp.3-33.
- Forbes, G.** [1989], *The Language of Possibility*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.
- Forbes, G.** [1990], 'The Indispensibility of Sinn', *Philosophical Review* 99, pp.535-63.
- Frege, G.** [1966], *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*. 2nd edition, P.Geach and M. Black (trans and eds), Basil Blackwell, Oxford (first published in 1952).
- Frege, G.** [1967], 'The Thought: A Logical Inquiry' in P. F. Strawson (ed.) *Philosophy of Logic*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp.17-35.
- Frege, G.** [1980], *Philosophical and Mathematical Correspondence*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Geach, P.** [1962], *Reference and Generality*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York.



- Gibson, R. F. (Jr.)** [1982], *The Philosophy of W.V. Quine*, University Press of Florida, Tampa, Florida.
- Harnish, R.M. (ed.)** [1994], *Basic Topics in the Philosophy of Language*, Harvester Wheatsheaf, London.
- Heck, R.** [1995], 'The Sense of Communication', *Mind*, Vol.104, No.413, pp.80-106.
- Hookway, C.** [1978], 'Indeterminacy and Interpretation' in C. Hookway and P. Pettit (eds.), *Action and Interpretation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Hookway, C.** [1988], *Quine: Language, Experience and Reality*, Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Hornsby, J.** [1977], 'Singular Terms in Context of Propositional Attitude', *Mind* 86, pp.31-48.
- Kaplan, D.** [1969], 'Quantifying In', in D. Davidson and J. Hintikka (eds.), *Words and Objections*, Reidel, Dordrecht; reprinted in L. Linsky (ed.) [1971].
- Kaplan, D.** [1989], 'Demonstratives', in J. Almog, H. Wittstein, and J. Perry (eds.), *Themes from Kaplan*, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Kripke, S.** [1980], *Naming and Necessity*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.
- Kripke, S.** [1977], 'Speaker's Reference and Semantic Reference', *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 2, pp. 255-76.
- Kripke, S.** [1979], 'A Puzzle About Belief', in A. Margalit (ed.), *Meaning and Use*, Reidel, Dordrecht.
- Linsky, L. (ed.)** [1971], *Reference and Modality*, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Loar, B.** [1972], 'Reference and Propositional Attitudes', *Philosophical Review* 81, pp.43-62.
- McDowell, J. and Pettit, P. (ed.)** [1986], *Subject, Thought and Context*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- McDowell, J.** [1977], 'On Sense and Reference of a Proper Name', *Mind* 86, pp.159-85.
- McDowell, J.** [1984], 'De Re Senses' in C. Wright (ed.) [1984].
- Noonan, H.** [1984], 'Fregean Thoughts', in C. Wright (ed) [1984].
- Peacocke, C.** [1975], 'Proper Names, Reference and Rigid Designation' in S. Blackburn (ed.) *Meaning, Reference and Necessity*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

- Peacocke, C.** [1983], *Sense and Content*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Prior, A.N.** [1971], *Object of Thought*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Putnam, H.** [1975], 'The Meaning of 'Meaning'', in K. Gunderson (ed.) (1975), *Language, Mind, and Knowledge* (Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science VII), University of Minnesota Press, Minnesota, Minneapolis.
- Quine, W.V.** [1953], *From a Logical Point of View*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass; revised edition: 1961, Harper and Row.
- Quine, W.V.** [1956], 'Quantifiers and Propositional Attitudes', *The Journal of Philosophy* 53 , pp. 177-87; reprinted in Linsky [1971].
- Quine, W.V.** [1960], *Word and Object* , MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Quine, W.V.** [1966], *The Ways of Paradox and Other Essays*, Random House, Inc., New York; revised and enlarged edition [1976], Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Quine, W.V.** [1969a], *Ontological Relativity and Other Essays*, Columbia University Press, New York.
- Quine, W.V.** [1969b], 'Reply to Chomsky', in D. Davidson and J. Hintikka (eds.), *Words and Objections*, D. Reidel, Dordrecht.
- Quine, W.V.** [1970a], *Philosophy of Logic* , Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, NJ.
- Quine, W.V.** [1970b], 'On the Reasons for Indeterminacy of Translation', *The Journal of Philosophy* 67 , pp.178-83.
- Recanati, F.** [1993], *Direct Reference* , Basil Blackwell, Oxford.
- Recanati, F.** [1995], 'Quasi-Singular Proposition: The Semantics of Belief Reports', in *The Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volume LXIX*, pp.175-93.
- Richard, M.** [1983], 'Direct Reference and Ascription of Belief', *Journal of Philosophical Logic* 12 , pp.425-52; reprinted in N. Salmon and S. Soames [1988].
- Richard, M.** [1989], 'How I Say What You Think', in P. French, T. Uehling, and H. Wettstein (eds.), *Midwest Studies in Philosophy XIV*, University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, Ind.
- Richard, M.** [1990], *Propositional Attitudes: an Essay on Thought and How We Ascribe Them*, Cambridge University Press, New York.
- Rozemond, M.** [1993], 'Evans on *De Re* Thoughts', *Philosophia*, pp.275-98.
- Russell, B.** [1905], 'On Denoting', *Mind* 14 , reprinted in Russell [1971].

- Russell, B.** [1912], *The Problem of Philosophy* , Oxford University Press, New York.
- Russell, B.** [1918], 'Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description', in his *Mysticism and Logic*, Longmans, London.
- Russell, B.** [1971], *Logic and Knowledge* , George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, (first published in 1956).
- Sainsbury, M.** [1985], 'Critical notice of Gareth Evans' *The Varieties of Reference*', *Mind* Vol. XCIV, No. 373, pp.120-42.
- Salmon, N. and Soames, S.** (eds.) [1988], *Propositions and Attitudes* , Oxford University Press, New York.
- Salmon, N.** [1981], *Reference and Essence* , Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.
- Salmon, N.** [1986], *Frege's Puzzle* , MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Salmon, N.** [1989] 'Illogical Belief', *Philosophical Perspectives* 3, pp.243-85.
- Salmon, S.** [1990], 'The Millian Heir Rejects the Wages of Sinn' in C. A. Anderson and J. Owens (eds.) [1990].
- Schiffer, S.** [1987a], 'The 'Fido'-Fido Theory of Belief', *Philosophical Perspective I*, pp.455-80.
- Schiffer, S.** [1987b], *Remnants of Meaning* , MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.
- Schiffer, S.** [1990], 'The Mode-of-Presentation Problem', in C. Anderson and J. Owens (eds) [1990].
- Schiffer, S.** [1992], 'Belief Ascription', *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol LXXXIX, No.10, pp.499-519.
- Searle, J. R.** [1983], *Intentionality* , Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Segal, G.** [1989], 'The Preference for Sense and Reference', *The Journal of Philosophy*, pp.73-89.
- Sen, P. K.** [1991], *Reference and Truth*, Allied Publishers Ltd., New Delhi.
- Soames, S.** [1987], 'Direct Reference, Propositional Attitudes and Semantic Content', *Philosophical Topics* 15 , pp.47-87; reprinted in Salmon and Soames [1988].
- Sosa, E.** [1970], 'Propositional Attitudes *De Dicto* and *De Re*', *The Journal of Philosophy* LXVII, pp.883-96.
- Urmson, J. O.** [1968], 'Criteria of Intentionality', *Aristotelian Society Proceedings, Supplementary Volume* 42, pp.107-22.
- Woodfield, A.** (ed.) [1982], *Thought and Object* , Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Wright, C.** [1984], *Frege: Tradition and Influence*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.