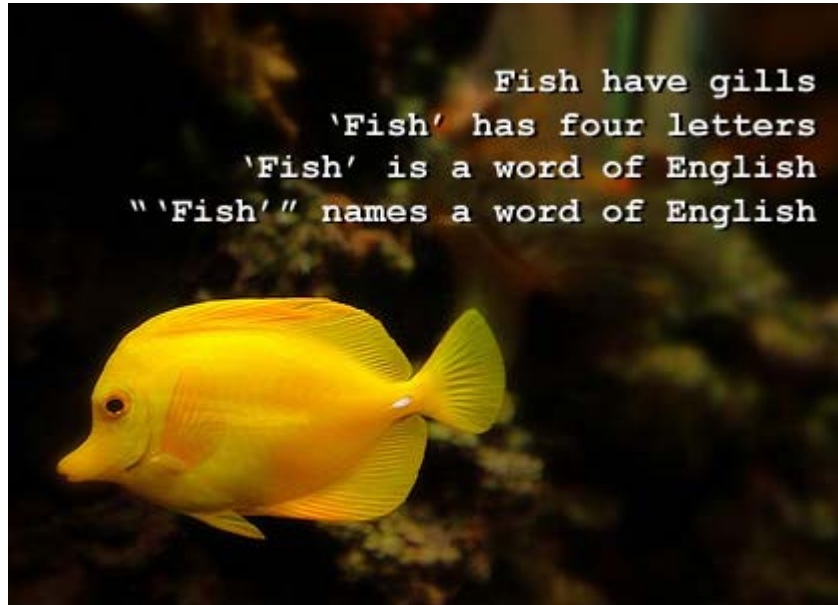


In Conjunction with



An illustration of the introductory concepts of use and mention. (Image courtesy of MIT OCW, original photo courtesy of Terry Goss.)

Introduction to Philosophy of Language

Instructor:

Prof. Richard Holton

Course Highlights

This course features a comprehensive list of [readings](#) and [assignments](#).

Course Description

In this introductory course on the philosophy of language, we examine views on the nature of meaning, reference, truth, and their relationships. Other topics may include relationships between language and logic, language and knowledge, language and reality, language and acts performed through its use. No knowledge of logic or linguistics presupposed.

Syllabus

This page includes a [calendar](#) of lecture topics.

Prerequisite

No knowledge of logic or linguistics is presupposed.

Overview

We will cover these major topics:

- Sense and Reference, Names and Descriptions
- Pragmatics
- Propositional Attitudes
- Truth
- Rule Following

Texts

Martinich, Aloysius P., ed. *The Philosophy of Language*. 4th ed. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001. ISBN: 0195135431.

Kripke, Saul. *Naming and Necessity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980. ISBN: 0674598466.

Assignments

The following are required for this course: two short papers (due in week twelve and week fifteen) and a final exam.

Calendar

WEEK #	TOPICS	KEY DATES
Section One: Sense and Reference, Names and Descriptions		
1	Frege: On Sense and Nominatum	
2	Russell: On Denoting Russell: Descriptions	
3	Quine: Two Dogmas of Empiricism	

WEEK #	TOPICS	KEY DATES
4-5	Kripke: Naming and Necessity Putnam: Meaning and Reference	
6	Strawson: On Referring Donnellan: Reference and Definite Descriptions Kripke: Speaker's Reference and Semantic Reference	
7	von Fintel: Would you believe it? The King of France is Back! Yablo: Non-Catastrophic Presupposition Failure Perry: Problem of the Essential Indexical Lewis: Attitudes De Dicto and De Se	
Section Two: Pragmatics		
8	Austin: Performative Utterances Grice: Logic and Conversation	Assignment two due
9	Lewis: Scorekeeping in a Language Game Langton: Speech Acts and Unspeakable Acts	

WEEK #	TOPICS	KEY DATES
	Langton and West: Scorekeeping in a Pornographic Language Game	
10	Lewis: Languages and Language	
Section Three: Propositional Attitudes		
11	Frege: On Sense and Nominatum Davidson: On Saying That	
12	Kripke: A Puzzle About Belief Salmon: How to Become a Millian Heir	1 st paper due
13	Crimmins and Perry: The Prince and the Phone Booth Saul: Substitution and Simple Sentences	
Section Four: Truth		
14	Frege: On Sense and Nominatum Tarski: The Semantic Conception of Truth, and the Foundations of Semantics Stoljar: The Deflationary Theory of Truth	
Section Five: Rule Following		
15	Kripke: On Rules	2 nd paper

WEEK #	TOPICS	KEY DATES
	and Private Language Millikan: Truth Rules, Hoverflies, and the Kripke-Wittgenstein Paradox Holton: Meaning and Rule Following	due

Readings

This section includes the required texts and the assigned readings for the course.

Required Texts

Martinich, Aloysius P., ed. *The Philosophy of Language*. 4th ed. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001. ISBN: 0195135431.

Kripke, Saul. *Naming and Necessity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980. ISBN: 0674598466.

WEEK #	READINGS
Section One: Sense and Reference, Names and Descriptions	
1	Frege. "On Sense and Nominatum." In <i>The Philosophy of Language</i> .
2	Russell. "On Denoting." In <i>The Philosophy of Language</i> . Russell. "Descriptions." In <i>The Philosophy of Language</i> .
3	Quine, Willard van Orman. "Two Dogmas of Empiricism." In <i>The Philosophy of Language</i> . <i>Background Reading</i> Friedman, Michael. <i>Reconsidering</i>

WEEK #	READINGS
	<p><i>Logical Positivism</i> . New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1999. ISBN: 0521624495.</p> <p>Murzi, Mauro. "Logical Positivism." Forthcoming in <i>The New Encyclopedia of Unbelief</i>. Edited by Tom Flynn. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2007. ISBN: 1591023912. (See Mauro Maurzi's Web site on logical positivism.)</p> <p>Hempel, Carl G. "Empiricist Criteria of Cognitive Significance." In <i>The Philosophy of Language</i> .</p>
4-5	<p>Kripke. "Naming and Necessity." In <i>The Philosophy of Language</i> .</p> <p>Putnam. "Meaning and Reference." In <i>The Philosophy of Language</i> .</p>
6	<p>Strawson. "On Referring." In <i>The Philosophy of Language</i> .</p> <p>Donnellan. "Reference and Definite Descriptions." In <i>The Philosophy of Language</i> .</p> <p>Kripke. "Speaker's Reference and Semantic Reference." In <i>The Philosophy of Language</i> .</p>
7	<p>Von Fintel, K. "Would you Believe It? The King of France is Back! (Presuppositions and Truth Value Intuitions)." In <i>Descriptions and Beyond</i>. Edited by M. Reimer and A. Bezuidenhout. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 315-41.</p> <p>Yablo. "Non-Catastrophic Presupposition Failure." In <i>The Philosophy of Language</i> .</p> <p>Perry. "The Problem of the Essential Indexical." In <i>The Philosophy of Language</i> .</p> <p>Lewis. "Attitudes De Dicto and De Se." In <i>The Philosophy of</i></p>

WEEK #		READINGS	
		<i>Language</i> .	
Section Two: Pragmatics			
8		<p>Austin. "Performative Utterances." In <i>The Philosophy of Language</i> .</p> <p>Grice. "Logic and Conversation." In <i>The Philosophy of Language</i> .</p>	
9		<p>Lewis. "Scorekeeping in a Language Game." In <i>The Philosophy of Language</i> .</p> <p>Langton, Rae. "Speech Acts and Unspeakable Acts." <i>Philosophy and Public Affairs</i> 22, no. 4 (1993): 305-330.</p> <p>Langton, Rae, and Caroline West. "Scorekeeping in a Pornographic Language Gam." <i>Australasian Journal of Philosophy</i> 77 (1999): 303-19. Reprinted in Langton, <i>Sexual Solipsism</i>.</p>	
10		<p>Lewis. "Languages and Language." In <i>The Philosophy of Language</i> .</p>	
Section Three: Propositional Attitudes			
11		<p>Frege. "On Sense and Nominatum." In <i>The Philosophy of Language</i> .</p> <p>Davidson. "On Saying That." In <i>The Philosophy of Language</i> .</p>	
12		<p>Kripke. "A Puzzle About Belief." In <i>The Philosophy of Language</i> .</p> <p>Nathan U. Salmon. "How to Become a Millian Heir." <i>Noûs</i> 23 (1989): 211-220.</p>	
13		<p>Crimmins, Mark, and John Perry. "The Prince and the Phone Booth: Reporting Puzzling Beliefs." <i>The Journal of Philosophy</i> 86, no. 12</p>	

WEEK #	TOPICS	LECTURE NOTES
Section One: Sense and Reference, Names and Descriptions		
1	Frege: On Sense and Nominatum	I: Introductory (PDF) II: On Sense and Reference (PDF)
2	Russell: On Denoting Russell: Descriptions	III: Russell on Denoting (PDF)
3	Quine: Two Dogmas of Empiricism	IV: Quine's Two Dogmas (PDF)
4-5	Kripke: Naming and Necessity Putnam: Meaning and Reference	V: Naming and Necessity, Lecture One (PDF) VI: Naming and Necessity, Lecture Two (PDF) VII: Naming and Necessity, Lecture Three (PDF)
6	Strawson: On Referring Donnellan: Reference and Definite Descriptions Kripke: Speaker's Reference and Semantic Reference	VIII: Strawson and Donnellan on Referring and Denoting (PDF) IX: Kripke on Donnellan (PDF)
7	von Fintel: Would you believe it? The King of France is Back! Yablo: Non-Catastrophic Presupposition Failure Perry: The Problem of the Essential Indexical Lewis: Attitudes De Dicto and De Se	X: Presupposition and Empty Names (PDF) XI: Indexicals and De Se Attitudes (PDF)
Section Two: Pragmatics		
8	Austin: Performative Utterances Grice: Logic and Conversation	XII: Austin on Peformatives (PDF) XIII: Grice: Implicature (PDF)
9	Lewis: Scorekeeping in a Language Game Langton: Speech Acts and Unspeakable Acts Langton and West: Scorekeeping in a	XIV: Lewis: Scorekeeping (PDF) XV: Langton: Unspeakable Acts (PDF)

WEEK #	TOPICS	LECTURE NOTES
	Pornographic Language Game	
10	Lewis: Languages and Language	XVI: Lewis: Language and Languages (PDF)
Section Three: Propositional Attitudes		
11	Frege: On Sense and Nominatum Davidson: On Saying That	XVII: Propositional Attitudes: Frege and Davidson (PDF)
12	Kripke: A Puzzle About Belief Salmon: How to Become a Millian Heir	XVIII: Propositional Attitudes: Kripke (PDF)
13	Crimmins and Perry: The Prince and the Phone Booth Saul: Substitution and Simple Sentences	XIX: Propositional Attitudes: Crimmins and Perry (PDF)
Section Four: Truth		
14	Frege: On Sense and Nominatum Tarski: The Semantic Conception of Truth, and the Foundations of Semantics Stoljar: The Deflationary Theory of Truth	XX: Truth: The Liar (PDF) XXI: Truth: Minimalism (PDF)
Section Five: Rule Following		
15	Kripke: On Rules and Private Language Millikan: Truth Rules, Hoverflies, and the Kripke-Wittgenstein Paradox Holton: Meaning and Rule Following	

I: INTRODUCTORY

Some background

The deficiencies of the subject/predicate analysis

Aristotle was a philosopher

No one is immortal

Whales are mammals

The mullet is a fish

Terms, predicates, quantifiers, functions; connectives. The compositional nature of language.

Use and mention

Fish have gills

'Fish' has four letters

'Fish' is a word of English

'Fish' names a word of English

Semantics and Pragmatics A short letter of recommendation for a philosophy job:

X has neat handwriting and is always punctual.

Semantics (provisional characterizations): that which is strictly and literally said (meant); the truth conditions; the invariant linguistic meaning.

Pragmatics (provisional characterization): the rest.

What is the semantic contribution of a singular term?

Its referent? The 'Fido'-Fido theory

Problems:

Identity

Non-referring terms

Existentials (esp. negative existentials)

Indirect discourse (She said that HTLV-III, not LAV, was the cause of AIDS)

II 'ON SENSE & REFERENCE'

The Metalinguistic Approach to Identity

Frege starts by explaining the approach that he used to take to identity, in which

$$a = b$$

is held to be, not about *a* and *b* directly, but rather about the terms 'a' and 'b'. In other words it is equivalent to:

'a' and 'b' co-refer

in which 'a' and 'b' are mentioned and not used. Frege now rejects this account since it would have the consequence that an identity sentence would express 'no genuine knowledge'. He is not denying that it would express no knowledge; but it would be knowledge about words, not about the world. To see this, consider a case in which I introduce a new term, let's say 'Tiger Town' to refer to Princeton. Then

Tiger Town is Princeton

doesn't tell you anything about Princeton, but it is nonetheless true (and linguistically informative) that

'Tiger Town' and 'Princeton' co-refer

In contrast an identity sentence like

The Morning Star is the Evening Star

gives us real information about the Morning Star.

There are other problems with the metalinguistic approach:

(i) where does it stop? ('a is the same size as b')

(ii) what about mixed uses? ('a and b are both planets, and in fact are identical')

(iii) what happens with translation?

Sense

Now it is plausible to connect with a sign not only the designated object, which may be called the reference of the sign, but also the sense of the sign, in which is contained the manner and context of presentation. (200)

In the case of genuinely proper names like 'Aristotle', opinions as to the sense may differ ... (n.2)

Different terms can have different senses but the same reference; they can have the same sense and the same reference; but they cannot have the same sense and different reference. What are senses? Modes of presentation? Descriptions?

Sense without Reference

Frege says that this is possible, and gives examples from astrology and mathematics. A sentence containing an empty name will lack a truth-value. But the sentence does not assert that the name has a reference. Rather it presupposes it (p. 206) [Question: what account can now be given of negative existentials?]

Indirect Discourse

Words in indirect discourse are held to have as their reference what is standardly their sense. Then we can maintain the thesis that the substitution of co-referring expressions does not change the truth value of a sentence; it is just that, in indirect discourse, sameness of reference is only given when we would normally have sameness of sense.

Distinguish senses from images (ideas)

Ideas are subjective. (Worry: Can we keep senses distinct from ideas? The Third Realm.)

The Sense and Reference of a Sentence

The proposition is the sense of a sentence. (For 'proposition' Frege uses the term 'der Gedanke', which is normally translated 'thought') So what is the reference?

We have realized that we are to look for the reference of a sentence whenever the reference of the sentence-components are the thing that matters; and that is the case whenever and only when we ask for the truth value.

Thus we find ourselves persuaded to accept the truth-value of a sentence as its reference. (203)

Isn't the truth-value a property of a proposition? No; to ascribe truth to a proposition is just to say what is said by the sentence that expresses that proposition.

What interests us can therefore never be merely the reference; but the proposition alone does not give knowledge; only the proposition together with its reference, i.e. its truth-value, does. Judging may be viewed as a movement from a proposition to its reference, i.e. its truth-value. (203)

III RUSSELL ON DENOTING

Knowledge by Acquaintance and by Description

Knowledge of individuals comes in two forms. We can know an individual by being directly acquainted with it. Or we can know it (or know *of* it, as we might say), via a description. Russell makes it clear that he thinks knowledge by acquaintance is primary:

All thinking has to start from acquaintance (212)

Every proposition which we understand must be composed wholly of constituents with which we are acquainted (*Problems of Philosophy* p. 32)

Much of Russell's later work consists in trying to analyze the ways that this grounding is supposed to work: reducing each proposition to its constituents. (Russell ultimately thought that the only things we were truly acquainted with were momentary sense data.) 'On Denoting', however, is concerned with the prior question of how expressions of language can come to be about things that we know only via description. This relation is the relation of *denotation*; it contrasts with the *reference* relation which obtains between terms and objects with which we are directly acquainted.

Quantifiers

Russell wanted to make do with just one quantifier: the universal. He does it here by a rather cumbersome metalinguistic method:

C (everything) means 'C (x) is always true'
C (nothing) means ' "C(x) is false" is always true'
C (something) means 'It is false that "C (x) is false" is always true'

(Russell says that 'C(x) is always true' is to be understood as 'ultimate and undefinable'; but we can get some grip on it by thinking that 'always' here (p.213) means something like: 'for every instantiation of the variable').

We would now do it rather differently, saying (roughly) that a sentence of the form

$\forall x C(x)$ is true just in case every object in the domain satisfies 'C' (an object α satisfies 'C' iff α is C), and then defining the existential quantifier in terms of the universal:

$\exists x C(x) =_{\text{def}} \sim \forall x \sim C(x)$

On Russell's account The father of Charles II was executed becomes: It is not always false of x that x fathered Charles II, and that x was executed, and that 'if y fathered Charles II, y is identical with x' is always true of y Or, simplified, and without the problematic metalinguistic component:

$\Box x$ (x fathered Charles II, and x was executed, and $\Box y$ if y fathered Charles II then $y = x$)

Informativeness of Identity

How should we analyze George IV wanted to know whether Scott was the author of Waverley? Not as George IV wanted to know whether $a = b$ But as George IV wanted to know whether $\Box x$ (x wrote Waverley, and $\Box y$ if y wrote Waverley then $y = x$ and $x = \text{Scott}$) Note that if you think of Frege's senses as being given by definite descriptions, then Russell's theory here is a version of Frege's not an alternative to it.

Note too that Russell distinguishes his solution from

$\Box x$ (x wrote Waverley, and $\Box y$ if y wrote Waverley then $y = x$, and George IV wanted to know whether $x = \text{Scott}$)

In this sentence the definite description has a primary occurrence (or as we would more normally say today, has wide scope). Compare Russell's example of the touchy yacht owner (p. 217).

Excluded Middle

The Law of the Excluded Middle states that all sentences of the form

$(Fa \vee \sim Fa)$

are valid. (This is actually subtly different from the claim that either 'Fa' or ' $\sim Fa$ ' must be true, which is what Russell gives; this latter is now usually called 'bivalence'. According to some theories (most notably supervaluation) the two come apart sometimes.)

But we don't want to assert:

Either the King of France is bald, or The King of France is not bald

However, on Russell's account, that is not naturally read as an instance of the Law of the Excluded Middle. The natural reading is one in which the definite description in the second conjunct has wide scope over the negation:

$\exists x (x \text{ regally rules over France, and } \exists y \text{ if } y \text{ regally rules over France then } y = x, \text{ and } x \text{ is bald})$ or $\exists x (x \text{ regally rules over France, and } \exists y \text{ if } y \text{ regally rules over France then } y = x, \text{ and } \sim x \text{ is bald})$

In contrast, the instance of the Law of the Excluded Middle is one in which the negation has wide scope over the

$\exists x (x \text{ regally rules over France, and } \exists y \text{ if } y \text{ regally rules over France then } y = x, \text{ and } x \text{ is bald})$ or $\sim \exists x (x \text{ regally rules over France, and } \exists y \text{ if } y \text{ regally rules over France then } y = x, \text{ and } x \text{ is bald})$

or, as we might put it in (rather stilted) English

Either the King of France is bald, or it is not the case that there is a unique King of France who is bald

Empty terms

All meaningful *terms* do refer. But meaningful descriptions need not denote. If they have wide scope, they will always be false. But if they have narrow scope, they may be true (as in the last conjunct of the last example). There is no need for a Meinongian notion of subsistence. (But what of terms?)

IV QUINE'S TWO DOGMAS

Overview

Sections I – IV: Looking for a reductive account of the analytic synthetic divide (the existence of which is the First Dogma), and failing to find one. The best that can be given is a tight circle of interdefinitions involving analyticity, meaning, synonymy, substitutability, necessity.

Section V: Rejecting the Second Dogma, that every meaningful (synthetic?) statement is reducible to experience.

Section VI: Sketching an empiricist alternative.

Section I

An analytic statement is true in virtue of its meaning. What is meaning? Distinguish meaning from extension for both terms and predicates [Digression on essence] Make do with sameness of meaning, rather than trying to identify meanings themselves. Distinguish logically true statements ('Either Harry is a bachelor or it is not the case that Harry is a bachelor') from those that are analytic but not logically true ('Bachelors are unmarried'). The latter class pose the problem.

Section II

Perhaps we can turn all analytic statement into logical truths by definition. But who gives the definitions? Not the lexicographers: they merely report them. So there have to be preexisting synonymy relations for them to report on. (Unimportant class for which this is not true: stipulative definitions)

Section III

Perhaps two terms are synonymous iff they can be interchanged in all contexts *salva veritate*. But is this sufficient for synonymy? Mere sameness of extension is not sufficient: creature with a heart and creature with kidneys have the same extension. But in order to have a test to draw these apart we need to consider sentences like

Necessarily all creatures with a heart are creatures with a kidney

But that is just tantamount to the claim that 'All creatures with a heart are creatures with a kidney' is analytic.

Could we define analyticity in terms of logical rules? That is ok for an artificial formal language. But it doesn't help with natural language? No.

General worry about Quine's approach so far: why does our inability to give an analytic reduction of a concept show that it is somehow illegitimate? (Compare knowledge) Does Quine have some independent reason for thinking that the notion of the analytic is worrisome?

Some hint is given from the passage at the end of Section IV. There Quine concedes that whether a given statement is true is a function both of what its words mean and of how the world is. However, he asks whether these two contributions can be neatly divided. If they could, we could identify the class of sentences for which the contribution of the world was zero; and these would be analytic. So this throws doubt on the supposition that we can divide the contribution of meaning from the contribution of the world.

Section V

Radical reductionism (the Second Dogma)

Word version: every word must correspond to an experience

Sentence version: every sentence must be reducible to an experience (or set of experiences which would verify it, and a set that would confirm it.

Problem:

Our statements about the external world face the tribunal of sense experience not individually but only as a corporate body. (57)

For example: what experience would verify the sentence that there are centaurs (rather than that we are hallucinating)? Compare Hume on miracles.

There is no dividing of the factual and linguistic component in any one sentence. At best the distinction needs to be drawn for the whole of science.

The web of belief: a network of claims, some of which we are more likely to revise in response to evidence than others, but all of which could be revised (except perhaps the unimportant class of stipulative definitions; Quine does not return to them). No sentence is entirely empirical. Houses are just as much theoretical posits as electrons. Finally there is a brief endorsement of pragmatism. What does Quine mean by this: that it is up to us how to revise our theories in the light of recalcitrant experience? ('A question not of matters of fact, but of choosing a convenient language form' 59) That there is nothing more to truth than having a theory that works?

V NAMING & NECESSITY, LECTURE ONE

The Frege-Russell view of ordinary names

There has been much discussion as to whether Kripke represented the views of Frege and Russell accurately. We shan't review this. It is enough to note that the view he criticizes under this heading has been widely held; and that it is unclear whether, if the views of Frege do diverge, they can escape his criticisms.

The Frege-Russell theory: the referent of a name is whatever is denoted by the definite description associated with it.

The cluster theory (Wittgenstein; Searle): the referent of a name is whatever is denoted by most or enough of the cluster of definite descriptions associated with it. (31)

Some advantages of both the Frege-Russell account and the cluster account:

(1) it explains how names can refer to things, and in particular, how they can refer to things with which we are not acquainted. (27-8)

(2) it explains how identity statements can be informative (28);

(3) it explains how an existential claim can be informative, and how it can be possibly false

(28)

To understand a name is to grasp the description (cluster of descriptions) that is (are) associated with it. So someone who is competent with a name will know *a priori* that the bearer of the name (if there is one) fits the description (most of the descriptions). (64)

Will someone who understand the name also think that the claim that the bearer of the name (if there is one) fits the description is *necessary*? That depends on whether the description (cluster of descriptions) is (are) being used to give the meaning of the name, or to fix its referent. To see what this means, and what is at issue here we need to get clearer on what is meant by 'a priori' and 'necessary'.

A priori

At base an epistemic notion: a sentence is *a priori* iff it could be known independently of experience. (Note: it could in fact be known *a posteriori* though)

Necessary

At base a metaphysical notion: a sentence is necessary iff it is true in every possible world. Some people have claimed that necessity is relative to (and is an artifact of) language. As it is sometimes said: all necessity is *de dicto*: 'It's only a statement or a state of affairs that can be either necessary or contingent! Whether a particular necessarily or contingently has a certain property depends on how it is described' (40). (Quine, in so far as he accepts necessity at all, says something along these lines.) Kripke is radically opposed to this. (Note the claims in the paragraph on p. 40, from which the above quotation is taken, are put in the

mouth of some imagined opponent; Kripke is *not* endorsing these claims.) He thinks that there are many necessarily true sentences that are true independently of language. They are necessary *de re*. In particular: he thinks that ordinary names are *rigid designators*, in the sense that they pick out the same thing in every possible world in which they pick out anything. But then an identity sentence, $a=b$, containing two rigid designators will be necessarily true. One source of the suspicion of *de re* necessity comes, Kripke suggests, from a confusion about the role of possible worlds in understanding necessity. (42–8)

Analytic

Kripke doesn't give a full account. He says that he will understand analytic sentences to be those that are true in virtue of meaning, and true in virtue of meaning in every possible world ('That's sort of stipulative') (39)

Sentences that are necessary but not *a priori*

Many identity sentences concerning physical objects. True mathematical statements that lack proofs (perhaps: 'Every even number greater than 2 is the sum of two primes' — Goldbach's conjecture).

Sentences that are *a priori* but not necessary

The meter stick is one meter long. (The meter stick is used to fix the reference of the term 'one meter') I am here now. The actual F is F (The actual inventor of the zipper is the inventor of the zipper)

So, if a theory claims simply that the description is used to fix the reference of the name, speakers will not need to think that it is a necessary truth that the bearer of the name fits the description.

VI NAMING & NECESSITY, LECTURE TWO

The Modal Argument

If the description *gives the meaning* of a name, then it will be a necessary truth that the bearer of the name fits the description. But it isn't. Aristotle might not have taught Alexander the Great. Moving to the cluster theory makes no difference: Aristotle might have had very few of the properties for which he is famous.

Perhaps the use of the description is to *fix the reference* of the name. And maybe there are some cases for which this is true ('Jack the Ripper'). But Kripke has a battery of arguments against the idea that this is normal case:

The Epistemic Argument

If the description fixes the reference of the name then whoever is competent with the name will know *a priori* that the bearer of the name fits the description (or fits most of the description). But we don't know this *a priori*, since there is something that we could find out, *a posteriori*, that would make us deny that they fitted the description. So the knowledge that we have concerning the bearer of the name is held *a posteriori*.

The Semantic Argument

This broadens the point made above. Suppose it turned out that someone other than the Gödel, Schmidt, did the things standardly attributed to Gödel. By the description theory, 'Gödel' would then refer to Schmidt. But it wouldn't; 'Gödel' would still refer to Gödel (witness how we described the example). Similarly, if the description applied to no one, 'Gödel' would still refer to Gödel.

The Paucity of Information Argument

Very often we simply don't have enough beliefs to uniquely identify anyone as the bearer of the name (Feynman/Gell-Mann, p.81).

Some Possible Responses by the Description Theorist

(i) Be careful about which description you use: 'The person called "Aristotle"'; 'The person who actually taught Alexander, etc.'; 'The person who is widely believed to have taught Alexander, etc.'" Kripke has a variety of responses here (pp. 87–91).

(ii) Hold that names are descriptions that always take wide scope. Kripke objects that his claims apply equally to names in simple sentences (pp. 10–12).

The Causal 'Picture'

In contrast to the description theory Kripke offers an alternative picture: names refer to the object they refer to in virtue of an initial baptism, followed by a causal chain in which the name is 'passed from link to link'. Each person who learns the name intends to use it to refer to whoever the person they learn it from uses it to refer to. The account is fundamentally social, unlike the description theory (p. 91). Why does Kripke insist that this is a *picture* not a *theory*? Is it just to avoid refutation? Or to avoid making the description theory trivially true (see n. 38)? Or is there some deeper reason?

VI NAMING & NECESSITY, LECTURE THREE

Metaphysical Possibility and Epistemic Possibility

A statement is metaphysically possible iff there is a possible world in which it is true. A statement is epistemically possible iff there is a world in which, as far as our experiences go, words seem to be used the same way, but in which an utterance of the sentence that expressed that statement would express a true statement (that's rough; but the idea is that there are worlds in which an utterance of the sentence 'Hesperus is Phosphorous' would express a truth). Although identity statements involving rigid terms are, if true, metaphysically necessary (i.e. their denial is not metaphysically possible) they need not be epistemically necessary. We often mark our talk of epistemic possibility by the locution 'It might have turned out that ...' Apparent counterexamples to the necessity of identity are often cases of epistemic possibility. ('Elizabeth II might have turned out to be the daughter of the Trumans.')

Natural Kind Terms

Terms like 'Gold' and 'Tiger' work like proper names. They are rigid designators (of kinds), and their reference is not fixed by description but by something like ostention. The descriptions we give of them could be radically wrong. Cf. Putnam: 'Meanings ain't in the head'. The H₂O/XYZ example. The linguistic division of labor. The indexical element in natural kind terms.

Non-Natural Kind Terms

'Yellow': a term whose reference is fixed as the physical property that gives rise to the visual impression of yellow. (Contrast with a pure dispositional view on which, in each possible world, the yellow things are those that look yellow.)

The Argument for Dualism

Contrast identity statements that contain rigid names ('Hesperus is Phosphorous) and those that contain a rigid name and a description ('Benjamin Franklin is the inventor of bifocals'). The former are necessary, but the latter are contingent (unless the description happens to be rigid); on the Russellian approach, they are not even centrally identity statements. If an identity statement is necessary, then there will be no possible world in which the entity named by the term on one side of the identity has a property that is not had by the entity named on the other side. According to Kripke, the identity theorist about mental states wants to affirm identities using rigid names. There are two kinds. The token-token theorist (pp. 145-8) wants to say that each individual pain is identical with a particular neural state; the type-type theorist (pp. 148-55) wants to make the stronger claim that every mental type is identical with a neural type ('Pain is identical with C-fiber firings'). Kripke argues that both fall to the same basic worry: there are possible worlds in which the neural type lacks the property of being painful; whereas it is an essential property of pain that it is painful.

VIII STRAWSON & DONNELLAN ON REFERRING & DENOTING

Strawson's Distinctions

- (i) a sentence (i.e. understood as a particular string of English terms)
- (ii) a use of a sentence (i.e. with all of its indexical expressions—whether implicit or explicit—assigned a reference)
- (iii) an utterance of a sentence (i.e. some particular concrete utterance).

Analogous distinctions are to be made for terms.

Meanings attach to sentences and expressions. They are akin to directions for use. But it is the use of a sentence that is either true or false, not a sentence itself; and it is the use of an expression that either does or does not refer.

What happens then in cases in which the use of a description fails to denote? The description has meaning, which is given by the descriptive content. But in using the description in subject position, the speaker does not assert that the description is instantiated. Rather she presupposes ('signals' 'implies') that it is. Where this presupposition is not met, the speaker's utterance lacks a truth value. (Or, perhaps, sometimes, the speaker fails to say anything: "This is a fine red one")

How much does Strawson end up disagreeing with Russell?

Donnellan

Two different uses of descriptions: referential and attributive.

- (i) Attributive use: Smith's murderer is insane =Whoever murdered Smith is insane
Both Strawson's account and Russell's account apply primarily to this.
- (ii) Referential use: Smith's murderer is insane = He is insane.

IX KRIPKE ON DONNELLAN

What exactly is Donnellan claiming?

Is he saying that there is a semantic or syntactic ambiguity? (And what does he mean by the latter? He seems to have in mind structural ambiguity.) He says that he is not. But if not, what is the distinction between referential and attributive uses supposed to be? Is the claim that a simple referential use in which the description fails to denote can nonetheless be *true*?

A bundle of distinctions

- (i) De re/de dicto
- (ii) Wide/narrow scope (and intermediate: 'Hoover believed that the Berrigans plotted to kidnap a high American official')
- (iii) rigid/non rigid descriptions (cf. *dthat*, indefinite *this* "I came home and there was this man on the doorstep")

The Gricean Framework

The distinction between what is said, and what the speaker thereby manages to communicate. Speaker's meaning and semantic meaning
Speaker's reference and semantic reference.

Five Artificial Languages

Weak Russell Language
Intermediate Russell Language
Strong Russell Language

Unambiguous D-language
Ambiguous D-language

Methodological Conclusions

There is no need to claim that English is like an unambiguous D-language, since:

- (i) the phenomena adduced arise even if it like a weak or intermediate Russell language;
- (ii) the phenomena arise for names, for which no ambiguity thesis is forthcoming

Ambiguity postulation as the lazy approach; tests for ambiguity. Could English actually be indeterminate? The anaphoric test.

X PRESUPPOSITION AND EMPTY NAMES

Non-Catastrophic Presupposition Failure

Frege and early-Strawson argued that sentences containing terms (names or descriptions) that fail to refer lack truth-values. Russell thought that those containing non-denoting descriptions are false. But even those who embrace the Frege/Strawson line have to concede that there seem to be a class of sentences with non-denoting descriptions that are simply false; and moreover in some way their falsity doesn't stem directly from the fact that they contain non-denoting terms. Contrast:

- (1) The King of France is bald
- (2) My friend went for a drive last week with the King of France

Following Yablo, call cases like (2) case of 'non-catastrophic presupposition failure'; it is non-catastrophic in the sense that it doesn't wreck the communicative intent of the speaker.

Three tests

Traditionally, the test for presupposition is lack of truth-value if it is not met. But that test begs the question against the phenomenon we are considering here. So we need some other tests:

Sentence: 'I'm picking my guru up at the airport'; Presupposition: 'I have a guru'; tests:

- (i) 'Hey, wait a minute, I didn't know that you had a guru';
- (ii) what is denied, hoped, regretted etc: 'I hope I'll pick my guru up at the airport' doesn't entail 'I hope I have a guru';

(iii) projection: 'I don't have to pick up my guru after all' still entails 'I have a guru'.

We might think that our intuitions about the truth and falsity of certain sentences are direct evidence for their truth or falsity. Or we might think that our intuitions are too unreliable for that. Nevertheless they need some explanation; we need some explanation of what von Steupel calls 'a pragmatics of assent and rejection'. When we talk about truth and falsity from now on, we'll mean it in this weak sense, not assuming that this is 'deep' truth and falsity.

Topic

One possibility: the difference between (1) and (2) is that in the former 'The King of France' is in topic position (it is what the sentence is *about*), whereas in the latter 'My friend' is in topic position. Maybe only non-denoting descriptions in topic position give rise to truth-value gaps. But consider:

- (3) The King of France is sitting in that chair

Intuitive idea: a sentence with a false presupposition is false if we would judge it false even if we came to believe that the presupposition were true. (NB this isn't the same as saying that it would be false even if the presupposition were true: maybe that chair is the French Throne, so if the King of France did exist, that is just where he'd be sitting.) More precisely: consider a sentence S with a presupposition π . Suppose that the speaker is speaking against a background of information D , according to which π is false. In determining the truth value of S , we first revise D , and then we see whether D would entail the falsehood of S . Von Fintel considers four proposals for how to do the revision:

(i) remove not- π from D remove any proposition from D that is logically incompatible with π add π to D close under logical consequence

Problem: suppose I have examined all of the existing kings, and have concluded that they are all not-bald. So D contains 'All kings are not bald'. Then (1) would come out false.

(ii) remove not- π from D remove any proposition from D that is logically incompatible with π remove any proposition from D that was in D just because not- π was in D add π to D close under logical consequence

Problem: 'The King of France is on a state visit to Australia this week' is typically judged false. But having removed so much from D , I have nothing left there that rules it false. So we have to restrict the set of things that we took out of D : von Fintel's proposal is to leave in the set of judgments that we could get by considering some salient (existing) entities:

(iii) remove not- π from D remove any proposition from D that is logically incompatible with π remove any proposition from D that was in D just because not- π was in D , unless it could be shown to be true by examining the [intrinsic] properties of a contextually salient entity add π to D close under logical consequence

Nice consequence: 'The King of France is one of the bald people in this world' now gets ruled false, since this makes the class of bald people in this world into a salient entity.

Problem: why couldn't we now show that (1) is false, by examining France, and showing that it is true that it has no king. So, modify again:

(iv) remove not- π from D remove any proposition from D that is logically incompatible with π remove any proposition from D that was in D just because not- π was in D , unless it could be shown to be true by examining the [intrinsic] properties of a contextually salient entity without at the same time showing that π is false. add π to D close under logical consequence

Yablo

Don't try just to capture the false sentences with non-denoting descriptions. Try to explain a host of different sentences that we take to be false or true despite failing presuppositions (e.g. the Donnellan sentences). But focus just on the false:

A The lodger next door offered me twice that sum—False (there is no lodger next door)
B The author of Principia Mathematica also wrote Principia Ethica—False
C All ten solar planets are inhabited—False
D The man drinking a martini is a philosopher—False (the man in question is an engineer)
E My cousin is not a boy any more—False (my female cousin is eight years old)

Basic idea: what is true or false is that which is said *in addition* to the presupposition. Or in other words, in evaluating what is true or false in a sentence S independently of the presupposition π , think what would have to be added to the presupposition to entail S.

So if the presuppositions are

A There is exactly one lodger next door
B There is exactly one author of Principia Mathematica
C There are exactly ten solar planets
D That man (Daniels) is the man drinking a martini
E My cousin is a male human being

The asserted contents are:

A Some and all lodgers next door offered me twice that sum
B Some and all Principia Mathematica authors also wrote Principia Ethica
C All solar planets are inhabited
D That man (Daniels) is a philosopher
E My cousin is an adult.

All of these are false. Might we say then that we judge a sentence S with a false presupposition π to be false just in case its asserted content is false; and we judge it true just in case its asserted content is true? That would be too quick, since then it seems that every such sentence would be either true or false: in arguing that there is non-catastrophic presuppositional failure, we seem to have reached the conclusion that there is no catastrophic presupposition failure. Yet our starting point was that there is: it is what is exhibited in (1).

Yablo's response is to do things in two stages. A sentence S *makes a claim* just in case, if its asserted content is true, then the asserted content of $\sim S$ is false. Otherwise it fails to make a claim. Statements that fail to make a claim suffer catastrophic presupposition failure. That is what happens to (1): its asserted content is: 'Any French Kings are bald'; and the asserted content of its (narrow scope) negation is: 'Any French Kings are not-bald'. But those are both true. So (1) is neither true nor false.

In contrast, sentences that do make a claim will be judged true or false depending on whether their asserted content is true or false. Or more precisely, since there might be more than one sentence that could serve the role of asserted content, depending on whether the conjunction of asserted contents are true or false. (That's not quite the terminology that Yablo uses: he calls the conjunction the asserted content, and calls the conjuncts from which it is constructed the π -free extensions; but the idea should be reasonably clear.)

XI INDEXICALS & *DE SE* ATTITUDES

Propositions and Indexicals

So far we have treated the objects of belief and assertion as propositions; and we have treated indexicals as though they were singular terms like any other. But consider the difference between:

(1) I am in a mess And

(2) NN is in a mess Where 'NN' is a name for you. It seems that one can believe either of these without believing the other. So, on a Fregean doctrine, we must take 'NN' and 'I' to have different senses. What is the sense of the latter? Any description that we try to put in that doesn't itself contain an indexical will not do the job. Indeed it is unclear that there is any concept that we have that corresponds to 'I'. (This is clearer if we consider 'now'.) But if we cannot come up with a

sense for the indexical, how are we to understand the proposition in which is supposedly appears?

In general: No amount of belief about the world will enable one to locate oneself in the world. (Lingens; the two Gods.) But if propositions are ways of describing the world (this comes out most clearly if one understand them as classes of possible worlds), then no self-locating belief will be a proposition. In Lewis's terminology, the *de se* (the self-locating) does not reduce to the *de dicto*. This applies equally to other attitudes than belief (e.g. desire); and to temporal location as well as spatial (the insomniac; 'Thank goodness that's over').

De Re

Does it help if we move to *de re* belief ascriptions? No: one can still have a belief about oneself (understood *de re*) that one is in a mess, without believing (1).

Limited Access

This is Frege's own solution. 'Everyone is presented to himself in a special and primitive way in which he is presented to no-one else' ('The Thought', p. 359) What does it mean? How do we manage to communicate? How do we make sense of what two people, each of whom believes (1), have in common?

Lewis

Take the basic form of a belief ascription to be the self-ascription of a property. All beliefs are thus *de se*. *De dicto* is a special case of *de se*, where what one self-ascribes is world membership.

Note that there are two moves here: first Lewis takes the primitive relation to be self-ascription. So there is no need to get the *de se* element into the *content* of the attitude; rather it goes into the *attitude* itself (i.e. the attitude that is the attitude to the content). Second, Lewis takes the contents of the attitudes to be properties rather than propositions.

Most of Lewis's discussion focuses on the second of these two moves. Perhaps this was because he was already assuming the first in his account of *de re* belief (one self-ascribes membership of a world; to see the significance of this, imagine coming up with a version of the two gods example in which the gods don't even know which world they are in). But the first is equally significant. It is very different to the Fregean approach, which doesn't think of belief as any kind of self-ascription.

Perhaps we can leave self-ascription as primitive, but it would be good to know a bit more about it. In particular, what is the relation between self-ascription of a property and the ascription of that property to a particular physical or mental entity? Is self-ascribing a property *p* the same as thinking 'I am *p*'. If so, what is it that is denoted by 'I'? Do we have independent access to it, or is it, so to speak, the shadow of the self-ascriptions?

XII AUSTIN ON PERFORMATIVES

The Nature of a Performative Utterance

Utterance in which we do something rather than simply say something Not a report on the action but a performance of the action Not true or false

Infelicities

Misfire (act not performed): The convention does not exist Circumstances are not right Act is not performed fully and correctly

Insincerity (act performed insincerely, etc): Agents lack the necessary mental states

Misunderstanding (act performed but not taken up)

Duress (act performed, but no responsibility)

Pretence (act not really performed)

Marks of Performatives

Distinction between first person present use ('I apologize) and second or third person ('He apologizes'), and past or future tense use ('I will apologize')

Explicit performative markers. Can all performatives be reduced to these? According to Austin, such markers are not to be understood as providing statements that you are performing the actions, but as indicators that you are.

Problems

I apologize; I'm sorry; I feel awful about it (cf. I am apologizing)
The rulings of juries and umpires.

Are statements so different to performatives? Isn't the act of stating a kind of performative?
Parallels to infelicities: 'The cat is on the mat but I don't believe that it is'; 'I promise that I shall be there, but I haven't the least intention of being there.'

Austin's other work

How to Do Things with Words

Locutionary act: to utter a sentence with a given sense and reference

Illocutionary act: to perform an act *in* uttering a sentence (e.g. to threaten); this is not caused by the utterance but is rather part of what the utterance is.

Perlocutionary act: to achieve something *by* uttering a sentence (e.g. to persuade; to frighten); this is a causal effect of the utterance.

The performatives are a subset of the illocutionary acts; a proper subset, since asserting is an illocution. Illocutionary acts can be achieved non-verbally; but, Austin thinks, they must still be conventional.

XIII GRICE: IMPLICATURE

The temptation to multiply senses, and the effects on this on the attempt to give a straightforward account of the semantics of English. The meaning of 'and': They had a child and got married. They got married and had a child. The meaning of the indicative conditional.

Conversational and Conventional Implicature

Conventional implicatures: 'therefore'; 'but'. Conversational implicature: not residing in the lexical meaning of the words involved.

The Cooperative Principle

Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage of the conversation at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you find yourself. In particular:

Quantity: Make your contribution as informative as required ? Do not make it more informative

Quality Don't say what you believe to be false Don't say that for which you lack evidence.

Relation Be relevant (subsumes the second quantity rule?)

Manner Avoid obscurity, ambiguity, prolixity, disorderliness.

Why? Contractual basis? Precondition for any communication?

Could there be societies in which these maxims are not met? (In particular, *manner* seems less secure)

The origins of conventional implicatures

Conventional Implicature arising from apparently flouting (not just violating) one or more of these maxims, whilst still being cooperative. The need for an *argument* in cases of a conversational implicature.

Cancellability (unlike conventional implicature) Nondetachability (unlike conventional implicature) Implicature is not part of the meaning (unlike conventional implicature) Implicature is not part of what is said, or part of the truth conditions (like conventional implicature)

Does this help with the Kripke explanation of the Donnellan cases?

Indicative Conditionals

How do we understand the indicative conditional in English?

Problem: if the indicative conditional is interpreted as the material conditional, then from B we can infer If A then B; and from not-A we can infer If A then B, for arbitrary B.

Grice's response: the problem is that, if you are in a position to assert B, you shouldn't assert the weaker If A then B.

Problem: but that is so regarding the inference B to A or B. Yet that doesn't seem an incorrect inference. Moreover, whilst in some cases the explanation citing conversational implicatures does seem to do the job, in others it doesn't. Contrast:

I'll come to the party if my ex-wife is there (and I'll come if she isn't) I'll come to the party if I sustain serious injuries on the way (since I won't)

Jackson's response: the conditional brings a conventional implicature that $P(A \rightarrow B/A)$ is high. (The indicative conditional indicates the robustness of the corresponding material conditional with respect to its antecedent.)

XIV LEWIS: SCOREKEEPING

Presupposition

Two approaches:

Semantic: presuppositions are, in the first place, properties of *sentences*: one sentence presupposes another (Frege)

Pragmatic: presuppositions are, in the first place, properties of *people*, or, at least, of people's attitudes: people believe, or otherwise accept, a certain set of sentences, and these are the presuppositions of a conversation (Stalnaker, Lewis)

The rule of accommodation for presupposition. Note its limit: we might fill a void by a presuppositionally required sentence, but do we reject prior beliefs?

Permissibility

Note the different forms that the master's orders might have: 'You are required to shut the door'; 'You will shut the door'; 'Shut the door'. Do all come out as true on Lewis's account? And do we also accommodate speakers' authority?

Vagueness

The account here is basically supervaluational (a vague sentence is true iff it is true on all precisifications), but with the additional feature that a sentence can count as true if it is 'true enough', where this is understood as obtaining when it is true in a large enough set of precisification. But then context will determine what is meant by large enough; and this in turn will be governed by a rule of accommodation. Note the tendency of standards to go up easily as a result of accommodation, but to come down is harder.

Relative Modality

'Can' and 'Must' as relative to certain worlds. Again the tendency to change is asymmetric.

Special application: knowledge. To know something is to exclude its falsity from all of the relevant possibilities. A possibility is not relevant iff it is properly ignored. Lewis's rules governing when a possibility is properly ignored (a selection from 'Elusive Knowledge'):

Rule of Actuality (the actual world is never properly ignored) Rule of Belief (what you believe to obtain is not properly ignored, even if it is false)

Rule of Resemblance (a world which is saliently like one which is not properly ignored is not properly ignored) Rule of Attention (a world which is not ignored is not properly ignored)

Performatives

Against Austin, Lewis holds that declarative performative sentences (e.g. 'I promise to be there') have truth conditions in a straightforward way. 'I promise to be there' is true just in case I promise to be there; and since, typically, there is no more to promising than uttering the appropriate sentence with the appropriate intent, such utterances will typically make themselves true. (Note that this doesn't make *all* performatives true just in virtue of uttering them; 'I command you to open the door' is perhaps true whenever I sincerely assert it, but 'I *legitimately* command you to open the door' requires much more if it is to be true; and 'I marry you' requires all sorts of things.) If this is right though, why does it sound so odd to say that a performative is true?

XV LANGTON: UNSPEAKABLE ACTS

Background: MacKinnon's claim that pornography is subordination, and that it is silencing.

Subordination

Subordination may be a perlocutionary act: by making various judgments or rulings certain people may come to be subordinate. But might it also be an illocutionary act? Certainly we have no formulation 'I hereby subordinate'. But then there are other clearly illocutionary acts that have no corresponding form of words ('I hereby threaten you?') Langton argues that it is. She classes it with other verdictives ('Fault!') and exercitives (orderings, authorizations etc.): it *ranks* women and *legitimizes* certain behavior towards them. A crucial issue here: what authority does pornography have?

Compare pornography with advertising.

Silencing

Silencing again may be locutionary (a gag), or perlocutionary (no one listens). But might it be illocutionary? Certain words simply might not count. For instance, blacks in apartheid South Africa; the participants in a gay marriage ceremony in a state in which gay marriage is not allowed; a woman saying 'no' to unwanted sex.

Presuppositional Accommodation

Accommodation seems to be a device whereby claims go into the background in order to make sense of what is said. Is it more effective than straight out assertion? The boot example. People misunderstanding their own responses. Is this peculiar to sexual responses? Consider advertising again.

Truth in Fiction

We take from fiction various lessons about how things actually are. What kind of things can be falsified in fiction? Laws of physics seem more easily broken than rules of morality. Does that mean that, if there is an implicit moral stance in a piece of literature, we are more likely to see it as endorsed by the writer?

XVI LEWIS: LANGUAGE & LANGUAGES

What is the relation of a language understood as a formal characterization, and language understood as a certain social phenomenon? Or to put the point in another way: in virtue of what is it correct to use a certain abstract object (a formal language) to characterize the linguistic behavior of a certain population? Lewis's idea is that a language is used by a population iff there is a convention to use that language; and a convention to use it is in turn spelled out as a convention to do certain things with it. But before exploring what those things are, we need to have some take on the idea of a convention.

Conventions (rough analysis): regularities to which people conform because their belief that others conform gives them pragmatic reason to conform.

Conventions (more precise analysis) regularities to which people conform because their belief that others conform gives them pragmatic reason to conform, and where:

- (i) there must be other regularities that could do the job (or else the regularity that is followed would be forced upon the people involved, rather than being followed as convention);
- (ii) the people must have a general preference that others conform (or else we would have deadlocked conflict), and (iii) all of these facts must be mutual knowledge amongst those involved.

A given language L (understood formally) can then be said to be used by a population of speakers (a concrete group of people), just in case there is a convention of *truthfulness* and *trust* in

L: *truthfulness*, in that the speakers utter only true sentences of L; and *trust* in that they believe others to be truthful in L, and so come to believe what they say. And since the formal semantics work in terms of truth conditions, it is a straightforward matter to see what it would be for a sentence to be true. The formal is connected to the social.

Does this account fully determine the language that is used by a population? There are two issues here. First, knowing that there is a convention of truthfulness and trust to use a certain language leaves open the *mechanisms* by which the interpretation of that language is fixed. Take the relation of names to their bearers. It could be, for instance, that we had a convention of using a Lagadonian language in which objects name themselves, and so are related by identity. Or it could be that we use a language in which names are related to their bearers by causal chains; or one in which they are related by descriptions. We need to know how things are for English, and for the other natural languages in which we are interested. These are the issues that we have been discussing up till now: whether Frege's theory of name is correct etc. Second, there is the issue of whether, even given this information, the language is fully determined: whether there is semantic indeterminacy, perhaps of the innocuous kind in which our conventions simply do not fix whether some particular word is properly assigned one sense or another; or of a more systematic and disturbing kind, for instance as discussed by Quine, or by Goodman and by Wittgenstein, as interpreted by Kripke. We'll return to this issue at the end of the course.

XVII PROPOSITIONAL ATTITUDES: FREGE & DAVIDSON

Frege's account

Words in the complement sentence of a propositional attitude report refer to what is customarily their sense.

Worries for Frege

What happens to iterated reports? What happens to anaphoric dependence and quantification into or out of propositional attitude reports? Are there such things as senses to do the job? In particular, the more we are pushed towards idiolects, the more problematic the various anaphoric relations become. How do we make the substitutions that we regularly make, e.g. replacing indexicals with names or other indexicals?

Davidson's Paratactic Analysis

- (1) Galileo said that the Earth moves.
- (2) Galileo said that. The Earth moves.
- (3) $\Box x$ (Galileo's utterance x and my next utterance make us *samesayers*). The Earth moves.

Some nice (?) features: No need for Fregean senses, propositions or the like. Words in the complement perform their stand roles. Words in the complement are used not mentioned. We can keep to the surface grammar (?)

Worries for Davidson

Is the complement 'that' really a demonstrative (notwithstanding the *OED* passage); what of other languages? Claims about sentences that would have been uttered. Claims about never uttered sentences (Kripke) 'No one's ever said that aardvarks make good attorneys' The counting problem (McFetridge):

The Earth moves. Galileo said that. The Earth moves. That's another thing Galileo said.

How innocent is the *samesaying* relation? Can we generalize to belief and other propositional attitude reports?

XVIII PROPOSITIONAL ATTITUDES: KRIPKE

Millian v. Fregean Accounts

According to the Millian account, the semantic value of a name is just its referent, and so substitution of coreferential terms would maintain not just truth value but also meaning. In *Naming and Necessity* Kripke suggested a Millian account of names that occur in extensional contexts and within modal operators. (Note that some—e.g. Michael Devitt—held him to be proposing a causal account, according to which the causal chain is part of the meaning of the name: same referent + different causal chain = different meaning; Kripke's comments here suggest that that interpretation is mistaken). But Kripke himself seemed to reject Millianism about names in propositional attitude contexts: he held that Hesperus is Hesperus can be known *a priori*, but Hesperus is Phosphorous cannot; that surely entails that knowing that Hesperus is Hesperus is not the same as knowing the Hesperus is Phosphorous; and so that names are not Millian within knowledge ascriptions.

That might suggest that the Fregean theory is correct for propositional attitude contexts, even if it is wrong elsewhere. But as Kripke points out, there are difficulties in thinking that it will solve all of our problems

(i) Do we go for community wide senses or idiolectic senses? The former don't seem fine grained enough; the latter give rise to all kinds of problem ('Everyone knows that Aristotle was a philosopher')

(ii) Iterated attitudes seem to provide substitution problems even for synonyms: Assumption: 'attorney' is synonymous with 'lawyer' (if you doubt that, substitute two terms that you do think are synonymous). Then contrast:

Whoever believes that attorneys are wealthy believes that attorneys are wealthy
Whoever believes that attorneys are wealthy believes that lawyers are wealthy

Mary doubts that whoever believes the attorneys are wealthy believes that attorneys are wealthy
Mary doubts that whoever believes the attorneys are wealthy believes that lawyers are wealthy

However, Kripke isn't trying to refute the Fregean account directly. Rather he is trying to show that problems about belief (and—or?—about belief ascription) arise without invoking any Millian principle of substitution. The upshot is that puzzles about belief cannot by themselves be used against the Millian account; or at least, not until we find out just what is generating the puzzle in each case.

Pierre

Disquotation principle, D: If a normal English speaker, on reflection, sincerely assents to 'p', then he believes that p.

Strengthened disquotation principle, SD: A normal English speaker who is not reticent will be disposed to sincere reflective assent to 'p' if and only if he believes that p.

Translation principle, T: If a sentence of one language expressed a truth in that language, then any translation of it into any other language also expressed a truth (in that other language).

By D and T, (i) Pierre believes that London is pretty and believes that London is not pretty. By SD and T, (ii) Pierre believes that London is pretty and does not believe that London is pretty.

Some responses:

(i) is false because Pierre doesn't really understand 'London' (or 'Londres'); but then nor do very many other speakers. (We risk raising the standard so high that many don't fall under it). Similar problems arise if we accept that he knew what the terms meant, but deny that he had the relevant beliefs. (Though might we deny that he believes both? Compare what we'd say about a recognitional capacity.)

(i) is true, since Pierre believes a contradiction. But there is no logical mistake that he makes.

(i) is false because 'London' isn't really a translation of 'Londres' (Again we risk raising the standard too high, and making the translation principle trivial.)

Peter

Now we don't even need the translation principle (or at least, all we need is a homophonic translation principle).

Naïve Theorist

Naïve theorists (most notably Nathan Salmon and Scott Soames) conclude that names are Millian even within belief contexts. They explain the apparent unacceptability of many coreferential substitutions by means of pragmatic rules on what a good ascription would be like (basically: keep the words as close to the original as you can); deviating from these rules by making unwarranted substitutions gives rise to ascriptions that are strictly true, but pragmatically unacceptable.

Presupposition

Should we be able to 'answer the original question' as Kripke insists? Compare someone who insisted to an innocent: 'Have you stopped beating your wife or not? Yes or No? Answer the question!' If that is the correct diagnosis, what are the presuppositions of our belief ascribing practice?

XIX PROPOSITIONAL ATTITUDES: CRIMMINS & PERRY

Problems with the naïve view

(i) straightforward unintuitive consequences. So unintuitive that it might seem that we've lost track of the idea that meaning is use.

(ii) if the explanation of the unintuitive consequences is supposed to be in terms of conversational implicature, do we get the standard Gricean features: Cancellability, Nondetachability?

Two theses it would be nice to maintain

- (1) Semantic Innocence
- (2) Direct Reference (Millianism)

Is it possible to maintain these two theses and yet still think that substituting coreferential names in propositional attitude ascriptions can change truth-value. In effect Davidson's account achieved that; or could have done, depending on quite how the samesayer relation is understood. The trick was to find some *other* part of the ascription sentence (i.e. other than the complement sentence) whose reference changes when coreferential terms are substituted in the complement sentence. For Davidson this is the complementizer 'that'. But that approach ran into various problems. Is it possible to attribute the job to some other part of the sentence?

Crimmins and Perry

For Crimmins and Perry the job is done by 'unarticulated constituents'. Compare sentences like 'It is three o'clock' or 'It is raining'. To determine the full semantic content of these sentences they need to be supplemented with a reference to place. Typically this will be the place of utterance; but it need not be (consider how they might be used in a phone conversation to someone a long way away). We can think of the reference as being achieved by an unarticulated constituent, which, if articulated, would give rise to something like 'It is three o'clock at p', where 'p' ranges over places. (It is an interesting question, on which Crimmins and Perry remain open, as to whether these 'unarticulated constituents' are really present in some way in the sentence.)

The next step is to realize that the reference of such unarticulated constituents can be a linguistic entity. To see how this works it is helpful to start with Crimmins' discussion (in *Talk About Beliefs*) of Quine's famous example

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

Clearly here the term 'Giorgione' refers to Giorgione; but equally clearly, substituting the coreferential term 'Barbarelli' changes the truth-value of the sentence. Crimmins suggests that 'so' functions as a demonstrative denoting a name, so that (1) can be paraphrased as

- (2) Giorgione was called that because of his size.

Crimmins points out that whilst in a typical use of (1) 'so' will refer to the name 'Giorgione' that is used earlier in the sentence, in the right context it need not. Consider the (false!) sentences

- (3) Both Giorgione and Titian were known as 'The Giant'. Giorgione was so-called because of his size; in Titian's case it was his towering skill that gave rise to the name.

Here 'so' is naturally taken as referring to the name 'The Giant' which is mentioned in the *previous* sentence; it seems that it can refer to *any* name that is made contextually salient (which is what we would expect of a demonstrative). Crimmins and Perry's idea is that belief reports have much in common with sentences containing 'so-called'; however, in a belief report the element that would do the work of 'so-called' is unarticulated. In essence (and much simplified), the proposal is that a report of the form

- (4) Judith believes that Giorgione was a painter

can be understood as expressing the same proposition as is expressed by

- (5) Judith believes that Giorgione was a painter by means of that notion and that idea

where the notion in question is a representation of the individual Giorgione and the idea is a representation of the property of being a painter. This gives rise to opacity in the following way. Suppose Judith has two notions of the individual Giorgione, one of which includes the feature that he is called 'Giorgione' whilst the other includes the feature that he is called 'Barbarelli'. Let us further suppose that she believes the first of these notions (her *Giorgione-notion*) to concern an Italian landscape painter; and that she believes the second (her *Barbarelli-notion*) to concern an English conductor. One of these notions will be denoted by the expression 'that notion' in (5). Which one? That will depend on which of them is made salient by the context; as with 'so-called' there is no simple rule that determines this. However, again paralleling the case of 'so-called', a typical way of making a representation salient will be by means of the very words used in the ascription. So typically (5) will be used to ascribe to Judith the belief that the person denoted by her Giorgione-notion has the property of being a painter (I have described this belief meta-linguistically, but this can be avoided). Now we can see how this gives rise to opacity. Suppose we substituted 'Barbarelli' for 'Giorgione' in (5). The name would still function to denote the same person. However, typically the denotation of 'that notion' would change. Rather than denoting Judith's Giorgione-notion, it will now typically denote her Barbarelli-notion. For Crimmins and Perry the notions and ideas are concrete particulars: the particulars that make up beliefs. But they could think of them as more abstract.

XX TRUTH: THE LIAR

Disquotational accounts of truth

Frege held that, for every sentence p , p is equivalent to the sentence ' p is true'. Frege also held that truth is a primitive and undefinable notion. But many Twentieth Century philosophers have contended that Frege should have pushed his basic insight further: that one understands all that there is to know about truth once one understands that equivalence. We shall consider that idea further on Thursday. But first we shall consider another problem: the paradox of the liar.

Paradox of the Liar

Distinguish the truth operator *It is true that* (taking sentences to sentences) from the truth predicate *is true* (taking names to sentences). The liar is a problem for the latter:

The standard liar: This sentence is false

The strengthened liar: This sentence is not true

'Contingent' liars:

Father: Everything your mother says is true

Mother: Everything your father says is false

Jones: Most of Nixon's assertions about Watergate are false
Nixon: Everything that Jones said about Watergate is true

The strengthened liar shows that the problem cannot be escaped by moving to a denial of truth.

The problem arises if the language can achieve self-reference, and if the language is semantically closed, i.e. if there is a truth predicate which can be applied to the name of any sentence of the language to form a sentence that itself receives a truth-value. (Actually even self-reference isn't needed; consider Yablo's paradox in which each premise in an infinite sequence of premises says that all the premises after it are false.)

Tarski

Basic idea: in place of a single language containing its own truth predicate, think of a hierarchy of languages, each of which contains a truth predicate that applies to expressions in the languages below it in the hierarchy, but not to itself. (Tarski was actually skeptical about doing this for English, which he took to be simply contradictory. Quine was more optimistic.) The Liar will now be simply ungrammatical.

Kripke

Basic idea: think of the truth predicate as a partially defined predicate, i.e. one that is defined for some sentences and not for others. Start with the sentences that do not contain any truth predicate. Assign each of them to class of true or false. Now see which of the remaining sentences have their truth values determined as a result of this assignment: assign them to

the class of the true or of the false accordingly. Now apply this procedure again. Continue applying it until each application results in no more sentences being assigned to either the true or the false. The Liar will not have been assigned to either the true or the false; it is, in Kripke's terminology, ungrounded. Similarly ungrounded is the Truthteller:

This sentence is true.

Priest

Simply embrace the contradiction. (Bold) But we now need to block the idea that from a contradiction everything follows.

XXI TRUTH: MINIMALISM

Minimalist accounts of truth

Minimalist views come in many strains and under many names (Minimalist, Disquotational, Deflationary, Redundancy). They can be thought of as comprising two claims, one negative, one positive:

Negative claim: there is no substantial property of truth *Positive claim:* the truth predicate is to be entirely understood by realizing that each instance of the following two schemas is true:

S is equivalent to 'S' is true.
Not-S is equivalent to 'S' is false

Note: the quotation marks can be understood in different ways (providing names of sentences, names of propositions, anaphoric terms) and the equivalence can be understood in different ways (material equivalence, necessitated material equivalence, equivalence of meaning).

Do we need to restrict the schemas so that they don't apply to paradoxical sentences? Perhaps not.

Normativity

Belief aims after truth. Perhaps the minimalist catch that:

Believe p iff 'p' is true, i.e. believe p iff p.

Truth Value Gaps

Reference failure. Partially defined predicates. Presuppositional failure more generally.

Gappiness (first version): There are some meaningful declarative English sentences which are neither true nor false.

This seems quite compatible with minimalism. Someone who utters a sentence with a presuppositional failure makes just the same kind of mistake as someone who utters the name of that sentence within the scope of the truth predicate.

Problems

I Boghossian: 'any proposed requirement on candidacy for truth must be grounded in the preferred account of the nature of truth'

But compare randomly chosen raffle tickets. We can't say what those that are chosen have in common (other than that they are chosen); but we can say what those that are chosen and those that are not chosen have in common: they are all raffle tickets. Analogously we get a substantial property of being true-or-false, without a substantial property of being true.

II Dummett:

Suppose that P contains a singular term which has a sense but no reference: then, according to Frege, P expresses a proposition which has no truth-value. This proposition is therefore not true, and hence the statement 'It is true that P' will be false. P will therefore not have the same sense as 'It is true that P', since the latter is false whilst the former is not.

Relatedly:

Suppose 'P' is neither true nor false.

Then it is not the case that 'P' is true, and it is not the case that 'P' is false.

Then not P, and not not P

Contradiction (even in intuitionistic logic)

It doesn't help to point out that 'P' fails to get a truth value; we would still be involved in asserting something that fails to get a truth value, and that is something we shouldn't do. Underlying problem here: if the minimalist account is true, then the truth predicate doesn't really provide a way of talking about a sentence without using it.

Responses

(i) Restrict the scope of the account of the truth predicate to those sentences that don't suffer presuppositional failure. But: (a) it is unclear that the minimalist is in any position to do that

(b) it is too strong anyway: the equivalences should hold.

(ii) Just shut up. Don't say that they are not true; don't say that they are not false.

Compare intuitionism: intuitionists don't want to say that undecidable mathematical sentences are true, or that they are false; but they don't want to say that they are neither true nor false. But how then can we say what we want to say, since we can't embrace the first construal of Gappiness. Another try:

Gappiness (second version): There are some meaningful declarative English sentences which are not truth-apt.

How is truth-aptitude related to truth? A natural suggestion: (TA) 'S'

is truth-apt if and only if 'S' is either true or false But from

this If 'S' is truth-apt then 'S' is either true or false and then

by contraposition If 'S' is not truth-apt, then it is not the case that 'S' is true or false and then by modus ponens in a case in which S is not truth-apt

It is not the case that 'S' is true or false Which was our original problem. So, either we have to deny (TA)—but then how do we understand truth aptitude?—or we

reject contraposition. Perhaps we need to do the latter anyway. Don't we want to accept all instances of: If Fa or not-Fa, then 'a' has a reference. Now we get the same problem as before. Contraposition gives us If 'a' doesn't have a reference, then neither Fa, nor not-Fa

Rejecting Contraposition

The contradictions come because we want to accept conditionals that have non-truth-apt antecedents and false consequents; but we do not want to accept their contrapositives, which have true antecedents and non-truth-apt consequents.

The Lukasiewicz table for the conditional

	T	–	F
T	T	–	F
–	T	T	–
F	T	T	T

if, then

A non-contraposing table for the conditional:

	T	-	F
T	T	-	F
-	T	T	T
F	T	T	T

if, then

Combining this with the Lukasiewicz table for conjunction gives a table for the biconditional

iff	T	-	F
T	T	-	F
-	-	T	T
F	F	T	T

Which we can use to understand (TA).

Expressivism

Expressivists (Emotivists) hold that ethical sentences aren't in the business of making assertions. So Eating meat is wrong is rather like:

Boo: (Eating meat) They standardly go on to say that ethical sentences are neither true nor false. But it seems that this cannot be reconciled with minimalism. Perhaps they should retreat to the claim that ethical sentences do not express beliefs.