

# HEAVY HANDS, MAGIC, AND SCENE-READING TRAPS

STEPHEN NEALE\*

The Graduate Center  
City University of New York

## ABSTRACT

This is one of a series of articles in which I examine errors that philosophers of language may be led to make if already prone to exaggerating the rôle compositional semantics can play in explaining how we communicate, whether by expressing propositions with our words or by merely implying them. In the present article, I am concerned less with “pragmatic contributions” to the propositions we express—contributions some philosophers seem rather desperate to deny the existence or ubiquity of—than I am with certain types of traps that those who exaggerate the rôle of semantic convention and underestimate the rôle of pragmatic inference are apt to fall into.

**Key words:** Semantics, pragmatics, definite descriptions, demonstrative descriptions (deictic and descriptive uses of), singular terms, scope (ambiguities and generalized), psychological verbs

## 1. *Heavy hands and magic*

Among contemporary battles about the truth conditions of the propositions we express with sentences of natural language, we can distinguish the local and the global. Local battles are fought over specific examples, over the truth conditions (or finer-grained features) of the propositions expressed with specific sentences, interested parties disagreeing about the truth-conditional (or finer-grained) facts. For many years, such disagreements were often skirmishes in a global battle about where to draw the line between what speakers *state* and what they merely *imply*.<sup>1</sup> In the language of propositions, they were fights over where to draw the line between those

---

\* I thank Alan Berger, Paul Elbourne, Jeremy DeLong, Josh Dever, Kevan Edwards, Jeff King, Michael Liston, Nathan Salmon, and Teresa Robertson for illuminating and engaging correspondence on portions of this article and for straightening me out on all sorts of things.

<sup>1</sup> This was the terminology employed by Grice (1961) before introducing his notions of *saying* and *implicating* in later work. See Grice 1989.

propositions that speakers *express* and those they merely *imply* (expressing and implying being the dominant ways of *communicating* propositions by way of speech or writing). Some philosophers like to use the modifiers ‘semantic’ and ‘pragmatic’ here, distinguishing propositions speakers *semantically express* and propositions they *pragmatically imply*. Others prefer to refrain because of another, more interesting, global battle that is not quite co-ordinate with the first. This is the battle between what I shall call, in a rare mood of detachment, *heavy-handed semantics* and *heavy-handed pragmatics*, a battle over the correct way of explaining truth conditions that are frequently not themselves in dispute: here, interested parties disagree about the division of labour, about the precise contributions to the truth conditions of propositions expressed made by compositional, truth-conditional semantics and by what has come to be known as intrusive, truth-conditional pragmatics. Suppose I say to you, ‘When I leave, I’ll place a key under the flowerpot to the right of the front door.’ Although I used ‘when I leave’ (rather than, say, ‘when I leave my house’) and although I used the noun phrases ‘a key’ (rather than, say, ‘a key to my car’) and ‘the front door’ (rather than, say, ‘the front door of my house’), it could well be the case that I used the sentence in question to express the proposition that when I leave *my house*, I’ll place a key *to my car* under the *first* flowerpot to the right of the front door *of my house*. So a question arises: is the full content of the proposition I expressed to be explained by heavy-handed pragmatics or by heavy-handed semantics, the latter aided by some heavy-handed syntax?

According to heavy-handed pragmatics, the example I just gave was of a case in which *the proposition the speaker expressed outstripped in content what was supplied by a compositional semantics for the sentence uttered, even relative to the anchoring and co-anchoring of the contents of any indexical or anaphoric expressions that sentence may contain.*<sup>2</sup> Heavy-handed semantics disagrees: the example was actually of a case in which, as in any other, *the content of the proposition the speaker expressed was determined by, and only by, semantic composition on the contents of its syntactic constituents, some of which are not only indexical but also aponic (i.e. devoid of all phonological content).*<sup>3</sup>

Heavy-handed pragmatics usually involves one of three ways of describing how content that can (perhaps only in principle) be determined by compositional semantic mechanisms falls short of the content of the proposition the speaker expresses: (i) In terms of what many philosophers discussing uses of incomplete definite descriptions

<sup>2</sup> See Neale (2004, 2005b, 2007) for a potted history of heavy-handed pragmatism, which I call “linguistic pragmatism”, and some specific pragmatist explorations. The *locus classicus* of contemporary pragmatism is Sperber and Wilson (1986). Excellent sourcebooks are Carston (2002) and Récanati (2004).

<sup>3</sup> A *ponic* is an item of syntax that has phonetic properties, an *aponic* is one that does not. Since ‘aponic’ can function as both an adjective and a noun, we can use it to avoid such nominal mouthfuls as ‘phonologically empty element’ and ‘phonetically null element’, and to avoid the adjectival mouthfuls ‘phonologically empty’ and ‘phonetically null’. (All aponics are homophonous I suppose, but it does not follow that all aponics affect the totality of phonic features of a sentence in the same way.) Since ‘indexical’ can also function as an adjective and a noun, ‘indexical aponic’ and ‘aponic indexical’ are strictly interchangeable. However, for purposes of *emphasis*, one may be more useful than the other in certain contexts.

(‘the table’, ‘the murderer’, ‘the emperor’, ‘the mayor’, and so on) have called *ellipsis* (not to be confused with a *syntactic* notion in generative grammar *often known as ellipsis, deletion or elision*).<sup>4</sup> (ii) In terms of what Sperber and Wilson (1986) call the *underdetermination* of propositions by the meanings of the linguistic forms we use to express them (even relative to assignments of referents to singular terms and the specification of any anaphoric links).<sup>5</sup> Or (iii) in terms of what Perry (1986) has called *unarticulated constituents* of the propositions we express.<sup>6</sup>

We are in virtually the same territory with the concepts mentioned in (i)-(iii), though talk of underdetermination appears to involve subtleties and allow for interpretive possibilities not obviously captured by talk of ellipsis and unarticulated constituents, and talk of utterance ellipsis certainly facilitates general characterisations of unarticulated constituents and underdetermination. There is no need, however, to get embroiled in these matters here. The basic point is that in heavy-handed pragmatics non-semantic factors bear on the contents of the propositions we express.

Heavy-handed semantics is syntactically ham-fisted unless supported by a plausible syntactic theory that justifies repeated appeals to aponic “indexical” expressions, for it must postulate their presence in examples as diverse as the following, assuming they are used to express whole propositions: ‘Smith left a key under the flowerpot to the left of the door’, ‘Every villager is happy’, ‘Every villager who owns a donkey feeds the donkey at night’, ‘There’s no wine’, ‘No-one has drunk any wine’, ‘The Russian voted for the Russian’, ‘Smith hasn’t had measles’, ‘Smith hasn’t had breakfast’, ‘Smith is ready’, ‘Smith has finished’, ‘Smith has had enough’, ‘Smith left’, ‘Smith used a gun’, ‘It’s raining’, ‘It’s noon’, ‘Two sugars, please’, and ‘Only if you promise not to tell anyone.’<sup>7</sup>

More importantly for present concerns, heavy-handed semantics is *semantically* ham-fisted unless supported by a theory of “indexicality” that is not just heavy-handed pragmatics in formal disguise. Indeed, it is important for philosophers and linguists not be misled by the rhetoric of some heavy-handed semanticists, rhetoric in which heavy-handed pragmatics is said to invoke “magic” where heavy-handed semantics invokes only well-understood semantic mechanisms.<sup>8</sup> For the following must be conceded by both sides at the outset:

---

<sup>4</sup> Bach (1981), Donnellan (1968), Husserl (1913), Neale (1990, 2004, 2007), Quine (1940), Sellars (1954).

<sup>5</sup> See also Carston (2002) and Récanati (2004).

<sup>6</sup> See also Crimmins (1993), Crimmins and Perry (1989), Récanati (2002), and Neale (2007).

<sup>7</sup> See Sperber and Wilson (1986), Carston (2002), Récanati (2004), Neale (2005b, 2007). Some authors say sentences themselves have as their meanings, or encode, *partial*, *gappy*, or *incomplete* propositions, and that this is the source of much underdetermination. But it seems to me the semantics of a sentence is a very different *type* of entity from the sort of thing a speaker expresses with that sentence. In Neale (2004, 2005b, forthcoming a) I prefer to talk of sentences encoding *blueprints* for propositions. No proposition blueprint is itself a proposition (any more than a building blueprint is a building). Many distinct propositions (or buildings) may *satisfy* a single blueprint.

<sup>8</sup> I have in mind here especially Stanley (2002a, 2002b). See below. It is strange that people on *both* sides of this

(a) Nothing like the formal mechanisms of compositional semantics determines the propositional contents of (at least particularized) conversational implicatures, or the propositions we convey by utterances replete with metaphor, irony, anacoluthon, aposiopesis, etc.

(b) Such contents are (at least partly) functions of speaker's intentions.

(c) The mechanisms of compositional semantics do not give hearers the means even to assign referents to all singular terms or to resolve all lexical, structural or anaphoric ambiguities, let alone to identify the full contents of utterances replete with metaphor, irony, anacoluthon, or aposiopesis, or to identify the contents of any conversational implicatures.

(d) The hearer will have to *pragmatically infer* such content.

In short, everyone in the business of explaining how we use language to communicate is, by virtue of his or her job description, already up to his or her neck in the magic of pragmatics. Furthermore, it must be conceded by both sides that:

(e) The mere existence and use of purportedly indexical words such as 'I', 'you', 'he', 'she', 'it', 'here', 'there', 'now', 'then', 'today', 'tomorrow' and 'yesterday' demonstrates that in order to have any plausibility whatsoever a compositional semantic theory must distinguish, at least for these words, the abstract notion of the meaning of an expression, which Kaplan (1989) has dubbed its *character*, from what the expression is used to refer to on a given occasion of utterance, which Kaplan has dubbed its (*propositional content*).

(f) For some of these words, it has seemed appealing to some semanticists to view character as a precise rule or recipe that determines content on occasions of use, a function from "contexts" to contents, which is why many semanticists have invoked formal "contexts" to serve as the arguments of characters.

(g) No such rules or recipes exist for determining the contents of, for example, 'everyone', 'every student', 'no-one', 'no politician', 'the murderer', 'the mayor', 'the emperor', 'the front door' or 'a key', on particular occasions of use. (Vague talk of "salient" objects or properties (or "salient" sets or functions!) hardly constitutes the provision of such rules.)

---

debate have billed themselves as mavericks fighting the traditional, establishment, or orthodox position (or assumption). On the side of heavy-handed pragmatics, Récanati suggests he is fighting against the traditional, establishment, or orthodox position (or assumption) that every constituent of the proposition expressed by someone uttering a sentence *S* (or expressed by an utterance of *S*) is traceable to an item in *S*'s syntax; and, on the side of heavy-handed semantics, Stanley suggests he is fighting against the traditional, establishment, or orthodox position (or assumption) that *it is not the case that* every constituent is traceable to an item in *S*'s syntax! Certainly both are fighting on behalf of and against different *traditions*, but talk of fighting *orthodox* or *establishment* positions (or assumptions) strikes me as faintly absurd (though, no doubt good for grants and sales!).

(h) The meanings of certain nouns are such that understanding the propositions speakers express with sentences that contain them requires identifying what are sometimes called *implicit arguments*: ‘mother’, ‘king’, ‘mayor’, ‘emperor’, and ‘murderer’, for example.<sup>9</sup> (In some cases, the meaning appears to signal that more than one argument is called for: ‘ambassador’, for example.) In the right circumstances, I may use the sentence ‘The next mayor will have a tough time’ to express the proposition that the next mayor *of New York* will have a tough time. As I noted in *Descriptions*, Husserl once said “When a contemporary German speaks of ‘the Emperor’, he means the present German Emperor” (1913, p. 85). A literal reading of this remark suggests a precise rule or recipe that determines content on the basis of the speaker’s nationality!<sup>10</sup>

(j) The meanings of many other nouns are not obviously like this: ‘door’, ‘river’, ‘table’, ‘dog’, and ‘geek’, for example. Nonetheless, it is often the case that identifying the propositions speakers express using sentences that contain these nouns still requires identifying some additional object or property. In the right circumstances, I may use the sentence ‘Every chair we purchase collapses within a week’ to express the proposition that every chair we purchase *from Smith* collapses within a week *of our purchasing it*. And, as noted earlier, I may use the sentence ‘When I leave my house, I always place a key under the flowerpot to the right of the front door’ to express the proposition that when I leave my house, I place a key *to my car* under the flowerpot to the right of the front door *of my house*.<sup>11</sup>

One thing is absolutely certain about the examples in (j) and some of those mentioned ten or so paragraphs earlier: they do not involve rule-governed indexicality of the sort mentioned in (e) and (f). So it would be extremely misleading for a heavy-handed semanticist to claim, as Stanley (2002a) does, that a heavy-handed pragmatist who talks about pragmatic enrichment, unarticulated constituents, or utterance ellipsis in characterising the contributions made to the contents of the propositions we express is appealing to “magical” ellipsis or “magical” enrichment, if the implication in such a claim is that nothing equally “magical” is involved in talk of contexts assigning “salient” individuals, properties, sets, or functions to aponic “indexicals” in syntax, “indexicals” very unlike those that have as their characters precise rules or recipes for determining content. The natural language expressions we use to refer to objects have utility because they encode *constancy* of object (proper names), *perspective* on objects (traditional indexicals), or *satisfaction conditions* on objects (definite descriptions)—or, perhaps, some combination (demonstrative descriptions?). By contrast, Stanley’s aphonics (see

---

<sup>9</sup> As Smiley (1981, 2004) observes, nouns of this form are typically the ones that Russell uses to produce examples of definite descriptions.

<sup>10</sup> According to some heavy-handed pragmatists, interpreting particular utterances of these words requires “saturation” of an “implicit argument”. See esp. Récanati (2004).

<sup>11</sup> Here, some heavy-handed pragmatists talk of “enrichment” rather than saturation, a process that is constrained only by the exigencies of the overall interpretation process. For engaging overviews of the literature on saturation and enrichment see Carston (2002) and Récanati (2004).

footnote 12) are wholly non-constant, non-perspectival, and non-descriptive in what they encode. In short, if they exist at all, they are expressions whose values are identified *wholly* pragmatically, without any guidance from their own meaning properties!

Appeals by heavy-handed pragmatics to enrichment, unarticulated constituents, and utterance ellipsis *per se* are not themselves meant to constitute a *theory* in any interesting sense; they are merely (a) acknowledgments that more is going on than can possibly be attributed to linguistic semantics *per se* and (b) attempts to provide suggestive labels for fairly high-level and largely intuitive theoretical notions that heavy-handed pragmatists believe will figure prominently in any plausible theory of utterance interpretation. Such notions, it is hoped, can be given some meat by cognitive psychology as advances are made in understanding the mental processes by which we integrate linguistic and non-linguistic information in interpreting one another, processes that explain not only how we interpret utterances of ordinary nouns, but also how we assign references to names and pronouns, establish binding relations (where syntax falls short), resolve potential ambiguities, identify and interpret utterances replete with metaphor, irony, anacoluthon, aposiopesis and, on top of all of this, how we identify what a speaker is *implying* as well as saying. These cognitive processes must be appealed to by *any* account of what is going on in the examples discussed, whether it involves specifying richer phrases, specifying unarticulated constituents, or specifying the values assigned to aphonic elements in syntax in the manner of some heavy-handed semanticists. However you cut the cake, it's *magic*, and *pragmatic* magic at that. It betrays a serious misunderstanding of the issues to complain, as Stanley does, that talk of utterance ellipsis is an appeal to "magical ellipsis" no analogue of which is to be found in semantically heavy-handed talk of contexts "supplying" individuals, functions, properties, sets or whatnot to aphonic elements in syntax.

However we proceed, the heavy lifting is done by pragmatic inference because interpreting utterances of sentences containing aphonic "indexicals" is a pragmatic, richly inferential matter, the product of integrating linguistic and non-linguistic information. The only substantive difference between the way the heavy-handed pragmatist sees the process of identifying the proposition expressed and the way someone postulating aphonic elements in syntax sees it is that the latter is just *insisting* that the search for and integration of contextual information in the interpretation process is triggered syntactically. To the best of my knowledge, no-one has even attempted to produce an argument designed to show that an item in syntax is *necessary* for such a search to be triggered or for such integration to take place. (Such an argument would have to come from empirical psychology, of course, not from armchair speculations about the nature of language or the nature of mind.) If it is not question-begging, then Stanley's (2002b) claim that "Linguistic communication is rule-governed and convention-bound

in a way that would be mysterious, if there were strong pragmatic effects on intuitive truth-conditions” is just nonsense.<sup>12</sup>

Of course the newer global battle and continuing local battles may come together in interesting ways. For example, a position on the truth conditions of the proposition a speaker expresses with  $\phi$  on a particular occasion might make more sense, and be easier to defend, if a heavy-handed pragmatics (or a heavy-handed semantics) is assumed; indeed, the position might very well *incline* a theorist towards one heavy hand rather than the other. Equally, an antecedent commitment to one heavy hand rather than the other might incline a semanticist towards a particular position on the truth conditions of the proposition a speaker expresses with  $\phi$  on a particular occasion.

<sup>12</sup> The syntactic details of the particular heavy-handed semantics Stanley (2002a, 2002b) endorses are set out in detail by Stanley and Szabó (2000). Every nominal has associated with it an aphonic domain variable “assigned” a value “by context” and composition. We might call this a syntactic proposal with semantic import, or a semantic proposal implemented syntactically, it doesn’t matter. What is crucial, however, is that it has a very clear *syntactic* dimension. Although the variable is syntactically real, it is not attached to, dominated by, or associated with either of the quantificational nodes, D (‘the’) or NP (‘the table’), in ‘the table’ as one might have thought; rather, it ‘cohabits’ a node with the common noun N (‘table’). The variable is complex element they represent as  $f(i)$  a compound of two variables, one individual,  $i$ , the other functional,  $f$ :

$$(i) [{}_{\text{DP}} \text{the} [{}_{\text{NP}} [{}_{\text{N}} \langle \text{man}, f(i) \rangle ]]]$$

I take the liberty of italicizing Stanley and Szabó’s variables in accordance with my own policy of italicizing all aphonics. Here is the idea:

The value of ‘ $i$ ’ is provided by context, and the value of ‘ $f$ ’ is a function provided by context that maps objects onto quantifier domains. The restriction on the quantified expression ‘every man’ . . . relative to context would then be provided by the result of applying the function that context supplies to ‘ $f$ ’ to the object that context supplies to ‘ $i$ ’ (2000a: 251-2).

They go on:

Since we are taking quantifier domains to be sets, relative to a context, what results from applying the value of ‘ $f$ ’ to the value of ‘ $i$ ’ is a set. Relative to a context, ‘ $f$ ’ is assigned a function from objects to sets. Relative to a context, ‘ $i$ ’ is assigned an object. The denotation of ‘ $\langle \text{man}, f(i) \rangle$ ’ relative to a context  $c$  is then the result of intersecting the set of men with the set that results from applying the value given to ‘ $f$ ’ by the context  $c$  to the value given to ‘ $i$ ’ by  $c$ . That is (suppressing reference to a model to simplify exposition), where ‘ $[\alpha]_c$ ’ denotes the denotation of  $\alpha$  with respect to the context  $c$ , and ‘ $c(\alpha)$ ’ denotes what the context  $c$  assigns to the expression  $\alpha$ :

$$[\langle \text{man}, f(i) \rangle] = [\text{man}] \cap \{x : x \in c(f)(c(i))\}. \quad (2000a: 253)$$

It is for expository simplicity only that Stanley and Szabó treat quantifier domains as sets, however. They make it clear that in order to deal with a certain form of counterexample, on their final theory quantifier domains are “intensional entities such as *properties*, represented as functions from worlds and times to sets.” (2000a: 252).

The problem with this proposal is that from the point of view of a theory of utterance interpretation it is, in fact, *merely syntactic*. The values “context” “assigns” to the individual variable ‘ $i$ ’ and the functional variable ‘ $f$ ’ in any particular case are unconstrained. Neither ‘ $i$ ’ nor ‘ $f$ ’ is perspectival or descriptive. (For discussion of this, see Neale (2007).) Thus ‘ $f(i)$ ’ is wholly non-constant, non-perspectival, and non-descriptive, as well as wholly aphonic. Since it concerns the interpretation of nominals, the theory posits  $n$  occurrences of the wholly aphonic, wholly non-perspectival, wholly indexical expression  $f(i)$  as part of the logical form of every sentence containing  $n$  common nouns. On this account, interpreting an utterance of a sentence containing  $n$  nouns involves identifying the values “context” has “assigned” to each of the  $n$  occurrences of ‘ $f(i)$ ’ via identifying the values “context” has “assigned” to  $n$  occurrences of the wholly non-perspectival, non-descriptive, aphonic expression ‘ $i$ ’ and  $n$  occurrences of the wholly non-constant, non-perspectival, non-descriptive, aphonic expression ‘ $f$ ’. In effect, then, the proposal is nothing more than a pointlessly formal and absurdly syntactic way of saying that interpreting an utterance of, say, ‘Every philosopher explained several theories to every linguist’ involves identifying which class of philosophers, which class of theories, and which class of linguists are being talked about. But that is precisely what heavy-handed pragmatics has been saying all along, only without the syntactic palaver and dogma.

I shall return to heavy hands after a few words about the local battles that will concern me here and their repercussions for more global matters. Primarily, they concern the truth conditions of the propositions we express when we either (a) report speech acts with sentences containing verbs such as ‘say’, ‘state’, ‘assert’, ‘claim’, ‘deny’, and ‘promise’ (‘Ralph said that that man was a spy’, ‘Ralph promised to have no further contact with that man’, etc.) or (b) ascribe mental states with sentences containing psychological verbs such as ‘think’, ‘believe’, ‘know’, ‘doubt’, ‘hope’, ‘want’, and ‘intend’ (‘Ralph thinks that that man is a spy’, ‘Ralph intends to blackmail that man’). If proper names (‘Orcutt’), bare demonstratives (‘him’, ‘that’) or descriptive demonstratives (‘that man’) are directly referential singular terms, as some philosophers maintain, then the only thing corresponding directly to such a term in the proposition a speaker expresses by uttering a sentence containing it is the term’s referent. (For purposes of continuity with the literature I want to examine, I shall just assume that propositions are structured entities containing objects and properties (including properties of properties) as constituents.) As direct reference theorists often put it, the term’s contribution to propositional content is exhausted by its reference.<sup>13</sup> Criticisms of direct reference usually take the form of describing a scene in which various psychological facts are meant to be self-evident, evaluating for truth or falsity (in connection with this scene) the proposition that constitutes a direct reference theory’s prediction of what was expressed by someone uttering a specific sentence containing a psychological or speech act verb, and then declaring the prediction incorrect in some way or other. I have yet to see an argument of this type that would worry me if I were a direct reference theorist; indeed every argument I know of involves either a specific type of error that I shall describe in a moment or else either an overestimation of the deliverances of compositional semantics or an underestimation of the rôle of pragmatic inference in explanations of psychological facts about communication.

This leads us back to the global battle. But it is not my aim to immerse myself *directly* in the global battle here. My aim rather is to describe in some detail one of several traps that heavy-handed semanticists are apt to fall into—*scene-reading* traps, as I call them—and work through several important instances.<sup>14</sup>

## 2. *Scene-reading traps*

A semanticist has fallen into a *scene-reading* trap when he postulates a reading of some particular sentence *S* in order to explain data which, upon examination, has suggested itself to the semanticist because (a) a condition obtaining in a particular stipulated

<sup>13</sup> Well-known defenders of this view, which was brought to prominence by David Kaplan, are Nathan Salmon and Scott Soames, whose works are mentioned in the bibliography.

<sup>14</sup> A fuller account of these traps is contained in Neale (forthcoming a) from which much of the present paper is excerpted.

*scene* that he is articulating with a view to assessing for truth or falsity the proposition expressed by someone uttering *S* on a given occasion (or by a given utterance or use of *S*, as the semanticist might put it), has been erroneously built into (*b*) the conditions necessary and sufficient for the truth of that proposition.

An utterly silly example will illustrate the idea. The noun ‘bank’ is ambiguous between (roughly) *financial* and *fluvial* readings. This is why the sentence ‘Smith is down at the bank’ can be used to express a proposition that is true of a scene in which Smith is down on the bank of the River Avon fishing or to express a rather different proposition that is true of a scene in which Smith is down at his local branch of Barclays cashing a cheque. Now imagine a semanticist who claims to have discovered a *third* reading of ‘bank’ and describes the following scene in presenting his case: Smith is cashing a cheque at a branch of Barclays Bank that is located right down on the bank of the Avon. (For vividness, suppose that Smith often fishes in the Avon right outside this particular branch of Barclays, and that because the queue is long he is currently leaning out of a conveniently open window with his line in the water.) Our imaginary semanticist then claims that the truth conditions of the proposition I express when I utter ‘Smith is down at the bank’ are neither the truth conditions of the proposition we get if ‘bank’ is read financially nor those of the proposition we get if it is read fluvially. As he puts it, neither fully captures the “reading” we want—or, rather more tellingly, neither captures this “scene” or “scenario”—so we need a third reading of the sentence, which means we need a third reading of ‘bank’.

Obviously the imaginary semanticist’s argument is ridiculous, and the diagnosis of his error is simple. He has fallen into a scene-reading trap. The described scene, call it  $\sigma$ , is one in which the propositions expressed by *both* readings of ‘Smith is down at the bank’ are true. He has fallen into the trap of building two interesting conditions obtaining in  $\sigma$ —Smith’s being at a financial bank and Smith’s being at a fluvial bank—into the conditions necessary and sufficient for the truth of the proposition expressed by a particular reading of ‘Smith is down at the bank’. But the mere existence of such a *scene* does not mean there is a *reading* upon which both conditions must obtain, i.e. a reading whose truth conditions include both of these conditions. It is quite enough that the propositions expressed on the two uncontroversial readings are *both* true in such a scene. (Notice two absurd consequences of the imaginary semanticist’s position: Puns are impossible; and every substantival word is potentially ambiguous in an indefinite number of ways.)

Given the evident absurdity of the ‘bank’ example, one might be excused for thinking that philosophers of language are not going to fall into scene-reading traps. But one would be wrong. Some very prominent philosophers of language have made scene-readings errors, though they tend to involve structural rather than lexical ambiguities. At the end of the day, falling into a scene-reading trap is one way of making a mistake that can be found in discussions of truthmakers, facts, causation, knowledge, responsibility,

and moral luck, when a condition that obtains in a particular scene, situation, state-of-affairs, or circumstance  $\sigma$  is mistakenly built into the truth conditions of a proposition *supported by*  $\sigma$  (in the language of Barwise and Perry), *verified by*  $\sigma$  (in the language of Russell and Ayer), or *made true by*  $\sigma$  (in language found in much traditional and current discussion).<sup>15</sup> Errors of this kind are easily masked by vagaries of scope, and among the unfortunate consequences are philosophical doctrines marred by faulty logics of the (purported) connectives ‘the fact that ( $\phi$ ) makes it the case that ( $\psi$ )’, ‘the fact that ( $\phi$ ) makes-true the sentence ( $\psi$ )’, ‘the fact that ( $\phi$ ) caused it to be the case that ( $\psi$ )’, and so on.<sup>16</sup>

The specific scene-reading errors I shall discuss here involve the propositions speakers express with sentences containing definite and demonstrative descriptions, by which I mean (more or less) noun phrases of the forms ‘the  $\phi$ ’ and ‘that/this  $\phi$ ’, respectively.<sup>17</sup> In this realm, scene-reading errors lead to the postulation of scope ambiguities that simply do not exist (or for which there is simply no independent evidence). Straightening out such errors should make it easier to straighten out those involving truthmakers and the like. But for present concerns my sights are on bad arguments for scope ambiguities, bad arguments against direct reference, and overestimations of what can be accomplished by compositional, truth-conditional semantics unaided by truth-conditional pragmatics.

I shall look at several versions of the error here, setting out the basic diagnosis with the help of a clear example involving definite descriptions. I shall then turn to some general issues about scope and binding possibilities involving demonstrative descriptions, before turning to more subtle and interesting scene-reading errors and general issues concerning scope ambiguities.

### 3. Scope ambiguities and definite descriptions

According to neo-Russellians (i) ‘the  $\phi$ ’ is a *quantifier phrase* on a par with ‘every  $\phi$ ’, ‘some  $\phi$ ’, ‘no  $\phi$ ’, ‘one  $\phi$ ’, ‘two  $\phi$ s’ etc.; (ii) there is some theoretical utility in rendering ‘the  $\phi$  is  $\psi$ ’ as [*the*  $x$ :  $\phi x$ ]  $\psi x$  in a metalanguage that we can use simultaneously to specify truth

<sup>15</sup> Barwise (1981), Barwise and Perry (1983), Russell (1921, 1940), Ayer (1936).

<sup>16</sup> I made a preliminary foray into this terrain in Neale (2001). The general form of the error might be called the *truthmaker-truth condition error*.

<sup>17</sup> Following custom, I shall frequently use the quasi-English expressions ‘the  $\phi$  is  $\psi$ ’, ‘that  $\phi$  is  $\psi$ ’, etc. in lieu of the more inclusive formalisms ‘ $\psi$ (the  $\phi$ )’, ‘ $\psi$ (that  $\phi$ )’, where  $\psi$  is what remains of a sentence, however complex, after removing a single occurrence of ‘the  $\phi$ ’, ‘that  $\phi$ ’, etc. *Prima facie*, some care has to be taken with such usage because of the putative existence of alternative scope possibilities involving ‘the  $\phi$ ’, ‘that  $\phi$ ’ and parts of  $\psi$ . It is always difficult to decide whether to use ‘definite description’ to label a syntactic class or a semantic class. Some occurrences of expressions of the form ‘that  $\phi$ ’ certainly do not function as Russellian descriptions, and some occurrences of expressions that are *not* of that form certainly *do* (e.g. occurrences of possessives such as ‘Fred’s mother’ and some occurrences of zero article noun phrases, such as ‘chairman’ in ‘As chairman, I hereby declare the meeting closed.’ I won’t be too fussy here.

conditions and to capture certain aspects of “logical form”, the expression [*the x: φx*]ψ*x* construed as an unabbreviated formula of a language containing the unrestricted quantifier *the x* and an unlimited class of restricted quantifiers of the form [*the x: φx*]; and (iii) no special scope conventions are needed in this language. The ambiguities in the following,

- (1) The king of France is not bald<sup>18</sup>
- (2) George thinks the author of *Waverley* is industrious
- (3) The first man to walk on the moon might have been Russian
- (4) The president used to be a democrat
- (5) The bride should choose
- (6) The man who drank poisoned water was inevitably poisoned

are captured using distinct sentences of our formal metalanguage, abstractly (S) (for ‘small’) and (L) (for ‘large’):

- (S)  $\textcircled{S}[the\ x:\ \phi x]\psi x$   
 (L) [*the x: φx*] $\textcircled{L}\psi x$ .

Thus (2) has the following readings:

- (2S) *George thinks* ([*the x: x authored Waverley*] (*x is industrious*))  
 (2L) [*the x: x authored Waverley*] (*George thinks* (*x is industrious*)).

Throughout, I shall use ‘S’ and ‘L’ in this way when labelling the (alleged) readings of a sentence upon which a description of interest has small scope and large scope respectively. For simplicity, I try to avoid sentences that have readings upon which descriptions can be understood with intermediate scope (e.g. ‘George thinks that Henry doubts that the author of *Waverley* is industrious’) and sentences containing more than one description.<sup>19</sup>

It is certainly a virtue of the quantificational account of descriptions that it comports with the existence of such ambiguities and with the fact that descriptions may contain variables bound by exterior quantifiers, as in (7) and (8):

---

<sup>18</sup> The ambiguity Russell saw in (1) may appear less certain than the others; but it is arguable that this is for largely pragmatic reasons. See Grice (1981) for discussion.

<sup>19</sup> Strictly speaking, even ‘The author of *Waverley* = the author of *Ivanhoe*’ may be read in two ways, as either (i) or (ii), but the “ambiguity” is one with no truth-conditional significance:

(i) [*the x: x authored Waverley*] [*the y: y authored Ivanhoe*] (*x = y*)  
 (ii) [*the y: y authored Ivanhoe*] [*the x: x authored Waverley*] (*x = y*).

- (7) Everyone talked to the person sitting opposite him  
 (8) The woman every true Englishman most reveres is his mother.<sup>20</sup>

But (a) the matter of the over-generation of readings is ever present, and (b) it would be a serious mistake to think that there is something syntactically or semantically *incoherent* about a theory that purports to provide a non-quantificational treatment of descriptions comports with such ambiguities and such binding possibilities.

#### 4. An uncontroversial scene-reading error

When a semanticist is assessing for truth or falsity the proposition expressed by someone uttering a declarative sentence  $S$  with respect to a scene  $\sigma$  he has described, let us say that he is assessing a *scene-sentence pair*  $\langle \sigma, S \rangle$ . Of course, a single sentence  $S$  may be used to express quite different propositions on different occasions of use, if only because of the existence of indexical expressions, so any particular assessment should really be relativised to a particular utterance of  $S$ .

A semanticist makes a scene-reading error involving  $\langle \sigma, S \rangle$  when he mistakenly sees in the truth conditions of the proposition expressed by someone uttering  $S$  on a given occasion, something that is only in the truth conditions of some *other* proposition that  $\sigma$  supports, often a proposition the semanticist himself has expressed (or implied the truth of) in describing  $\sigma$ . Scene-reading errors are implicated in claims to perceive a reading which a sentence simply does not have. For example, people sometimes make scene-reading errors when they are trying to get the hang of scope ambiguities involving descriptions. Consider (2) again

- (2) George thinks the author of *Waverley* is industrious

which, according to the Russellian, may be read as (2S) or as (2L) depending upon whether the description has large or small scope. A scene-reading error is made by a philosopher who, after appreciating the existence of the two readings, then claims to perceive a *third* that is fully captured by neither (2S) nor (2L). He describes the following scene: Suppose (i) that George does not know who wrote *Waverley*; (ii) that George thinks that whoever it was that wrote it is industrious; and (iii) that, independently, George thinks that Scott, whom he knows well, is industrious. The philosopher then says one of two things: (a) that neither (2S) nor (2L) captures this “reading”; or, perhaps more tellingly, (b) that neither (2S) nor (2L) captures this “scene” or “scenario”. Occasionally he will add that the third reading he has detected requires

<sup>20</sup> These examples are borrowed from Geach (1963, 1972). Similar examples can be found in Mates (1973), Evans (1982), and May (1985). Russell’s Theory of Descriptions handles these descriptions as a matter of course.  $\forall x\phi(iy)(\psi yx)$  is a perfectly well-formed description for Russell that unpacks perfectly well into a formula in primitive notation.

the description in (2) to have large scope and small scope *simultaneously* to capture this “reading”, “scene”, or “scenario”.

What is really going on, of course, is that the philosopher has simply described a scene in which (2S) and (2L) are *both* true. He is making essentially the same mistake as the imaginary semanticist described earlier who characterises a scene in which Smith is cashing a cheque at a branch of Barclays Bank that is located on a bank of the River Avon, and claims to perceive a third reading of ‘Smith is down at the bank’ that is not fully captured by appealing to either of the standard lexical meanings of ‘bank’. Since the scene-reading error involving (2) was prompted by a structural ambiguity, and the one involving ‘bank’ by a lexical ambiguity, we might call them, respectively, structural and lexical versions of the error. Instances of the lexical version are no doubt rare. But instances of the structural version are not. Indeed, precisely the one just described has been made in print.<sup>21</sup>

### 5. A (*slightly*) controversial scene-reading error

The next (alleged) scene-reading error I want to mention is one that comes up periodically when my friend Paul Elbourne and I heap scorn on one another’s theories of definite and demonstrative descriptions. The examples here are vexing and appear to have divided many great minds (as well as the minds of Elbourne and me): simplifying somewhat, we find Geach, Neale, Kaplan, Russell, and Salmon breaking one way, and Elbourne, Heim, Hintikka, and Kripke breaking the other way. I shall set the stage with what seems to be an uncontroversial scene-reading error that has a key feature of the controversial one.

It is a familiar point of logic and epistemology that ignorance of the truth value of the proposition that  $p$  does not require ignorance of the truth value of every proposition entailed by  $p$ . George might not know whether Scott and Ann are married to one another yet know that they are both married, for example. If this is the case, and if George wonders whether they are married to one another, I can use (9), but not (9’), to express a true proposition:

- (9) George wonders whether Scott and Ann are married to one another
- (9’) George wonders whether Scott and Ann are married.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup> Having encountered it a good number of times in lectures and seminars, I suspected it must occur somewhere in the literature. In correspondence about the present article, Nathan Salmon pointed me to two clear examples (the first of which was pointed out to him by C. Anthony Anderson): Linsky (1967, pp. 71-2) and Loar (1972, pp. 52-55). No doubt there are others.

<sup>22</sup> Similarly, moving from attitude to speech act verbs we can describe scenes in which I can use (i) but not (i’) to express a true proposition:

- (i) George asked whether Scott and Ann were married to one another.
- (i’) George asked whether Scott and Ann were married.

Just because George wonders whether the proposition that  $p$  is true, it does not mean that George wonders about the truth value of every proposition entailed by  $p$ . George may not know that Scott has more than one son yet know that he has at least one. If this is the case, and if George wonders whether Scott does have more than one son, I can use (10), but not (10'), to express a true proposition:

(10) George wonders whether Scott has more than one son.

(10') George wonders whether Scott has at least one son.

George might come to firmly believe there is extraterrestrial life because, and only because, NASA has recently announced the discovery of (unfrozen) water and some type of fungus on Mars. George no longer wonders—as he did before NASA's announcement—whether there is extraterrestrial life, but he still wonders whether there is *intelligent* extraterrestrial life. That is, in this stipulated scene, call it  $\sigma$ , I may utter (11), but not (11') to express a true proposition:

(11) George wonders whether there is intelligent extraterrestrial life

(11') George wonders whether there is extraterrestrial life.

Now imagine a semanticist who first approaches (11) and (11') with the following stipulated scene,  $\sigma'$ , in mind: George wonders about a great number of things before he falls asleep at night; in particular, he wonders whether there is extraterrestrial life and wonders whether there is intelligent extraterrestrial life. If the imaginary semanticist thinks the coherence of  $\sigma'$  falsifies a semantic theory according to which the proposition I express by uttering (11) does not entail the proposition I express by uttering (11'), he has fallen into a scene-reading trap.<sup>23</sup> (Similar examples of the trap can be constructed using (9)/(9') and (10)/(10').) With luck, reflection on  $\sigma$  and the other cases mentioned in the previous paragraph should disabuse the imaginary semanticist.

Russell seems to have seen all of this clearly when he presented the Theory of Descriptions, for he recognised that there are scenarios in which I may use (12), but not (12'), to express a true proposition (the description given small scope):

(12) George wondered whether Scott was the author of *Waverly*

(12') George wondered whether exactly one person authored *Waverley*.

Certainly one can describe scenes in which George wondered whether exactly one person authored *Waverley* and use (12) to express a proposition that is true of those scenes (the description given small scope). But it does not follow from this that there is a reading of (12) whose truth requires that George wondered whether exactly one person authored *Waverley*. The semanticist who thinks otherwise has fallen into a scene-reading trap by

<sup>23</sup> A similar example is mentioned by Kaplan (2005), involving 'Diogenes wished to know whether there were honest men' and 'Diogenes wished to know whether there were men.'

focussing on scenes in which the propositions expressed by (12) and (12') are both true. And the semanticist who claims that Russell's Theory of Descriptions predicts that the proposition I express by uttering (12) entails the proposition I express by uttering (12') has committed errors of both logic and scholarship. At least three people whose work I admire greatly have made *precisely* this double-barrelled error in print: Elbourne (2005, pp. 109-112, forthcoming), Heim (1991, p. 493), and Kripke (2005, p. 1023).<sup>24</sup>

## 6. Scope generalised

Contrary to what is often claimed or assumed, scope is *not* a concept that applies only to connectives and quantifiers. In the simplest formal languages used by philosophers the scope of a connective or quantifier is just the smallest formula containing it. This definition mirrors syntactic composition and is the standard, workaday definition we use when explaining the languages of the propositional and predicate calculi (and extensions containing modal operators). It is perfectly adequate for a language in which the smallest non-atomic expression is a whole sentence (open or closed); but it is a mistake to think the workaday definition gets to the heart of the *concept* of scope.

Reflections on the grammatical structure of natural language sentences reveal a general concept that spawns the workaday definition. Native speakers spot the ambiguities in (13) and (14) without any theoretical training:

(13) Small children and pets are not permitted

(14) Health benefits are available for all men and women who are unmarried.

---

<sup>24</sup> Elbourne attributes the argument to Heim's (1991) German paper, which I have not read. He uses example (i), and Kripke uses example (ii):

(i) Hans wonders whether the banshee in his attic will be quiet tonight

(ii) George IV asked whether the author of *Waverley* was Scott.

(The use of 'banshee' in (i) appears to be meant to prevent the Russellian from accounting for the data by giving the description large scope!) Elbourne (forthcoming) plans on sinking me in a new piece on this topic.

I should mention that other people whose work I admire have explicitly cautioned *against* making the error: Geach (1967), Kaplan (2005), Neale (2005a), and Salmon (this volume).

What is essentially a version of the same error is sometimes made in connection with examples such as the following (from Grice, 1989):

(iii) Give your wife flowers.

(iv) Is your wife here?

(v) Have you checked to see if the roof is leaking?

The error is made by anyone claiming that on Russell's theory someone uttering (iii) is instructing a man to ensure he is non-bigamously married; that someone uttering (iv) is inquiring whether the person he is addressing is non-bigamously married; that someone uttering (v) is asking if you have checked to see if you have exactly one roof. One only has to consider the following sentences to see that it is an error:

(vi) Make sure you have more than one son

(vii) Have Scott and Ann ever married one another?

And armed with a smidgen of grammatical vocabulary, they will say the ambiguities arise because the adjective ‘small’ might apply to the word ‘children’ or to the larger expression ‘children and pets’ in (13); and that the modifier ‘who are unmarried’ might apply to the expression ‘all men and women’ or just the word ‘women’ in (14). When they say this, they are talking about the *scope* of the adjective or modifier.

Whitehead and Russell introduced the concept of scope in *Principia Mathematica* in connection with the formal language they used, which was essentially the first-order predicate calculus with identity (though they defined identity). The definition they gave was basically this:

- (A) The scope of a connective or a quantifier  $\alpha$  is the smallest sentence (open or closed) properly containing  $\alpha$ .<sup>25</sup>

(Thus an expression  $\beta$  is within the scope of a connective or quantifier  $\alpha$  iff  $\beta$  resides in the smallest *sentence* containing  $\alpha$ .) This is general enough because the only non-atomic expressions in the calculus are whole sentences (open or closed) and the only expressions whose scopes we care about are the sentence operators ( $\forall x$ ), ( $\exists x$ ),  $\sim$ ,  $\bullet$ ,  $\vee$ ,  $\supset$ , and  $\equiv$ .

The *reasons* we care about the scope of the sentence operators are semantic. They emerge when (a) we set out a truth definition—it matters whether a particular occurrence of a variable is free or bound, for example, and the binding of  $\beta$  by  $\alpha$  requires  $\beta$  to be within  $\alpha$ ’s scope—and (b) when we translate between sentences of the calculus and sentences of natural language. Armed with the notion of scope, we have been able to shed light on a certain type of ambiguity found in natural language: *scope* ambiguity (also known as *syntactic* or *structural* ambiguity). In a typical case, we find a string of English with two meanings, one corresponding to each of a pair of sentences in the calculus that differ from one another in respect of the scopes of particular connectives or quantifiers. (‘John was fired or Jones was fired and Brown was satisfied’; ‘every man loves some woman.’) But not all permutations of scope lead to truth-conditional ambiguity (‘every man danced with every woman’; ‘the king is taller than the Queen’).

In the course of becoming adept at explicating natural language scope ambiguities involving quantifiers and connectives, the theorist develops quite robust intuitions about scope that have application *beyond* such expressions. That is, ambiguities in natural language that cannot be captured using the calculus are discovered that nonetheless *feel* like ambiguities of scope. (13) above is a good example—even if one of the readings is more natural in the most straightforward contexts. And the theorist has the intuition that the ambiguity is the product of a choice between taking ‘children and animals’

<sup>25</sup> In the interests of brevity, I talk of expressions rather than occurrences of expressions. The picky reader can easily make the relevant adjustments.

or just ‘children’ to be within the scope of ‘small’. The theorist who also knows some syntactic theory might suggest the following empirical hypothesis:

- (B) The scope of an expression  $\alpha$  is the smallest *syntactic constituent* properly containing  $\alpha$ .

(Thus an expression  $\beta$  is within the scope of an expression  $\alpha$  iff  $\beta$  resides in the smallest *syntactic constituent* containing  $\alpha$ .)

We have here an empirical hypothesis about natural language whose origins are in a stipulation about certain artificially constructed languages, but that is no excuse for conflating the empirical hypothesis and the stipulation.

On this general definition of scope, the direct object of a sentence is within the scope of the subject, but not vice versa. In (15), for example,

- (15) [<sub>S</sub> George [<sub>VP</sub> respects [Scott]]]

the scope of ‘George’ is the whole sentence and so includes ‘Scott’; but the scope of ‘Scott’ is just the VP (verb phrase) ‘respects Scott’ and so does not include ‘George’—‘respects’ and ‘Scott’ are within each other’s scopes, but this creates no problem. Quite generally, then, the subject NP (noun phrase) of a sentence S is not within the scope of any other NP in S.

A distinction between two levels of grammatical description is required in order to properly see scope (thus construed) at work in quantified sentences of natural language, to see how, for example, superficial ambiguities of the sort we characterize abstractly with a pair of logical forms (S) and (L)

- (S)  $\exists [the\ x: \phi x] \psi x$   
 (L)  $[the\ x: \phi x] \exists \psi x$

can be explained in terms of their underlying parsings. The theorist armed with a syntactic theory built on a Chomskyan factorization of grammatical structure into LF (“Logical Form”) and PF (“Phonetic Form”), might put forward a fully general empirical hypothesis about scope:

- (C) The scope of an expression  $\alpha$  is the smallest *syntactic constituent* properly containing  $\alpha$  at LF.<sup>26</sup>

(Thus an expression  $\beta$  is within the scope of  $\alpha$  iff at LF  $\beta$  resides in the smallest *syntactic constituent* containing  $\alpha$ .) Equivalently, for expressions  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ , if  $\alpha$  merges with  $\beta$

---

<sup>26</sup> See Neale (2005b). In the terminology of syntactic theory,  $\beta$ ’s being within the scope of  $\alpha$  amounts to  $\alpha$ ’s *c-commanding*  $\beta$ , where  $\alpha$  *c-commands*  $\beta$  iff the first branching node (of whatever category) dominating  $\alpha$  also dominates  $\beta$  (and  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  are non-overlapping).

to create  $[\alpha\beta]$ , then  $[\alpha\beta]$  is both  $\alpha$ 's scope and  $\beta$ 's scope. Given the empirical facts about natural language syntax, i.e. the facts about which categories of natural language expressions merge with which others to form larger expressions, there is no interpretive worry about  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  being in one another's scopes. We never get a situation, for example, in which single occurrences of 'and' and 'or' are both found within one another's scopes; or a situation, in which two noun phrases or a noun phrase and a sentence connective both occur within one another's scopes.

### 7. Scope ambiguities and singular terms

As noted already, a strength of the Theory of Descriptions is certainly the way it comports with—perhaps we can say *explains* and *predicts*—intuitive ambiguities involving descriptions, ambiguities of scope. But it would be a mistake to think one can immediately dismiss theories according to which descriptions are referring expressions on the grounds that quantifiers admit of scope permutations whereas singular terms, being “essentially scopeless”, do not. As Smiley (1981, 2004) rightly observes, Russellian distinctions of scope can be mirrored using predicate abstraction. Where the neo-Russellian distinguishes (S) and (L), Smiley distinguishes (S') and (L'):

(S')  $\exists\psi(\text{the } \phi)$

(L')  $(\lambda x\exists\psi x)(\text{the } \phi)$ .

Given the great power of lambda abstraction, this is hardly surprising—no doubt Church was well aware he had the means to treat descriptions as singular terms and mirror Russell's scope distinctions.<sup>27</sup> The distinction is still one that crucially involves scope, however. In (S') the description occurs within the scope of  $\exists$ ; in (L'), by contrast,  $\exists$  occurs within the scope of the description. Smiley himself is prepared to say the difference involves the scopes of  $\exists$  and “predicate formation” but adds that “there is absolutely no need to invoke a notion of scope” for the description (2004, p. 155). Is Smiley claiming (as some have) that singular terms (which for him includes descriptions) are the wrong *sorts* of expressions even to *have* scopes? That confused claim, as well as the confused claim that *predicates* are the wrong sorts of expressions to *have* scopes, can certainly be found in print: “People, Kripke and Dummett for two, freely ascribe *scopes* to singular terms, which is incoherent since only operators have scopes” (Patton, 1997; 251). “Intuitively, predicates, unlike quantifier phrases, are not the kinds of expressions that *have* scope” (Graff, 2001, p. 14). But there is nothing at all incoherent about a singular term or a predicate (or a determiner or any other expression) *having* scope (as Dummett and Kripke realise, and as Smiley recognizes for predicates

<sup>27</sup> The power of lambda-abstraction is not always properly appreciated. It makes it possible to do all sorts of things in formal languages that are not necessarily exploited by natural language. This ought to make semanticists rather more judicious in their appeals to it when theorising about natural language.

at least). Identifying the scope of the predicates ‘small’ and ‘who are unmarried’ in (13) and (14) above is vital—Are pet elephants allowed? Are married men eligible for health benefits? Similarly for Smiley’s complex singular terms ‘the  $\phi$ ’ in (1)-(6), which Smiley can read as (S’) or (L’).

To claim that only operators have scopes, or to claim that predicates or singular terms do not have scopes, is to have a tenuous grasp of the concept of scope by virtue of overlooking the general geometry and its impact on semantic composition. In the limited syntax of the first-order predicate calculus, where the smallest non-atomic expression is a whole formula, the range of scopes to be considered is very limited. Once  $\lambda x$  is added to the calculus this changes, of course, and a reason for caring about the scopes of predicates is immediately revealed, as Smiley recognizes. But once the notion of scope is set out in its simplest way it is seen to be fully general, obviating the need to play a game of eternal, incremental catch-up in the face of increasingly more complex languages.

The point remains, however, that ambiguities of scope in natural language illustrated by the examples in (1) above are not readily replicated when the definite descriptions are replaced by proper names or bare demonstratives, and any respectable semantic theory must explain this fact. At the same time, we should not be too quick to jump to the conclusion that if we find such ambiguities with, say demonstrative descriptions ‘that  $\phi$ ’ (or ‘this  $\phi$ ’), that we have immediately refuted referential accounts of such expressions and proved that a quantificational account is required. For when the quantificationalist appeals to a distinction between the following (S) and (L) forms

(S)  $\exists[that\ x: \phi x]\psi x$

(L)  $[that\ x: \phi x]\exists\psi x$

the referentialist may have the machinery to distinguish the following (S’) and (L’) forms:

(S’)  $\exists\psi(that\ \phi)$

(L’)  $(\lambda x\exists\psi x)(that\ \phi)$ .

## 8. *Deictic uses of demonstrative descriptions*

Depending upon whether they are being examined in connection with definite descriptions or in connection with the demonstrative pronouns ‘this’ and ‘that’, noun phrases of the forms ‘this  $\phi$ ’ and ‘that  $\phi$ ’ are known as *demonstrative* (as opposed to *definite*) descriptions or as *complex* (as opposed to *simple*) demonstratives. (They are also known as *descriptive* (as opposed to *non-descriptive* or *bare*) demonstratives.) I shall call them demonstrative descriptions; but since my discussion will be, for the

most part, limited to the form ‘that  $\phi$ ’, I shall often use ‘that  $\phi$ ’ as a quasi-label and talk of (e.g.) deictic uses of ‘that  $\phi$ ’.

If demonstrative descriptions are quantifier phrases rather than referring expressions on some of their uses, as numerous philosophers have argued or suggested, *prima facie* there is an expectation of straightforward ambiguities of scope mirroring those found with definite descriptions.<sup>28</sup> Although various uses have been separated and addressed in the literature, the discussion of both bare and descriptive demonstratives in philosophy has tended (if only tacitly) to focus on *demonstrative* or *deictic* uses of such expressions, for example when they are used in conjunction with physical demonstrations or with “demonstrative intentions” involving objects in the perceptual environment or some recent perceptual environment. This is no doubt largely because much of the discussion is, in effect, responsive to, and responsive to responses to, the fascinating accounts proposed by Russell and Kaplan, who have argued that bare demonstratives, at least, are devices of direct reference. Russell famously restricted the objects of reference to sense data; not so Kaplan.<sup>29</sup>

Deictic uses will be my principal concern here, but a brief excursion into the realm of well-known non-deictic uses will be necessary if error is to be averted (English being a language in which there are no syntactic clues as to whether we are dealing with a deictic or non-deictic use). Following Evans (1982), who rejects direct reference accounts of both bare and descriptive demonstratives, it is common to distinguish *perceptual* uses (‘Look! That man’s got a gun!’), *past-tense* uses (‘That Frenchman we met in the pub last night spoke impeccable English’), and *testimony* uses (‘That mountaineer who keeps breaking world records is coming to town tomorrow’). I shall follow suit, but focus on perceptual uses which, with Evans and those he has influenced, I regard as paradigmatic deictic uses.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> See (e.g.) Taylor (1980), Barwise and Cooper (1981), Davies (1981), Anderson and Keenan (1985), Keenan and Stavi (1986), Neale (1993a, 1993b), Richard (1993), King (1999, 2001), Lepore and Ludwig (2000), Dever (2002). (Lepore and Ludwig suggest that Davidson (1967) “may be construed as anticipating a quantificational treatment” (2000, p. 202). This seems to me at once an understatement and an overstatement. They also claim that their account is *not* quantificational. I disagree. On both matters, see Neale (forthcoming d)).

<sup>29</sup> Not all languages are like English in using the same form for both demonstrative pronouns and demonstrative determiners. In French, for example, we find *celui* and *celle* as the free-standing demonstrative pronouns and *ce* and *cette* as demonstrative determiners. (Diessel (2003) estimates about a quarter of the world’s languages use different forms.) English does not always use the same form for interrogative pronouns and interrogative determiners: ‘who/which man came to dinner?’

<sup>30</sup> According to King (2001) it is “philosophical orthodoxy” that demonstrative descriptions are directly referential (2001, p. xi and p. 1). This is highly questionable. First, there are widely discussed, common uses of demonstrative descriptions that *no-one* regards as directly referential, in particular anaphoric and definite uses. (For discussion and references, see §9.) Second, although a good number of philosophers may well maintain that demonstrative descriptions used *deictically* are directly referential—unfortunately, King does not tell us who is party to the alleged orthodoxy, he just notes that Kaplan suggests extending his own directly referential account of bare demonstratives used deictically to descriptive demonstratives used deictically—certainly a good number of philosophers maintain that demonstrative descriptions used deictically are *not* directly referential, including Loar (1976), Taylor (1980), Barwise and Cooper (1981), Davies (1982), Devitt (1984, 1989, 2003), Evans (1979, 1982), Keenan and Stavi

There is certainly a tradition of trying out quite general, quantificational “mop-up” accounts of demonstrative descriptions,<sup>31</sup> but there remains broad-based and well-motivated scepticism about the existence of scope ambiguities when such expressions are being used deictically, and this has dampened enthusiasm somewhat. An initial comparison of (1’)-(6’) with (1)-(6) certainly invites scepticism:

- (1’) That prince is not bald
- (2’) George thinks that that novelist is industrious
- (3’) That astronaut might have been Russian
- (4’) That senator used to be a democrat
- (5’) That bridesmaid should choose
- (6’) That man who drank poisoned water was inevitably poisoned.

Unlike (1)-(6), examples (1’)-(6’) appear to have just one reading each, a reading that is *not* captured by treating the demonstrative description ‘that  $\phi$ ’ as a quantifier phrase that is assigned small scope.<sup>32</sup>

Given that ‘that  $\phi$ ’ or ‘that  $\phi$  is  $\psi$ ’ are natural answers to the question ‘which  $\phi$  is  $\psi$ ?’, it is not surprising that demonstrative and interrogative descriptions pattern together for numerous purposes. Like sentences (1’)-(6’), sentences (1’’)-(6’’) also appear to have a single reading each, a reading that is *not* captured by treating the interrogative description ‘which  $\phi$ ’ as a quantifier phrase that is assigned small scope:

- (1’’) Which prince is not bald?
- (2’’) Which novelist does George think is industrious?
- (3’’) Which astronaut might have been Russian?
- (4’’) Which senator used to be a democrat?
- (5’’) Which bridesmaid should choose?
- (6’’) Which man who drank poisoned water was inevitably poisoned?

Treating an expression as a referring expression is quite different from treating it as a quantifier phrase understood with large scope.<sup>33</sup> But for the purposes of the narrow dialectic involving demonstrative descriptions in the present article, I want to put aside—except in one place—the important question whether the truth conditions of (1’)-(6’) are best explained by treating demonstrative descriptions used deictically as referring expressions (whether rigid or directly referential) or as quantifier phrases

---

(1986), Peacocke (1982), Neale (1993a, 1993b, 1999), Richard (1993), Lepore and Ludwig (2000), Dever (2002).

<sup>31</sup> See (e.g.) Taylor (1980), Barwise and Cooper (1981), Davies (1981), Keenan and Stavi (1986), Neale (1993a, 1993b), Richard (1993), King (1999, 2001), Lepore and Ludwig (2000).

<sup>32</sup> This is one issue in the study of demonstratives where there does seem to be an orthodoxy of sorts.

<sup>33</sup> See Kripke (1977, 1980), Soames (1989, 2002), and Ludlow and Neale (1991) for discussion.

understood with large scope. This is because I want to engage constructively with King (2001), who holds (i) that demonstrative descriptions, used deictically or otherwise, are quantifier phrases, and (ii) that they are not compelled by their own semantic properties to be understood with large scope. So I shall simply say that when ‘that  $\phi$ ’ is used deictically in utterances of (1’)-(6’) it appears to be understood with large scope.

It doesn’t take much to upset this way of talking, of course: What is to be said when a sentence contains *two* demonstrative descriptions? Do they both have large scope? Formally, our answer is that, as with definite descriptions, at most one of them has *largest* scope, but *both* demonstrative descriptions have large scope with respect to the expressions of interest: verbs of propositional attitude and other non-extensional expressions. So, strictly speaking, the matter of whether ‘that  $\phi$ ’ used deictically may contain a pronoun functioning as a variable bound by an external quantifier—something it could not do unless it were understood with smaller scope than the quantifier, of course—is not *directly* relevant. There is nothing semantically incoherent about the idea of ‘that  $\phi$ ’ containing a pronoun functioning as a bound variable when it is being used deictically, even if ‘that  $\phi$ ’ is treated as a referring expression, indeed even if it is treated as a *directly referential* referring expression, as Salmon (2006a, 2006b) has clearly demonstrated; it is simply an empirical question whether natural language actually avails itself of this possibility.<sup>34</sup>

It should be noted that it is not just philosophers with antecedent commitments to referential theories that are sceptical about deictic uses of ‘that  $\phi$ ’ being read with small scope. In defending the empirical hypothesis that any natural language referring expression is semantically atomic in respect of its contribution to truth conditions, I was myself inclined towards quantificational accounts of demonstrative descriptions in two articles published in 1993.<sup>35</sup> But along with those who reject such accounts in favour of referential accounts, I was sceptical about the existence of small scope readings and resigned myself to what Lepore and Ludwig (2000) rightly called an *ad hoc* scope restriction.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>34</sup> This is a matter on which there is confusion in the literature. For a brief discussion, see footnote 55.

<sup>35</sup> Neale (1993a, 1993b). I was exploring the empirical hypothesis that all natural language referring expressions are both *de jure* rigid and semantically unstructured (atomic), where an expression is semantically unstructured if and only if “its semantical value [is] exhausted by the semantical value of exactly one of its syntactical constituents” (1993a, p. 816). (In the truth-theoretic framework I used for exposition in some of that work, an expression’s being semantically unstructured amounts to the view that “its semantical value is wholly determined by a single axiom” (1993a, p. 816).) The idea is explored in more detail and in new ways in Neale (forthcoming d).

<sup>36</sup> The particular quantificational accounts I flirted with were hopeless in any case. The common suggestion was basically that an utterance of ‘that  $\phi$  is  $\psi$ ’ is to be understood as having the truth conditions of

(i) [*the*  $x$ : @( $\phi x$ ) •  $\tau(u, x)$ ] $\psi x$

where @ is the actuality operator,  $u$  refers to the utterer, and  $\tau$  specifies the theorist’s favoured way of *targeting* an object (for example, a demonstration or a type of intention). As Stephen Schiffer and Scott Soames pointed out to me almost immediately, any quantificational account that makes the speaker, the actual world, or some method of targeting an individual part of the proposition expressed conflicts with the very reasonable idea that the proposition I express by uttering ‘that  $\phi$  is  $\psi$ ’ on a given occasion is one that could be expressed or entertained by people

## 9. Non-deictic uses of demonstrative descriptions

We need to eliminate potential distractions before examining whether deictic uses of ‘that  $\phi$ ’ implicate themselves in ambiguities of scope. The first distraction concerns well-known *non-deictic* uses. In English, the demonstrative article precedes its nominal. But other languages do things differently, sometimes in ways that bear on the distinction between deictic and non-deictic usage. For example, in Modern Greek the demonstrative article (which effectively combines with a definite description rather than with a bare nominal to form a demonstrative description) may be pre- or postnominal:

<i>autos o anthropos</i> that the man (‘that man’)	<i>o anthropos autos</i> <i>the man</i> that (‘that man’).
--	--

And, interestingly, there appears to be a strong correlation between the prenominal form and deictic usage, and the post-nominal form and non-deictic usage.

---

ignorant of the existence of me and my utterances, intentions, and demonstrations, and by people in counterfactual situations. (Not everyone is moved by this objection, but I see it as a decisive refutation of the view I was trying out.) In Neale (2004), I offered an alternative “Gödelian” quantificational account that avoided the Schiffer-Soames objection: an utterance of ‘that  $\phi$  is  $\psi$ ’ is to be understood as having the truth conditions of

$$(ii) [an\ x: \phi x \bullet x=\alpha] \psi x$$

where  $\alpha$  refers directly to the object the speaker is targeting. (Schiffer (2005, 2006) presents what he takes to be a decisive refutation of this idea. I respond in Neale (forthcoming c, forthcoming d), but I am not rash enough to think Schiffer can ever be shaken off completely.)

It is important to see that my 2004 analysis of demonstrative descriptions used deictically is not appealing to some newfangled machinery to solve Schiffer’s problem. The machinery itself goes back to at least 1944 and I have used it myself in print since 1990. I call a quantifier of the general form  $[DET\ x: \phi x \bullet x = \alpha]$ , where *DET* is a determiner and  $\alpha$  is a singular term (a name or a bound variable, for example) *Gödelian* because Gödel (1944) used definite descriptions of this form in his slingshot argument against individual facts. The restricted quantifier  $[the\ x: \phi x \bullet x = \alpha]$  is the counterpart of  $(\iota x)(\phi x \bullet x = \alpha)$ , which is what Gödel actually uses. For discussion, see *Facing Facts*.

I first used Gödelian definite and indefinite descriptions in Neale (1990) to analyse items that seemed to me semantically conjunctive. The appositive constructions (i) and (ii), for example, I analysed as (iii) (1990, p. 116, n. 55):

- (i) John Smith, the man who threw ice cream at the pope, is  $\psi$
- (ii) The man who threw ice cream at the pope, John Smith, is  $\psi$
- (iii)  $[the\ x: man\ x \bullet x\ threw\ ice\ cream\ at\ the\ pope \bullet x=John\ Smith] \psi x$ .

(It is not the English description itself that is given a Gödelian analysis in these sentences, but the *combination* of the name and the description when one of them occurs in apposition to the other.) Similarly, I analysed the noun phrase ‘another man’ as a Gödelian *indefinite* description  $[an\ x: x \neq \alpha \bullet man\ x]$ , where  $\alpha$  is a referring expression, perhaps a variable bound by another quantifier phrase, as in (v), the analysis offered of (iv) (1990, p. 247):

- (iv) every man who lives with another man saves money
- (v)  $[every\ y: man\ y \bullet [an\ x: x \neq y \bullet man\ y] y\ lives\ with\ x] y\ saves\ money$ .

(I have simplified the example here, principally by removing the donkey anaphora, which was the actual topic of discussion at that point in *Descriptions* (‘every man who lives with another man shares the bills with him’).) I appealed to Gödelian descriptions containing externally bound variables again in Neale (2004) in order to deal with apparently bound variable uses of descriptions. See footnote 40 of the present article. In Neale (2004) I also appeal to Gödelian descriptions to explain certain referential uses of definite descriptions. This idea has been criticised by my good friends Michael Devitt (2004, this volume) and Stephen Schiffer (2005, 2006), but I do not think their arguments succeed. For discussion, see Neale (forthcoming d)

There is a great deal that could be said about demonstrative descriptions across languages, about the relationships between definite, indefinite, demonstrative, and interrogative descriptions, and about the relationships between all four species of descriptions and third-person pronouns, but I do not want to hold things up with a lengthy discussion here.<sup>37</sup> Suffice to say, that (i) the difference in felicity conditions governing the use of definite and demonstrative descriptions has yet to be articulated in an entirely satisfactory way, but (ii) the following observations seem to be agreed upon (even if they are not pulled together and presented as a batch in the literature, which may well be the case):<sup>38</sup>

(a) As Geach (1965, 1972), Evans (1977, 1985), Maclaren (1982), and others observe, demonstrative and definite descriptions are sometimes used in lieu of bound pronouns.<sup>39</sup> Here are some examples involving demonstratives:

(16) One woman whom [every tribesman]<sub>1</sub> admires is [that tribesman]<sub>1</sub>'s wife

(17) [Every logician]<sub>1</sub> was walking with a boy near [that logician]<sub>1</sub>'s house.

(18) [Every person you meet these days]<sub>1</sub> seems to think it's just a matter of time before Hollywood discovers how great [that person]<sub>1</sub> is.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>37</sup> For some discussion, see Neale (2004, forthcoming d).

<sup>38</sup> These observations are made in various numbers, and in various ways, by Quine (1960), Geach (1962, 1963), Postal (1966), Partee (1972), Mates (1973), Stockwell, Schacter and Partee (1973), Lakoff (1974), Evans (1977, 1982), C. Lyons (1977, 1999), J. Lyons (1977), Cooper (1979), Davies (1981, 1982), Devitt (1981a, 1981b), Maclaren (1982), Levinson (1983), Anderson and Keenan (1985), May (1985), Hawkins (1987), Kempson (1988), Neale (1990, 2004, 2005), Wilson (1991), Comrie (1997), and King (1999, 2001). On the difference between pre- and post-nominal demonstrative articles in Greek, see Panagiotidis (2000).

<sup>39</sup> It is widely believed by linguists that both personal pronouns and definite articles originate in demonstrative pronouns. See Christophersen (1939), Givón (1984), and Diessel (1999).

<sup>40</sup> Example (16) is from Geach (1965), (17) is from Evans (1977), and (18) is a variant of one from Maclaren (1982). In Geach's (16) 'every tribesman' is understood with large scope to get the desired reading. In Maclaren's (18) the demonstrative description appears to be used as a way of avoiding gender, an instance of a well-known phenomenon. (As a former student of Maclaren, I feel compelled to alert philosophers to the wealth of data about demonstratives in Maclaren (1982)). For examples involving definite descriptions, see (e.g.) Kempson (1988) and Wilson (1991). It is important to see that it does not follow from the mere existence of this use of demonstrative (or definite) descriptions that they have to be treated semantically, on this use, as bound variables, rather than as, say, noun phrases that merely *contain* bound variables. For discussion, see Neale (2004), where I take issue with Wilson on precisely this matter. Wilson claims that the description 'the fired scientist' in (i) must be treated as a bound variable, hence referentially:

- (i) [every scientist who was fired from the observatory at Sofia]<sub>1</sub> was consoled by [someone who knew [the fired scientist]<sub>1</sub> as a youth].

But I pointed out that 'the fired scientist' is just an incomplete, relativised description that can be replaced by 'the fired scientist in question'. In a representation of the truth conditions of an utterance of (1), a Gödelian definite description containing variables on *both* sides of the identity sign gives us exactly what we want:

- (ii) [every  $x$ : scientist  $x$ .  $x$  was fired from the observatory at Sofia]  
[the  $z$ : fired scientist  $z$ .  $z=x$ ] [some  $y$ :  $y$  knew  $z$  as a youth]  
( $x$  was consoled by  $y$ ).

The matrix of [the  $z$ : fired scientist  $z$ .  $z=x$ ] is understood as uniquely satisfied relative to values of  $x$ . In short, the Russellian says that the incomplete description in (i) is not, *pace* Wilson, a bound variable, but just another incomplete description—one for which the speaker could provide a fuller description that is bound-into—a description containing a bound pronoun. It is an incomplete, relativized description whose natural completion contains an

(b) As Geach (1963, 1972), Evans (1977, 1985), Cooper (1979) and others observe, pronouns may be linked anaphorically to quantifier phrases that do not bind them:

- (19) [Just one man]<sub>1</sub> drank rum. He<sub>1</sub> was ill afterwards
- (20) Every villager owns [just one donkey]<sub>1</sub> and feeds it<sub>1</sub> at night.
- (21) Every villager who owns exactly one donkey feeds it at night.<sup>41</sup>

(c) As Evans (1977, 1985), Cooper (1979), Davies (1981) and others observe, such pronouns are readily replaceable by definite descriptions, *salva veritate*.<sup>42</sup>

- (19') [Just one man]<sub>1</sub> drank rum. [The man (who drank rum)]<sub>1</sub> was ill afterwards
- (20') [Every villager]<sub>2</sub> owns [just one donkey]<sub>1</sub> and feeds [the donkey (he<sub>2</sub> owns)]<sub>1</sub> at night
- (21') [Every villager who owns [just one donkey]<sub>1</sub>]<sub>2</sub> feeds [the donkey (he<sub>2</sub> owns)]<sub>1</sub> at night.

(d) As Geach (1963), Evans (1977, 1985), Maclaren (1982) and others observe, demonstrative descriptions may often be used in lieu of definite descriptions or unbound anaphors.<sup>43</sup> There was one such use in the characterisation of scene-reading traps in the long opening sentence of the fourth paragraph of the present essay. Here are some more:

- (19'') [Just one man]<sub>1</sub> drank rum. [That man]<sub>1</sub> was ill afterwards
- (20'') Every villager owns [just one donkey]<sub>1</sub> and feeds [that donkey]<sub>1</sub> at night

expression understood as a variable bound by the subject expression. Strangely, in his brief discussion of examples in which descriptions appear to function as bound variables, King (2008, p. 114) appears ignorant of the literature on this topic—Geach (1965, 1972), Evans (1977, 1985), Maclaren (1982), Wilson (1991), Neale (2001, 2004). Perhaps this is the reason he does not point out that he himself is presenting essentially the same Gödelian analysis I presented in Neale (2004), but with various added bits of machinery.

<sup>41</sup> Examples (19)-(21) are from Evans (1977), example (21) via Geach (1963, 1972). Caveat: Geach actually took the pronouns in these examples to be bound by the quantifiers. Evans and Cooper saw clearly that this was wrong. The pronouns in (19) and (20) cannot be bound by their antecedents—'just one man' and 'every villager', respectively—because they do not lie within their scopes; and the pronouns do not lie within their antecedents' scopes because (roughly) they lie outside the smallest clause containing those antecedents, in much the same way that the final occurrence of  $x$  lies outside the scope of the universal quantifier in  $(\forall x)(Fx \wedge Gx) \rightarrow Hx$ . For those philosophers unimpressed by such syntactic considerations, notice that assigning 'just one man' and 'a donkey' large scope yields incorrect truth conditions. For a summary of the issues geared towards philosophers, see Neale (1990), Chs 5 and 6.

<sup>42</sup> Caveat: Ultimately, Evans himself actually rejects the view that the pronouns are replaceable by definite descriptions in favour of the view that they have their references fixed rigidly by those descriptions in Kripke's (1972) sense. One consequence of this is that on Evans's view they resist small scope readings. (See observation (e) below.) This creates serious problems for his theory that other descriptivists about anaphora do not face. Notice that sometimes it is essential to use a description instead of the pronoun in order to disambiguate. Compare the following:

- (i) I bought an apple. I gave it to Jane.
- (ii) ? I bought an apple and a banana. I gave it to Jane.

<sup>43</sup> Caveat: Geach treats such anaphors as "pronouns of laziness". For criticism, see Evans.

- (21") Every villager who owns [exactly one donkey]<sub>1</sub> feeds [that donkey]<sub>1</sub> at night.
- (22) [One and only one person authored *Waverley*]<sub>1</sub> and [that person]<sub>1</sub> is Scotch.
- (23) One thing that counts as the personal property of [a tribesman]<sub>1</sub> is [[that tribesman]<sub>1</sub>'s] wife.
- (24) Every team has [one player who is weaker than the others]<sub>1</sub>. [That player]<sub>1</sub> is the one to play hardest against.
- (25) You may think the time has come to silence our friend in Moscow; but of course I could not endorse [that course of action].<sup>44</sup>

(e) As Geach (1967, 1972), Davies (1981), and others note, pronouns and demonstrative descriptions that are replaceable by definite descriptions may be read with small scope *if* the corresponding description can be read with small scope:

- (26) Someone murdered Mrs Smith last night. There is conclusive evidence that it was a man, and although the police have no suspect, they believe they will discover his (/that man's/the man who murdered Smith's) identity within hours.
- (27) Hob thinks a witch has put a curse on him. He also thinks that she (/that witch/the witch who has put a curse on him) has put a curse on Nob.

(f) As Geach (1963, 1972), Mates (1973), Evans (1977, 1985), and others observe, definite descriptions may contain—and anaphoric pronouns and demonstrative descriptions that are replaceable by definite descriptions may be understood *as if* they contained—pronouns bound by external noun phrases. We have already seen this:

<sup>44</sup> Example (22) is due to Ayer (1936), (23) to Geach (1965, 1972), and (24) to Maclaren (1982). Example (25) is one I have added to highlight a use of a demonstrative description that might be treated as anaphoric or anadeictic depending upon one's views about Davidsonian event variables. I raised the issue briefly in Neale (1990) pp. 262-3 n 48. Ayer presents (22) as an informal, natural language statement of the analysis Russell's Theory of Descriptions provides for:

(i) The author of *Waverley* is Scotch.

Ayer's informal statement is used frequently in the literature, though Ayer (1946) himself came to prefer Moore's (1944) three-clause statement because he accepted Stebbing's (1936) point that if 'that person' (or at least 'that') is being used deictically in (22), then (22) is not equivalent to Russell's analysis of (i), and that if it is being used as a device of cross-reference (anaphorically, as we would now say), then the second conjunct of (22) alone is just a restatement of (i), still unanalysed. (Stebbing appears to be suggesting that on the cross-referential use, 'that person' is equivalent to 'the one and only person who authored *Waverley*' or to 'the person in question'.) Ayer did not have the machinery to articulate unbound anaphora clearly—indeed, although anaphoric uses of both definite and demonstrative descriptions have been acknowledged in the philosophy literature for decades, it was probably not until Evans's work that philosophers had any inkling of what sort of machinery would be required to get anything like a clear statement of the type of anaphora exemplified in Ayer's informal statement of Russell's analysis.

Geach comes close to seeing that whereas in (16) 'every tribesman' is understood with large scope to get the desired reading and 'that tribesman's wife'—more particularly 'that tribesman'—is understood (on the reading in question) as within its scope, in (23) 'that tribesman' is *not* understood (on the reading in question) as within the scope of 'a tribesman'. The contrast between (16) and (23) is brought out nicely by Evans (1977) as an important part of a powerful polemic against Geach's theories of pronominal anaphora.

(20) [Every villager]<sub>2</sub> owns [just one donkey]<sub>1</sub> and feeds [the donkey (he<sub>2</sub> owns)]<sub>1</sub> at night.

(20') [Every villager]<sub>2</sub> owns [just one donkey]<sub>1</sub> and feeds [that donkey]<sub>1</sub> at night.

(20'') [Every villager]<sub>2</sub> owns [just one donkey]<sub>1</sub> and feeds [it]<sub>1</sub> at night.

(g) There are interesting semantic and distributional differences between personal pronominal, definite, indefinite, demonstrative and interrogative anaphors (and anadeictics) that appear to be bound up with particular issues about uniqueness and the more general issue of quantifier phrase incompleteness.<sup>45</sup> For present purposes, it suffices to note one important difference between ‘the  $\phi$ ’ and ‘that  $\phi$ ’ that bears on their uses as anaphors: the unique satisfaction of  $\phi$ , or of some readily inferable elaboration of  $\phi$ , is part and parcel of the semantics of ‘the  $\phi$ ’ but not part of the semantics of ‘that  $\phi$ ’. This is one reason demonstrative descriptions are often thought to be demonstrative versions of *indefinite* descriptions.<sup>46</sup> Another is the seeming truth-conditional equivalence of (e.g.) ‘I’ve read that book’ and ‘That’s a book I’ve read.’ There are pragmatic reasons for choosing one over the other, but truth conditions are unaffected. But they are used as definite rather than indefinite *anaphors*, as we have seen, functioning as abbreviated definite descriptions.<sup>47</sup> In effect, ‘that  $\phi$ ’ is often a useful way of avoiding the question of how ‘the  $\phi$ ’ should be “completed” when the unadorned  $\phi$  is satisfied by more than one thing, while still, in certain cases, drawing attention to the fact that not any old  $\phi$  will do. It is as if ‘that  $\phi$ ’ is understood as ‘the  $\phi$  in question’, relieving the speaker of the immediate burden of expanding upon  $\phi$  when it is satisfied by more than one thing. This explains certain subtle contrasts in the use of ‘the  $\phi$ ’ and ‘that  $\phi$ ’, such as the one between (26) and (26’), adapted from an example used by King (2001):

(28) Imagine a unique place on Earth where gravity is only half as strong as it is here. I could do slam dunks in that place.

(28') ? Imagine a place where gravity is only half as strong as it is here. I could do slam dunks in the place.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>45</sup> See Neale (2004, forthcoming d).

<sup>46</sup> Again, see Neale (2004, forthcoming d).

<sup>47</sup> Indefinite anaphora is typically effected with the word ‘one’:

(i) Hob bought an old brown donkey and Nob also bought one.

(ii) Hob bought an old brown Greek donkey then a young one

(iii) Hob bought an old brown donkey then an old grey one.

In (i), ‘one’ is understood as ‘an old brown donkey’; in (ii), it is understood as ‘brown donkey’; and in (iii), it is understood as ‘donkey’. A unitary N’ theory straightforwardly explains both examples (unless the DP hypothesis is correct). See Neale (1989).

<sup>48</sup> Not everyone finds the contrast sharp because there is actually a colloquial use of ‘the’ upon which (20’) is fine. I have modified King’s example mostly to circumvent its strangeness and a controversial claim involving lack of anaphora that King makes. (King imagines being one of two people who have “together and silently (to eliminate the possibility of anaphoric connection) performed calculations that show that there is exactly one location (we don’t know where) on the earth where its gravitational field is weak.” (2001, p. 68-69). Recognising the implications, King utters ‘Even I could slam dunk at that place’. Substituting ‘the place’ for ‘that place’, he says, fails to preserve

Filling out the description or tacking on ‘in question’ removes the relevant contrast:

(28'')? Imagine a unique place on Earth where gravity is only half as strong as it is here. I could do slam dunks in the place in question / the place where gravity is only half as strong as it is here.<sup>49</sup>

(h) Not all non-deictic uses of demonstrative descriptions are anaphoric. First, as Evans (1982) notes, there are uses of ‘this  $\phi$ ’ in some dialects upon which it may be used in lieu of an indefinite description:

(29) I met this interesting artist in the pub last night.

Evans makes it clear that he has in mind a *specific* (rather than a *referential*) use of the indefinite: some particular individual furnishes the speaker’s grounds for his utterance, and ‘this’ can be used in some dialects to indicate this.<sup>50</sup> Second, it is a familiar point of grammar that demonstrative descriptions, both singular and plural, are often used in lieu of non-anaphoric definites:<sup>51</sup>

felicity. Even if this is not technically anaphora, it is certainly anadeixis.)

<sup>49</sup> King (2001) uses pairs such as (28) and (28') to show that demonstrative descriptions in such examples are not just stylistic variants of definite descriptions. In a more recent paper, King (2008) argues the case again, largely in response to Salmon’s (2006a, 2006b) claim that some demonstrative descriptions that are bound-into are, or appear to be, “stylistically altered definite descriptions”. Here is what King says in response to Salmon, using an example he had used in his book (2001, p. 75):

[S]uppose that when a race car driver wins a certain (large) number of races, he is inducted into the prestigious Checkered Flag Club. We are watching the end of a race on TV in which the winning driver has, in virtue of this very win, achieved that mark. The announcer screams, “And by winning this race, Mario qualifies for induction in the Checkered Flag Club.” Intending to convey how important the Checkered Flag Club is to race car drivers, I say nodding at the TV:

(6) [Every race car driver in the Checkered Flag Club]<sub>1</sub> still remembers that race he<sub>1</sub> won. Obviously, this is perfectly fine. But replacing the complex demonstrative with the comparable definite description results in infelicity:

(6') \* [Every race car driver in the Checkered Flag Club]<sub>1</sub> still remembers the race he<sub>1</sub> won. . . . if the complex demonstrative in (6) is really a “stylistically altered definite description,” as Salmon claims, it is utterly mysterious why substituting the *appropriate description* [*my emphasis*, SRN] for the complex demonstrative would lead to infelicity. After all, Salmon’s claim is that the complex demonstrative *is* the definite description in such a case. (2008, p. 113).

Assuming King is right about the infelicity of (6'), he establishes here at most that ‘that  $\phi$ ’ does not function felicitously as a stylistic variant of the *particular* definite description ‘the  $\phi$ ’, but not the more general conclusion that it does not function felicitously as a stylistic variant of a definite description. So even if King has a good case against Salmon on this issue—of course, much depends upon how narrowly Salmon construes the phrase “stylistically altered definite descriptions”—he has no case against the suggestion I made above that sometimes demonstrative descriptions are used to relieve the speaker of the immediate burden of filling out the unadorned  $\phi$ , when  $\phi$  is satisfied by more than one thing.

<sup>50</sup> I am here using ‘specific’ in the sense of Ludlow and Neale (1991, 2005). I am simplifying greatly. For one thing, we need to bring in *pseudo-specific* uses of ‘this  $\phi$ ’ that are common in joke telling (‘So this bald guy walks into a bar with a frog on his head, and the barman says “Where did you get that?...”’).

<sup>51</sup> Examples similar to these are given by Evans (1982) and King (2001), though doubtless the uses they exemplify have been mentioned earlier. King (2001) calls the understood use of (31) a “no demonstration, no speaker reference” use.

(30) Do you remember that house we were going to build?

(31) If I ever find that person who turned in my wallet, I'll send him a reward.

In (30) and (31), the demonstrative descriptions seem to be understood as if they were definite descriptions.<sup>52</sup> As far as (30) is concerned, the reason seems to emerge when we contrast (30) with the past-tense use of 'that architect' in (32), or when we create a single question as in (33):

(32) Do you remember that mad architect we met and were going to hire?

(33) How good is your memory? Do you remember that mad architect we met and were going to hire and that house we were going to build?

In using (33), it is vital (assuming the house was never built) to defeat the existence implication that would arise if the demonstrative description were understood with large scope. Evidently, what we do is construe it as having the semantics of a definite description with small scope. And if the addressee has no memory of either, natural replies to (33) would involve incomplete definite descriptions that could be readily completed in context. Uses of demonstratives upon which they are no more than stylistic variants of definite descriptions are legion, and little more needs saying about them. Problems such uses raise about non-existence are reduced to familiar (though not completely solved) problems involving uses of definite descriptions.

## 10. *Demonstratives, binding, and scope*

As already noted, definite descriptions may contain variables bound by exterior quantifiers. Can demonstrative descriptions contain such variables? An interesting example of a non-deictic use of a demonstrative description I mentioned in "Term Limits" was one that Jamie Tappenden brought up in conversation one afternoon:

(34) Every man eagerly awaits that day when he retires.

The interesting feature of this example is that on the interpretation Tappenden intended the pronoun 'he' must be bound by the exterior quantifier phrase 'every man', within whose scope it (and the demonstrative description as a whole) lie. Again, this looks like a straightforward example of a demonstrative description used in lieu of, or interpreted as, a definite description ("Certainly an analysis that makes 'that day when he retires'

---

<sup>52</sup> The indefinite, specific use appears to be restricted to 'this  $\phi$ '. Definite uses involving 'this  $\phi$ ' are easy to find. An interrogator, after repeated demands for a particular piece of information, warns his prisoner,

(i) I shall get this information from you, one way or the other.

Here are two more cases involving the distal, adapted from Quirk *et al* (1985), one involving a plural:

(ii) Would those passengers seated in rows 20 to 30 now please board the aircraft.

(iii) Would that passenger seated in 34C please come to the podium.

equivalent to ‘the day (when) he retires’ looks plausible here” (1993c: 120, n 39).) On a non-deictic use of this sort, then, ‘that  $\phi$ ’ is a quantifier phrase by virtue of being understood as equivalent to a Russellian definite description; and this captures the fact that such cases do not appear to involve reference—Tappenden fastened onto the future-directed sentence (34) in our discussion precisely to stress the absence of genuine reference.<sup>53</sup>

Notoriously, quantifying into demonstrative descriptions used deictically is an ugly business. In “Term Limits” I contrasted the following:

- (35) [Every driver]<sub>1</sub> knows the mechanic working for him<sub>1</sub>  
 (35') ? [Every driver]<sub>1</sub> knows that mechanic working for him<sub>1</sub>

Certainly (35') is very strained indeed when ‘that mechanic working for him’ is used deictically. There does not seem to be anything *semantically incoherent* going on here, for there is nothing incoherent about a scene in which I utter (35') while using four fingers, two from each hand let us suppose, to demonstrate each of four mechanics, each one of whom works for exactly one of the four drivers in question. It would be easy enough to *work out* what I as trying to *communicate*; yet (35') does not naturally lend itself to this use for some reason.

Two explanations suggest themselves once we separate a couple of things we have harmlessly coalesced until this point: understanding ‘that  $\phi$ ’ used deictically as a referring expression and understanding it as a quantifier phrase that insists on large scope. Obviously, if it is a quantifier phrase that (for some reason) insists on larger scope than ‘every driver’, then we would have an explanation of the strained nature of (35'). But we would have an equally good explanation if (a) ‘that  $\phi$ ’ is a referring expression, and (b) there is a prohibition (for some reason) on referring expressions properly containing variables bound by exterior quantifiers—for example, because all natural language referring expressions are semantically atomic.<sup>54</sup> This is not a matter to be decided by fiat. The idea of referring expressions, even directly referential ones, having semantically relevant structure and containing variables bound by external quantifiers is perfectly coherent, syntactically and semantically. The interesting question

<sup>53</sup> Similar examples are discussed by King (2001) and Dever (2002). The latter suggests that binding into ‘this  $\phi$ ’ is more problematic than binding into ‘that  $\phi$ ’, contrasting examples similar to the following:

- (i) Every man dreads that moment when his eldest child leaves home.  
 (ii) ? Every man dreads this moment when his eldest child leaves home.

Interestingly, it appears easier to bind into ‘this  $\phi$ ’ when the binding is only “implicit”. The day arrives when Dever’s eldest child leaves home. I happen to be staying with him in Austin that day. He says to me over breakfast, ‘I’ve been dreading this moment.’ I reply with (iii):

- (iii) It’s only natural—every man dreads this moment.

Perhaps this is something like a semanticist’s pun, the implicit nature of the binding allowing me to play against one another readings that are similar to “strict” and “sloppy” readings in the linguists’ sense. See Neale (2005b) for discussion.

<sup>54</sup> On this notion, see footnote 36.

is the empirical one I confronted in “Term Limits”: is the possibility of semantically structured referring expressions actually exploited in natural language? (And if not, *why* not?) The question is on a par with another interesting empirical question I confronted in the same article. Obviously there is nothing semantically incoherent about the idea of non-rigid referring expressions; but is the possibility of non-rigid referring expressions actually exploited in natural language? (And if not, *why* not?)<sup>55</sup>

<sup>55</sup> With Salmon (2002, 2006a, 2006b), Stanley (2002b), and others, I read King (2001) as claiming, with Lepore and Ludwig (2000), that the idea of directly referential singular terms containing variables bound by exterior quantifiers is unworkable, indeed semantically incoherent. As Stanley observes “King takes the existence of QI [‘Quantifying In’] cases to provide a decisive refutation of the thesis that complex demonstratives are referring expressions” (2002b, p. 607). And Stanley himself claims that *within a general semantic framework of structured propositions* the idea of directly referential singular terms containing variables bound by exterior quantifiers must fail: “the data provide a “damning class of cases for the direct reference account”; and “Given the framework assumed, it is *fairly straightforward* [my emphasis, SN] to show that if any of this data is taken at face-value, the direct reference account of complex demonstratives is false” (2002b, p. 607). It is not surprising that Stanley does not demonstrate just how “straightforward” it is to show that the direct reference account of demonstrative descriptions is falsified by King’s QI data, taken at face-value: Salmon (2006a, 2006b) has shown that it is, in fact, a straightforward technical exercise to provide the allegedly unworkable direct reference account within a general semantic framework of structured propositions.

The idea of referring expressions—directly referential or otherwise—containing variables bound by exterior quantifiers is no more problematic, syntactically or semantically, than the idea of bound variables themselves being referring expressions; or the idea of sentences containing variables bound by exterior quantifiers. (Direct reference adds no special wrinkle since the variable is itself the paradigm of the directly referential expression.) The relevant facts ought to be clear from the fact that the occurrences of the open sentences  $Fx$  and  $Gx$  in  $\exists x(Fx \wedge Gx)$  do not undermine the technical ideas behind the compressed claims that (i) individuals are the extensions of singular terms, (ii) truth-values are the extensions of sentences, or (iii) functions from  $n$ -tuples of truth values to truth values are the extensions of  $n$ -place sentence connectives. (There are several well-known methods of decompressing so as to bring open sentences into the fold. For discussion, see Evans (1977) and, for more detail, the Postscript to the (forthcoming) expanded edition of *Facing Facts*, where these issues come up in connection with defining the extensions of open sentences and defining extensional operators and extensional languages.)

Remarks in King’s (2008) reply to Salmon (2006a, 2006b) suggest his position, *today* at least, is *not* that binding into directly referential singular terms is incoherent after all, even within a general semantic framework of structured propositions! So it would seem King, *now* at least, sides with Salmon against Lepore and Ludwig and against Stanley on the relevant technical issue. King (2008) focuses on what he claims are *empirical* shortcomings of Salmon’s direct reference semantics. In effect, King (2008) shifts the grounds, or at least the emphasis, of the debate from a conceptual issue to an empirical one about coverage. But given that Salmon is well aware of different uses of demonstrative descriptions and never claimed to be giving a “mop-up” semantics for all uses, the particular empirical issue is one with little bite.

Salmon (2002, 2006a, 2006b) mistakenly groups me with King, Stanley, Lepore and Ludwig in connection with semantic incoherence claims here. In particular, he construes (a) my mention in Neale (1990) of the particular troubles I saw bound-into definite descriptions creating for Strawson’s (1950, 1954) presuppositional accounts of descriptions and Hornstein’s (1987) Type II quantifier account—Type II quantifiers always have large scope—and (b) my empirical hypothesis in Neale (1993b) that natural language referring expressions are all rigid and semantically atomic as suggesting that I take the possibility of binding into definite descriptions as demonstrating that it is *semantically incoherent* to treat descriptions as referring expressions. But I do not. (a) In connection with the discussion in Neale (1990), Salmon has misconstrued me as making a fully general claim about theories of descriptions rather than one specific to the theories of Strawson and Hornstein—as far as *Strawson* is concerned, my claim may well be false, as Paul Elbourne has shown me. (b) In connection with the discussion in Neale (1993b) Salmon has simply misinterpreted my *empirical* hypothesis (that natural language actually fails to exploit the possibility of non-atomic singular terms) for an in-principle, technical claim, susceptible of formal proof, the truth of which (if it were true) would constitute a knock-down argument against treating bound-into demonstrative descriptions as referring expressions and hence against treating them as directly referential referring expressions. For detailed discussion, see Neale (forthcoming d).

Stanley (2002b) does something similar when he asserts that “The first paper I know of that clearly recognizes the threat QI cases pose for the direct reference account of complex demonstratives is Stephen Neale’s 1993” (2002,

In “Colouring and Composition”, I gave examples which suggested it was not binding *per se* that was the problem:

- (36) Keith<sub>1</sub> likes that guitar he<sub>1</sub> is playing
- (36') [That/this guitarist]<sub>1</sub> likes that guitar he<sub>1</sub> is playing.
- (36'') [The guitarist]<sub>1</sub> likes that guitar he<sub>1</sub> is playing.<sup>56</sup>

These seem fine even when ‘that guitar he is playing’ is being used deictically. What differentiates these examples from (35') is that *semantically singular* noun phrases are binding ‘he’, which means there is no *relativisation* of guitar to guitar player. The real issue, I suggested, is relativity rather than binding, an idea I have taken up elsewhere.<sup>57</sup>

It is clear there is much work to be done on non-deictic uses of demonstrative descriptions. Although the data are well-known, and although we seem to have a reasonably good handle on most of it, I think it is fair to say that the pieces have not been brought together as comprehensively and cogently as they should have been in the literature. A useful start has been made by King (2001), but he attempts a semantic unification that seems strained precisely because it attempts to foist ambiguities of scope onto us even for deictic uses of ‘that  $\phi$ ’. This is because King is attempting to provide a unitary quantificational treatment of demonstrative descriptions that is meant to cover *both* those used deictically *and* those used non-deictically. This seems to me like a serious mistake because demonstrative usage very clearly precludes demonstrative descriptions being understood with small scope, just as common wisdom has it in the (largely, but not wholly, referentialist) literature. As we shall now see, King’s principal example of ‘that  $\phi$ ’ used deictically being understood with small scope is unconvincing for a host of reasons.

---

p. 607). First, *no-one* can “clearly recognize” the threat Stanley mentions, since there is no such threat, as Salmon (2006a, 2006b) has shown. Second, I did not even *mention* in the paper Stanley cites (Neale (1993b))—nor had I mentioned anywhere else for that matter—the possibility of binding into demonstratives posing any threat to direct reference. The examples I brought up of attempted quantification into demonstrative descriptions—viz. (34) and (35') above, both of which Stanley alludes to—were *not* brought up to raise conceptual or technical trouble for (or pose a conceptual or technical “threat” to) direct reference accounts; they were brought up in the course of defending the *empirical hypothesis that natural language does not avail itself of the perfectly coherent possibility of referring expressions that are semantically non-atomic*. Stanley has misinterpreted an empirical hypothesis for an in-principle, technical claim. For further discussion, see Neale (forthcoming d).

<sup>56</sup> In (36)—and depending upon how things turn out, in (36')—I am assuming something that I and many other semanticists find uncontroversial: referring expressions may bind pronouns in exactly the same way that quantifier phrases may. See Neale (2006) for discussion.

<sup>57</sup> In Neale (2004, 2005, 2007). Of course, there is still a trivial form of relativisation when we switch players as in  
 (i) This guitarist [pointing] likes that guitar [pointing] he is playing, unlike that one [pointing] who does not like that guitar [pointing] he is playing.

Following up on note 53, notice that (ii)-(iv) are fine if uttered by the guitar player himself (or by someone other than the player stroking the guitar while the player is playing it):

- (ii) Keith likes this guitar he is playing
- (iii) That/this guitarist likes this guitar he is playing
- (iv) The guitarist likes this guitar he is playing.

## 11. *Demonstratives, attitudes, and scope*

King (2001) attempts to show the superiority of a particular quantificational account of demonstrative descriptions over referential accounts.<sup>58</sup> My interest here is restricted to what I believe to be the only argument he presents that really engages with the issue I want to address: whether demonstrative descriptions used deictically can be understood with small scope in attitude reports.<sup>59</sup>

It is King's view that sentences of the general form 'A thinks (believes, doubts, hopes, etc.) that that  $\phi$  is  $\psi$ ' are ambiguous in respect of the scope of 'that  $\phi$ ', even when 'that  $\phi$ ' is being used deictically. The existence of such a scope ambiguity is not at all obvious in connection with a deictic use of 'that man' in (37):

(37) John thinks that that man is French

This sentence appears to have no reading upon which the demonstrative description has small scope. But, says King, the existence of small scope readings for demonstratives can be brought out by examining uses of sentences containing demonstratives with *richer descriptive matrices*.

Before looking at the scene-sentence pair that King articulates in order to make his argument, it will pay to look at a similar scene-sentence pair lacking certain features of King's. For purposes of constructive engagement, I shall continue to assume, with King, that propositions are structured entities containing objects and properties (including properties of properties) as constituents, so there will be frequent talk of propositions containing persons and the contents of their thoughts as constituents, where the latter are themselves given in terms of propositions that may contain further persons and the contents of their thoughts as constituents.

First, the scene,  $\tau$ : (For the sake of continuity, I shall use King's characters.) During drinks before a company dinner, an up-and-coming but unpleasant executive manager named Alan is the only person in a group of company executives at the bar who is wearing a yellow tie. Sherry, who sits on the company's board of directors, wrote an internal memorandum to Alan last week saying she held him responsible for a production error that may cost the firm a substantial amount of money. Sherry has since learned that Alan is angry at her because of this memo, that he now hates her, that he is known to be vindictive, that he still enjoys the support of several board members

---

<sup>58</sup> King takes himself to be challenging and refuting the "philosophical orthodoxy" that demonstrative descriptions are *directly referential* in Kaplan's (1989) sense (2001, p. xi and p. 1). As I mentioned earlier, I seriously doubt the existence of such an orthodoxy.

<sup>59</sup> The problems with King's argument—which is actually a version of an argument originally given by Loar (1972)—actually generalise to his arguments for small scope readings in other non-extensional contexts, but a much longer article dealing with issues of existence, necessity, and rigidity would be required to spell out why in the sort of detail that would satisfy me enough for publication.

(including the CEO), and that he appears to be making good on his claim to fix the production problem in a way that might well end up *saving* the firm money. Sherry is looking over at the group of men at the bar, who are now laughing and joking. You and I are watching Sherry. I know the aforementioned history, but you do not, and I know you do not. You notice that Sherry, who is watching the executives at the bar, looks apprehensive and you ask me if I know why. I am not sure whether you know Alan by name, so I reply by uttering (38) while pointing at Alan:

(38) Sherry thinks that that guy wearing a yellow tie [pointing at Alan] hates her.

Our scene-utterance pair is  $\langle \tau, 38 \rangle$ . And if (38) is ambiguous in respect of scope, the relevant scene-reading pairs are  $\langle \tau, 38L \rangle$  and  $\langle \tau, 38S \rangle$ . But there is no temptation to think we need to read (38) as (38S) here, i.e. no temptation to think we need to understand the demonstrative description ‘that guy in the yellow tie’ with small scope in order to make sense of the adequacy of my response to your question. The (uncontroversial) reading upon which it is understood with large scope, (38L), is just fine. I did not *express* a proposition that entails the proposition that Sherry thinks Alan is wearing a yellow tie. Nor did I, by using ‘that guy wearing a yellow tie’, *pragmatically imply* the proposition that Sherry thinks Alan is wearing a yellow tie. (Alan’s tie, although visible from where *we* are, does not have to be visible from where Sherry is for my utterance to be felicitous—indeed, it is felicitous even if I know that Sherry is colour-blind and know she has no second-hand information about the colour of Alan’s tie.) So let us say that since I neither expressed nor pragmatically implied the proposition that Sherry thinks Alan is wearing a yellow tie, I did not intend to *communicate* (or *convey*) that proposition.<sup>60</sup> Of course, I used ‘that guy wearing a yellow tie’ for a *reason*: because I thought it would make it clear to you whom I meant; but the property expressed by the matrix ‘guy wearing a yellow tie’ is no part of the content of the thought Sherry has in the proposition I expressed, (i.e. it is no part of the content of a contained proposition that Sherry stands in the thinking or believing relation to). Bear this in mind as we turn now to King’s scene-sentence pair.

The sentence King asks us to consider is this:

(39) Sherry thinks that that guy who was just named CEO [pointing at Alan] hates her.

King claims that (39) is ambiguous between the (uncontroversial) reading upon which the demonstrative description is assigned large scope, (39L), and a reading upon which it is assigned small scope, (39S).<sup>61</sup>

<sup>60</sup> As Grice might have put it, since I neither *said* nor *conversationally implicated* that Sherry thinks Alan is wearing a yellow tie, it was no part of what I *meant* that Sherry thinks Alan is wearing a yellow tie.

<sup>61</sup> King says, “. . . of course we have a scope ambiguity” in (39) (2001, p. 111). To forestall possible confusion, something I mentioned earlier must be kept in mind: when King says that (39) has a reading upon which the demon-

The scene King articulates in order to argue for the existence of (39S) is the following, which I shall call  $\sigma$  and harmlessly embroider to ward off uninteresting objections to King's argument and to provide continuity with  $\tau$ : Shortly after the company dinner, the high-flying Alan joined the board of the company. A year later, relations between Sherry and Alan are still bad, and Sherry still thinks that Alan hates her. Fortunately, Sherry and Alan manage to stay out of one another's business most of the time. They behave cordially towards one another in public, and overall Sherry is very happy with her job. This afternoon there was a heated board meeting during which the CEO resigned and Alan was appointed his immediate successor by a slim majority. Tonight at the company's Christmas party, there is to be a speech by the outgoing CEO followed by a speech by Alan. Some but not all of those at the party know that Alan has been named CEO. Sherry is one of those who knows—she is still on the board and voted against him at this afternoon's meeting. She is convinced that Alan will be vindictive in his new position, making her work life miserable. She is moping around at the party saying she is thinking of quitting her job. You ask me why Sherry is behaving like this. I reply by uttering (39), while pointing at Alan, and by doing so, I am successful (let us suppose) in communicating an explanation (or a reason) for Sherry's behaviour.

If we call this scene  $\sigma$ , then we can talk about the scene-utterance pair  $\langle \sigma, 39 \rangle$  and the scene-reading pairs  $\langle \sigma, 39L \rangle$  and  $\langle \sigma, 39S \rangle$ .

There are several facts about  $\langle \sigma, 39 \rangle$  that need to be explained. I want to proceed slowly. It is uncontroversial that we need explanations of the following facts:

- A: The proposition I expressed (what I said) by uttering (39) while pointing at Alan was *true*.
- B: By expressing whatever (true) proposition it was that I expressed by uttering (39), I provided a satisfactory response to your question about Sherry's behaviour because I communicated (in some way or other) the proposition that Sherry's behaviour is to be explained by her belief that Alan has just been named CEO and hates her (a proposition that is, in fact, true).

(For immediate purposes, I am skirting around issues that might be raised about a potential cognitive difference between the belief that  $A \phi$ -ed and  $\psi$ -ed and the pair consisting of the belief that  $A \phi$ -ed and the belief that  $A \psi$ -ed. To the best of my knowledge, nothing turns on this here.) **B** is worded carefully to avoid begging an important question that will come up later. It does not follow from **A** and **B** that

---

strative description is assigned large scope, (39L), he is harmlessly sloughing over the important distinction, as I am, between (a) the view that the demonstrative description is understood with large scope and (b) the view that it is a rigid referring expression. The assimilation is harmless in the present context because the only thing King is trying to prove the existence of is (39S), a reading upon which the demonstrative description has *small* scope. The only thing, that is, that is relevantly *sub judice* is (39S). See King (2001), p. 192, n. 20. For ease of exposition and engagement, I follow King in this.

the (true) proposition I *expressed* is identical to the (true) proposition about the explanation for Sherry's behaviour that I *communicated*. For it is perfectly consistent with the truth of **A** and **B** that I *pragmatically implied* the latter. Indeed, the status of this proposition is something we shall have to take up as it might be thought arguable that something more *specific* than fact **B** needs to be explained, something we could describe by replacing "I communicated (in some way or other)" by "I expressed". Call the result of making that change \***B**. (If \***B** is explained, then obviously **B** is explained because *expressing* the proposition that *p* would count as a way of *communicating* the proposition that *p*, assuming, as is the case in our example, successful communication.) But \***B** is not uncontroversial and will have to be examined carefully. For the moment, then, let us proceed with caution, sticking to the less specific, uncontroversial fact **B**.

Two distinct, mutually exclusive arguments for the existence of (39S) can be attributed to King depending upon whether he is claiming merely that **A** and **B** need to be explained or claiming that **A** and \***B** (and *thereby* **B**) need to be explained. For purposes of exposition and engagement I shall suppose them put forward by two distinct people, whom I shall call 'King (Bar King) and \*King (Star King). Since there is no plausible *third* argument distinct from those of 'King and \*King that *King* could be giving, either King is 'King, or King is \*King.<sup>62</sup> I can state my conclusions immediately: Both arguments for reading (39) as (39S) fail. (39L) is the only reading of (39), and it forms part of the explanation not only of facts **A** and **B** but of another important fact, **C**, that certainly needs to be explained.

## 12. First formulation of the argument for a small scope reading

It is 'King's contention that explaining the pair of facts **A** and **B** requires an appeal to (39S), i.e. requires understanding the demonstrative description 'that guy who was just named CEO' with *small* scope in (39). Remember, Sherry thought Alan hated her *before* she learned that he had been named CEO, so the mere fact that she thinks Alan hates her does not, by itself, explain her current behaviour, though it certainly forms *part* of the explanation. But so does the fact that she thinks Alan has just been named CEO. As King notes, if I had uttered (40) or (41) I would not have communicated an explanation for Sherry's behaviour, despite expressing a true proposition:

(40) Sherry believes that Alan hates her

(41) Sherry believes that he [pointing at Alan] hates her.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>62</sup> For textual complexities that bear on whether King is 'King or \*King, see the next two footnotes.

<sup>63</sup> Here is what King himself says: "For it to seem true, it must be a correct explanation of Sherry's behavior, and not merely be a true ascription of belief. . . ." (2001, p. 112). But what do the occurrences of 'it' refer to here? My utterance of (39)? That is what the passage I quote in the next footnote strongly suggests. To keep things as clean as possible, I shall predicate truth (falsity) of propositions only and construe any talk of the truth (falsity) of an utter-

So the fact that I managed to communicate an explanation for Sherry's behaviour must have *something* to do with the fact that I used the demonstrative description 'that guy who was just named CEO' and not 'he' or 'Alan'.

'King purports to explain what that something is. If (39) is read as (39L), the proposition I expressed does not have the (complex) property expressed by the matrix 'guy who was just named CEO' as part of the content of the thought Sherry has. (The proposition's truth is certainly consistent with Sherry having an *additional* thought whose content is that, say, the guy who was just named CEO hates her, but that is not the issue.) And this, 'King claims, means that reading (39) as (39L) fails to explain why my utterance constitutes a satisfactory response to your question. In short, it is 'King's contention that even if reading (39) as (39L) explains fact **A**, it does not explain fact **B**. By contrast, says 'King, reading (39) as (39S) gives us what we want: the proposition I expressed by uttering (39) has the (complex) property expressed by the matrix 'guy who was just named CEO' as part of the content of the thought Sherry has for it is (roughly) the complex proposition that Sherry thinks that Alan has just been named CEO and hates her. And *this*, says 'King, explains why my uttering (39) constitutes a satisfactory response to your question: I expressed a proposition that contains the *explanation* for Sherry's behaviour: her belief that Alan has just been elected CEO and hates her—when I uttered (39).<sup>64</sup>

ance as shorthand for talk of the truth (falsity) of the propositions the speakers are expressing by producing those utterances. On this use, the opening sentence of the passage just quoted would be rendered as "For it to seem that I expressed a true proposition, that proposition must not only be true, it must contain an explanation for Sherry's behaviour." But if that is the right way to read King he is claiming that \***B** needs to be explained, not just **B**, so he must have in mind \*King's argument for (39S), not 'King's. See below.

<sup>64</sup> Here are King's own words (I have numbered his sentences in bold font for purposes of the analysis that follows):

(1) It seems to me that [39] is not read as [39L] in the present case. (2) For I think we have the intuition that *my utterance of [39] explains Sherry's behavior* [my emphasis, SRN]. (3) But if [39] is read as [39L], *it wouldn't explain her behavior* [My emphasis, SRN.] (4) For it [my emphasis, SRN] only ascribes to Sherry the belief that Alan hates her. (5) But Sherry has believed *that* for some time, and that she has *this* belief does not explain her behavior. (6) Intuitively, *I* [my emphasis, SRN] have explained Sherry's behavior because part of the content of the belief *I* [my emphasis, SRN] ascribe to her is that Alan was just named CEO. (7) [39L] fails to capture this (2001, p. 111).

In sentence (2), it seems King is claiming (a) that *my utterance of [39]* communicates the explanation of Sherry's behaviour (or that *I* do by producing that utterance). In sentence (3), he seems to be claiming that it (my utterance of (39)) would *not* communicate an explanation of Sherry's behaviour if [39] were read as [39L]. That is, the pronoun 'it' in King's sentence (3) appears to be anaphoric on 'my utterance of [39]' in sentence (2) (and not upon '[39]', for example, in sentence (3)). If this is right, then King appears to be assuming (correctly) that it is not sentence (39) itself or even a *reading* of sentence (39) that communicates the explanation of Sherry's behaviour, but *my utterance of (39) on a particular reading*, which commonsense would certainly prefer. But then notice the occurrence of 'it' in sentence (4). Is it anaphoric on 'my utterance of [39]' in sentence (2)? Or on '[39L]' in sentence (3)? If it is anaphoric on 'my utterance of [39]' in sentence (2), which stylistic considerations might favour, King would have to be using sentence (4) as a whole to say that my utterance of (39) only ascribes to Sherry the belief that Alan hates her. But, of course, he does not hold this, though he might well hold that *if [39] were read as [39L]*, my utterance of (39) *would* only ascribe to Sherry the belief that Alan hates her. But if the occurrence of 'it' in sentence (4) is anaphoric on '[39L]' in sentence (3), then King would have to be using sentence (4) to say that (39L) itself ascribes to Sherry the belief that Alan hates her. In sentence (6), however, it is *I* rather than my utterance of (39) which explains Sherry's behaviour, and it is *I* who ascribe to her the belief that Alan was just named CEO. So

There are at least three problems the sceptic about (39S) now wants to raise for 'King's argument as it stands. The first can be solved easily by taking on one or another of several non-trivial commitments. The second can be overcome only by denying certain data and accepting the ramifications. The third is that all of the relevant facts are already explained without postulating (39S) as a reading of (39), a fact that simply undercuts the original motivation.

### 13. *The missing piece problem: ellipsis or inference?*

The first problem is interesting not because it cannot be solved—there are three obvious solutions—but because articulating it clearly brings out the fact that any solution has non-trivial commitments.

*If* (39S) is a genuine reading of (39), and *if* my response to your question is read as (38S), then the (complex) property expressed by the matrix 'guy who was just named CEO' is part of the content of the thought Sherry has in the proposition I expressed. *But this fact alone cannot constitute an explanation of fact B.* Let's proceed slowly and carefully. Suppose you had posed your question to me as follows:

(42) Why is Sherry behaving like that?

Given your question, it is clear that I intended to *communicate* to you, by uttering (39), an explanation for Sherry's behaviour. Reading (39) as (39S) would certainly provide an *immediate* explanation of fact **B** *if* the proposition I expressed when (39) is read as (39S) entails the proposition that *Sherry's behaviour is to be explained by her belief that Alan has just been named CEO and hates her*. But unless there is considerably more to the proposition I expressed than meets the eye when (39) is read as (39S), the proposition I expressed manifestly does *not* entail the aforementioned proposition about Sherry's behaviour because it entails *no proposition whatsoever about Sherry's behavior*. However, given the question you asked me, by uttering (39), certainly I intended to *communicate* to you—I intended you to construe me as *giving* you—an explanation (or reason) for Sherry's behaviour. But if (39) is read as (39S), as 'King claims, then although I expressed a proposition that contains Sherry having a certain thought—standing in the thinking or belief relation to a certain proposition—which itself has as part of its content the property expressed by the matrix 'guy who was just named CEO', and although, as a good, cooperative Gricean, I intended to be communicating to you in some way or other the proposition that Sherry's behaviour is to be explained by her belief that Alan

---

King appears to be using sentence (6) to say something that is consistent with my *expressing* the proposition that Sherry believes Alan was just named CEO or with my merely *pragmatically implying* that proposition. The interpretive complexities of this passage and the complexities involved in reconciling a favoured interpretation with an interpretation of the quotation in the previous footnote are two of the reasons I have chosen to reconstruct King's argument as two distinct arguments, given by 'King and \*King. As I have said already, there is no plausible third argument distinct from those of 'King and \*King that *King* could be giving.

has just been named CEO and hates her, I did not, on 'King's account, as it currently stands, actually *express* that proposition. The point is simple: whether (39) is read as (39L) or (39S), the proposition I *expressed* by uttering (39) is not the proposition that Sherry's behaviour is to be explained by her belief that Alan has just been named CEO and hates her.<sup>65</sup>

In short, the claim that (39) is read as (39S) in  $\langle\sigma, 39\rangle$  can provide only *part* of an explanation of fact **B**, and 'King needs additional machinery to finish the job. (So does the sceptic about (39S), who claims (39) is read as (39L), of course.) There appear to be three simple solutions to the Missing Piece Problem available to 'King. As I said, it is not the problem itself that is of most interest but the chosen solution, each of which carries its own commitments.

(i) *The Pragmatic Implication Solution.* For familiar reasons, when considering the proposition or propositions an utterer *U* intends to be communicating on a given occasion by uttering a sentence *S*, we need to distinguish the proposition that *U* *expresses* on that occasion by uttering *S* from any propositions that *U* *pragmatically implies* by expressing whatever proposition he expresses (by uttering *S*) on that occasion. There are well-known problems involved in drawing this distinction cleanly, but its existence can hardly be denied in the light of the work of Paul Grice and the legions of philosophers and linguists who, inspired by this work, have attempted to distinguish what *U* *said* and what *U* only conversationally implicated, or to improve upon Grice's way of carving things up.<sup>66</sup> A major problem here, of course, is explaining in any theoretically satisfying way just why any particular proposition that seems to be communicated is pragmatically implied (if it is). *Ex post facto* justifications for labeling particular propositions that are communicated propositions *implied* rather than *expressed* are easy to come by, as Grice and others have shown, and if the pessimists like Chomsky, Davidson, and Fodor are right, providing a satisfactory account of pragmatic implications may well require nothing short of a complete theory of mind, as it is sure to involve at least inference, beliefs, expectations, memory, perception and norms, not to mention knowledge of language.

---

<sup>65</sup> This is why I would not have contradicted myself had I uttered (39) as part of (i):

- (i) Sherry thinks that that guy who was just named CEO hates her. Some people have suggested that her belief that Alan has just been named CEO and hates her explains her behavior. But they're wrong: Sherry's belief that Alan has just been named CEO and hates her does *not* explain her behavior: her belief that he's in love with her does.

I might have committed a *moral* error if I had uttered (i), but I would *not* have committed a *logical* or *semantic* one. There might seem to be an obvious reply 'King could make in connection with (i): Had I uttered (i) instead of just (39), the first sentence would have been read as (39L), and this explains why I would not have contradicted myself. But this is actually besides the point: by 'King's own lights, I would not have *contradicted* myself had I explicitly *insisted* that the first sentence be read with the semantics King assigns to (39S). This would be an odd thing to do, of course, but that is not relevant to the small point I am making right now: whether read as (39L) or (39S), the proposition I expressed by uttering (39) is not actually a proposition about Sherry's behavior.

<sup>66</sup> See, in particular, Sperber and Wilson (1986).

Nonetheless, 'King has as much right as anyone else to appeal to such a distinction in clear and uncontroversial cases and to consider judicious appeals in those that are less clear or more controversial. No-one would berate 'King or anyone else for being alive to the distinction, and armed with it he seems to have a perfectly good explanation of fact **B**. All he has to say is that although the proposition I *expressed* by uttering (39) was just the simple one traceable to reading (39) as (39S), by expressing that proposition in this particular context (i.e. in reply to your question), I *pragmatically implied* another proposition: the proposition that Sherry's behaviour is to be explained by her belief that Alan has just been named CEO and hates her. Why? Because I am a co-operative Gricean and take you to be one too. You asked me for an explanation of Sherry's behaviour. I *expressed* whatever proposition 'King's semantics says I expressed when I uttered (39) read as (39S). But in addition I *communicated* to you the proposition that Sherry's behaviour is to be explained by her belief that Alan has just been named CEO and hates her. How? (a) By *expressing* a proposition in which Sherry has a belief whose content includes Alan's having both the relational property of hating Sherry and whatever property it is that 'King's theory of demonstrative descriptions says is expressed by 'guy who was just named CEO' when it occurs as a syntactic sister to the demonstrative article 'that'; and (b) by *pragmatically implying* that Sherry's behaviour is to be explained by her having that particular belief.

But perhaps 'King would not find the Pragmatic Implication solution attractive. Perhaps he would want the proposition I expressed by uttering (39) to be the proposition that Sherry's behaviour is to be explained by her belief that Alan has just been named CEO and hates her. If so, then 'King must choose one of two *ellipsis*-based solutions to the Missing Piece Problem, one syntactic, the other pragmatic.

(ii) *The Heavy-handed Semantic Solution (Syntactic Ellipsis and LF)*. According to this solution, in  $\langle \sigma, 39 \rangle$  the sentence I uttered was one whose LF representation is more complex than its superficial form, (39), indicates; and this LF is recoverable in accordance with general principles of syntactic ellipsis studied by generative linguists.<sup>67</sup> Let us continue with the supposition that the sentence you used to ask me about Sherry's behaviour was (42):

(42) Why is Sherry behaving like that?

In the context, I provided a perfectly satisfactory response by uttering (39). But suppose I had begun with the word 'because' and answered using (39'):

(39') Because Sherry thinks that that guy who was just named CEO [pointing at Alan] hates her.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Typically, syntactic ellipsis (or deletion as it is often known) results from the deletion of an expression under stringent conditions of 'identity' that guarantee its 'recoverability.' However, there are plenty of unresolved issues here, for example whether *identity* is to be construed as a *formal* or *interpretive* notion. None of this matters for present concerns. See Neale (2004).

<sup>68</sup> It sounds more colloquial with 'she' replacing 'Sherry', but let that pass.

Or suppose I had mirrored your question by answering with (39''):

(39'') Sherry is behaving like that because she thinks that that guy who was just named CEO [pointing at Alan] hates her.

If I had uttered (39''), clearly I would have expressed a complex proposition about Sherry's thinking, about her behaviour, and about a particular relation between them (signalled by my use of the word 'because'). So *if (a)* my utterance of (39)—or, for that matter, my utterance of (39'), had I uttered that instead—is actually an utterance of a sentence whose LF is identical to the LF of (39''), and if (b) (39'') is read as (39''S), i.e. if the occurrence of the demonstrative description 'that guy who was just named CEO' in the occurrence of the sentence 'Sherry thinks that that guy who was just named CEO hates her' on the right hand side of 'because' in (39'') has small scope in that sub-sentence, then not only is the (complex) property expressed by the matrix 'guy who was just named CEO' part of the content of the thought Sherry has in the proposition I expressed by uttering (39), so is Sherry's behaviour and the relation between her thinking and her behaviour, expressed by the word 'because'. To the extent that 'King is happy with the Syntactic Ellipsis Solution, he now has an immediate explanation of fact **B**. But bear in mind, on this account the sentence I uttered, viz. (39), has an LF identical to the LF of (39'') and so is not actually being read as (39S) but as (39''S), an (alleged) reading upon which the demonstrative description has small scope in the smaller sentence containing it. So, in fact 'King's argument will not have demonstrated the existence of (39S) but, at most, the existence of (39''S).

There is another ellipsis-based solution, 'King might consider, however:

(iii) *The Heavy-handed Pragmatic Solution (Utterance Ellipsis, Underdetermination, Unarticulated Constituents)*. Not every form of ellipsis is syntactic in nature.<sup>69</sup> Following the lead of Quine (1940), Sellars (1954), and many others who have tried to understand the phenomenon of incomplete definite descriptions, 'King might appeal to a *pragmatic* or *speech act* notion of ellipsis, *utterance* ellipsis, a notion that has no syntactic dimension.<sup>70</sup> On this approach, my utterance of (39) was *not* the utterance of a sentence whose logical form is identical to the logical form of (39''). Rather, my *utterance* was elliptical for a more "explicit" utterance I could have produced, for example an utterance of (39''), and as such should be interpreted *as if* it were an utterance of (39'').<sup>71</sup> The idea here is that since you and I are both operating in accordance with the usual Gricean principles, I expect you to interpret my utterance of (39) *as if* it were

---

<sup>69</sup> For a discussion, see Neale (2004).

<sup>70</sup> See Neale (1990) ch. 3 and (2004).

<sup>71</sup> In the literature on incomplete descriptions (and other quantifier phrases), the pragmatic ellipsis approach is usually called the *explicit approach*, the idea being that the speaker could have produced an utterance of a sentence that makes more explicit the proposition he is seeking to express, for example 'the mayor of Boston is bald' instead of 'the mayor is bald'. For discussion, see Neale (2004, 2007).

an utterance of (39''), and you recognize this. In the less committal language of Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson (1986), the proposition I expressed by uttering (39) is *underdetermined* by the syntactic and semantic facts, it contains elements that do not correspond to elements in the syntactic structure of the sentence. In the language of John Perry (1986), the proposition I expressed by uttering (39) contains a number of *unarticulated constituents*. (I do not mean to be suggesting that utterance ellipsis, underdetermination, and unarticulated constituent analyses are always equivalent. But they are similar enough for present purposes.) To the extent that 'King is happy with utterance ellipsis or unarticulated constituents of propositions expressed, he now has an immediate explanation of fact B. But again, bear in mind that 'King's argument will not have demonstrated the existence of (39S) but, at most, the existence of (39''S).

I do not know which of (i)-(iii) 'King should endorse, but he *must* endorse one of them to solve the Missing Piece Problem if reading (39) as (39S) is to provide part of an explanation of fact B.

#### 14. *The missing entailment problem*

The second problem for 'King is more serious. There appears to be a *third* fact about  $\langle \sigma, 39 \rangle$  that needs to be explained:

C: If the proposition I expressed by uttering (39) while pointing at Alan is true (fact A), then so is the proposition that Alan was just named CEO.

The possibility of rejecting C is something we can certainly explore.<sup>72</sup> But let us suppose for the moment that 'King agrees that C needs to be explained and points out that anyone rejecting C is committed to the implausible view that I could have uttered (43) without inconsistency:

(43) ? Sherry thinks that that guy who was just named CEO [pointing at Alan] hates her, but that guy [pointing at Alan] wasn't just named CEO.

To someone who thinks C needs to be explained, I would be no more consistent uttering (43) than I would be uttering (44):

<sup>72</sup> This is a place where the difference between treating demonstrative descriptions as expressions that insist on large scope and treating them as expressions of direct reference is important. However, it would be wrong to claim that the direct reference theorist about demonstrative descriptions must reject C. Perhaps there are direct reference theorists who reject C, but such a rejection is not a consequence of direct reference *per se*, for the direct reference theorist could maintain that, strictly speaking, no proposition is expressed if the intended referent does not satisfy the descriptive matrix. Indeed, this is not an uncommon position. Multiple proposition theories such as those sketched by Neale (1999) and Dever (2002) may provide other ways of capturing C. On Dever's account it is actually captured because the proposition that Alan was just named CEO is a separate proposition expressed.

- (44) ?That guy who was just named CEO [pointing at Alan] wasn't just named CEO.

If (39) is read as (39L) in connection with my response to your question, we have a straightforward explanation of fact **C**: the proposition I expressed straightforwardly entails the proposition that Alan has just been named CEO. But if (39) is read as (39S), the proposition I expressed does *not* entail the proposition that Alan was just named CEO. So reading (39) as (39S) fails (on its own) to explain **C**. So not only does 'King need to appeal to one of the pieces of machinery offered in the previous section to explain fact **B**, he is going to need additional machinery in order to explain fact **C**.

But the search for suitable machinery should be called off immediately. The problem is not simply that an appeal to (39S) does not, by itself, provide an account of fact **C**. It is that failing to provide an *entailment*-based explanation means the theory makes some straightforwardly *false* predictions in minimally different cases. Consider a counterfactual scene  $\sigma'$  that differs from  $\sigma$  in just this respect: Alan has *not* just been named CEO but Sherry and I *think* he has. 'King's theory predicts that the proposition I express by uttering (39) while using the demonstrative description deictically and pointing at Alan is *true*! This is a patently unacceptable result as *I have precisely the same communicative intentions in  $\sigma$  and  $\sigma'$* , and I have provided a satisfactory response to your question because *I communicate the same explanation of Sherry's behaviour using exactly the same sentence!* Obviously 'King cannot coherently argue that his theory does *not* make this counterintuitive prediction because (i) as far as  $\langle \sigma, 39 \rangle$  is concerned, (39) must be read as (39S) rather than as (39L) in order to explain fact **B**, yet (ii) as far as  $\langle \sigma', 39 \rangle$  is concerned, the mere fact that *Sherry and I were wrong in thinking that Alan had been named CEO* means (a) that (39) must be read as (39L), and (b) that reading it as (39L) *does* explain the fact that I communicated the explanation for Sherry's behaviour! In short, 'King's original motivation for (39S) has gone up in smoke. Any resuscitation of his position will have to involve rejecting the view that **C** needs to be explained.

So, the present state of play seems to be as follows:

(1) There is no question that (39L), the (uncontroversial) reading of (39) upon which the demonstrative has *large* scope, explains facts **A** and **C**. The problem (as 'King sees it) is that *fact B* is left unexplained when (39) is read as (39L).

(2) By contrast, there is no question that 'King's (*sub judice*) reading (39S) explains fact **A** and, in conjunction with any of the three pieces of additional machinery offered in §13, also explains fact **B**. The problem is that *fact C* is left unexplained when (39) is read as (39S).

So, superficially at least, we seem to have a double failure on our hands, two readings of (39) that fall equally short of providing complete explanations of the relevant facts.

But now suppose 'King says he was too quick in accepting C: the third fact to be explained is not C but \*C:

\*C: Although the proposition I expressed by uttering (39) while using the demonstrative description deictically and pointing at Alan, does not entail the proposition that Alan was just named CEO, in performing that act I *pragmatically implied* the proposition that Alan was just named CEO.

By retreating from C to \*C, 'King is now claiming that the Missing Entailment Problem is spurious: the sceptic's argument assumes that the proposition that Alan was just named CEO is entailed by the proposition I *expressed* by uttering (39); but in fact, says 'King now, the proposition that Alan was just named CEO is merely one I *implied pragmatically*.

So what we have on our hands now is a down and dirty fight about the semantics-pragmatics distinction, or rather about the distinction between propositions expressed and propositions pragmatically implied. Let us put this on hold for a moment, summarise 'King's position, and turn to the third problem the sceptic raises for 'King.

'King now maintains that the facts to be explained are A, B, and C\*. In order to explain B, he must appeal to one of the three solutions to the Missing Piece Problem: (1) Pragmatic Implication; (2) Heavy-handed Semantics (Syntactic Ellipsis and LF); or (3) Heavy-handed Pragmatics (Underdetermination, Utterance Ellipsis, Unarticulated Constituents). And in order to explain C\* he must appeal to the idea that I pragmatically implied the proposition that Alan was just named CEO.

### 15. *The pre-existing, uncontroversial explanation problem*

The third problem is that 'King's argument never really had a chance of demonstrating the existence of the controversial reading (39S) in the first place. There are two related reasons for this. The first is that neither scope nor my use of a sentence containing an attitude verb are doing any of the heavy-lifting in  $\sigma$ . In response to your question, I could have communicated to you the proposition that Sherry's behaviour is to be explained by her belief that Alan has just been named CEO and hates her using the simple sentence (39<sup>†</sup>) instead of (39):

(39<sup>†</sup>) Alan has just been named CEO and he hates her.

Furthermore, as Josh Dever has pointed out to me, assuming you and I both know that Sherry thinks Alan hates her, I could even communicate it to you by uttering just (39<sup>\*</sup>):

(39<sup>\*</sup>) Alan has just been named CEO.

The viability of (39<sup>†</sup>) and (39<sup>‡</sup>) as responses to your question that seem just as good as (39), suggests very strongly that talk of scope is a red herring in any explanation of fact B. (Unless 'King argues for the implausible position that (39<sup>†</sup>) and (39<sup>‡</sup>) are the products of syntactic ellipsis, their LFs identical to the LF of (39), perhaps even (39'')!) Quite general facts about  $\sigma$ , about human psychology, and about communication are surely where the real action is. And if these facts can explain how it is that I could have communicated to you the proposition that Sherry's behaviour is to be explained by her belief that Alan has just been named CEO and hates her in  $\langle\sigma, 39^{\dagger}\rangle$  or  $\langle\sigma, 39^{\ddagger}\rangle$ , it would be quite extraordinary if they could not explain how I did it in  $\langle\sigma, 39\rangle$ ! 'King seems to have fallen into a scene-reading trap: he has simply assumed from the outset that no plausible explanation of the relevant facts is forthcoming if (39) is understood on its uncontroversial reading (39L), and so must be read as (39S), when in fact just such an explanation *must* be forthcoming because of the viability of utterances of (39<sup>†</sup>) and (39<sup>‡</sup>) as replies to your question.<sup>73</sup>

A perfectly acceptable explanation of the relevant facts emerges uncontroversially once we compare  $\langle\sigma, 39\rangle$  with the earlier example,  $\langle\tau, 38\rangle$ , in which I uttered (38), read as (38L):

(38) Sherry thinks that that guy wearing a yellow tie [pointing at Alan] hates her

In  $\tau$ , I used the demonstrative description 'that guy who is wearing the yellow tie' solely because I thought it was a good one to get you to fasten upon the right person. I neither *expressed* nor *pragmatically implied* the proposition that Sherry thinks Alan is wearing a yellow tie. So, in particular, the proposition I expressed by uttering (38) does not have the property expressed by the matrix 'guy wearing a yellow tie' as part of the content of the thought Sherry has. In  $\langle\sigma, 39\rangle$ , the sceptic says that (39) is read as (39L) and that the proposition I *expressed* does not have the property expressed by the matrix 'guy who was just named CEO' as part of the content of the thought Sherry has. But—and this is the difference—the sceptic claims that  $\sigma$  has certain features which make it the case that I nonetheless *pragmatically implied* the proposition that Sherry's behaviour is to be explained by her belief that Alan has just been named CEO and hates her.

Among the shared assumptions in  $\sigma$  before I uttered (39) were the fact that Sherry works for the company, and the fact that whoever is named CEO of the company is going to be Sherry's (and everybody else's) boss.  $\sigma$  might still be fleshed out in different ways depending upon such things as my assumptions about your state of mind, in particular

<sup>73</sup> I am assuming, of course, that 'King is allowing King's text to speak for him—see, in particular, sentences (2) and (3) of the passage I quoted earlier in footnote 65—'King cannot sincerely or coherently claim that he never intended to show that no plausible explanation of the relevant facts is forthcoming if (39) is understood on its uncontroversial reading as (39L), merely that a plausible explanation is (also) available if it is understood on the *sub judice* reading (39S), which makes it unclear that (39S) *fails* to exist. Recall King is trying to *demonstrate*, or at least *motivate*, the existence of the *sub judice* reading, and if there is already a perfectly good explanation of the relevant facts that does not appeal to the *sub judice* reading, then the motivation evaporates.

whether I assume you already know that Sherry thinks Alan hates her, assume you don't know this, or assume neither; and whether I assume you already know Alan has just been named CEO, assume you don't know this, or assume neither. Since nothing that importantly separates 'King from the sceptic emerges from comparing the various ways of spelling out  $\sigma$  in respect of these assumptions—trust me, I have worked through the permutations in detail—let's just stipulate that in  $\sigma$ , before I speak I assume you already know that Sherry thinks Alan hates her, and that I do not assume that you know Alan has just been named CEO. (These assumptions seem to be ones that King builds in, but if not it doesn't matter.)

You and I are good Griceans, of course: You asked me your question because you wanted to know why Sherry is behaving as she is, and I take you thus. (Nothing that importantly separates 'King from the sceptic alters if you already know the answer and are merely trying to find out whether I knew about the bad blood between Sherry and Alan, for example.) I am being cooperative when I respond to your question with (39), and you take me to be so. More precisely, I intend my conversational contribution to be true, informative, and relevant. You assume, correctly, that my response is a genuine attempt to communicate to you an answer. (For standard Gricean reasons, there is no presumption that the proposition I *express* must exhaust the propositions I *communicate*.) Assuming, as the sceptic does, that (39) is read as (39L), I have expressed a proposition that is true only if Alan was just named CEO and Sherry thinks Alan hates her. I could have used 'Alan' or 'he' [pointing at Alan] or 'that guy' [pointing at Alan] or 'that guy wearing the yellow tie' [pointing at Alan] if all I wanted to do was refer to Alan. But I didn't. I used 'that guy who was just named CEO'. Why? Because I intended you, the hearer, to realise that Alan's having just been named CEO is information relevant to finding out the answer to your question about Sherry's behaviour. Since (a) agents' beliefs play crucial rôles in their behaviour, (b) I have already *expressed* the proposition that Sherry believes Alan hates her in response to your question, and (c) that proposition was something already assumed to be true, the most natural and plausible thing for you to conclude here is that I am *pragmatically implying* the proposition that Sherry believes Alan has just been named CEO and ultimately communicating that the belief Sherry has in the proposition I expressed and the belief she has in the proposition I pragmatically implied *conspire* to explain her behaviour. Thus, a perfectly natural account of fact **B** that does not require the postulation of the controversial (39S) as a reading of (39).

Notice that there is no commitment in this explanation of fact **B** to the idea that *whenever* I use a sentence of the general form 'A thinks (believes, doubts, etc.) that that  $\phi$  is  $\psi$ ' the descriptive matrix  $\phi$  plays precisely this role. The only commitment is to the idea that the speaker is using the particular noun phrase he is for a *reason* and sometimes intends the hearer to recognise this and assign that information a rôle in identifying a proposition he is pragmatically implying. In  $\tau$ , I used 'that guy in the yellow tie' merely to steer you to the right individual. In  $\sigma$ , I used 'that guy who has just

been named CEO' not only to steer you to the right individual but also to communicate to you the proposition that Sherry thinks Alan has just been named CEO and thereby lead you to realize I am trying to communicate to you the proposition that Sherry's behaviour is to be explained by her belief that Alan hates her and her belief that he has just been named CEO.

So there is a perfectly good explanation of why my utterance is meant to explain Sherry's current behaviour that does not appeal to (39S) and the controversial thesis that demonstrative descriptions used deictically may have small scope with respect to attitude verbs.

It would seem that 'King fell into a scene-reading trap. Not the *simplest* kind—he is not inferring the existence of the *sub judice* reading (39S) solely on the grounds that reading (39) as (39S) in  $\sigma$  is needed to explain **A**, when **A** is, in fact, already explained when (39) receives its (uncontroversial) reading (39L).<sup>74</sup> The scene-reading trap 'King falls into is inferring the existence of the *sub judice* reading (39S) on the grounds that reading (39) as (39S) in  $\sigma$  is needed to explain **A** and **B** together, when in fact *both* are already perfectly well explained when (39) receives its (uncontroversial) reading (39L). For notice that (a) the scene,  $\sigma$ , is one in which, as 'King acknowledges,<sup>75</sup> the uncontroversial reading of (39L) is true, but (b)  $\sigma$  is described in such a way that 'King's *alleged* reading [39S] *would also be true, if it were a genuine reading*. In effect, certain features of  $\sigma$  that figured in the original description lured 'King into thinking that there is a reading of (39) upon which the demonstrative description has small scope, and that this reading is needed to explain the truth and explanatory force of my reply to your question. But, in fact, reading (39) as (39S) is neither necessary nor (without one of the three pieces of additional machinery offered in §11) even sufficient to explain fact **B**. Furthermore, reading (39) as (39S) means fact **C** is completely out of reach and forces King to show that it is **C\*** not **C** that needs to be explained.

---

<sup>74</sup> Indeed King himself seems to warn against precisely *that* error in a footnote:

(1) . . . it should be clear that as long as Alan . . . was named CEO. . . if [38S] is true, so is [39L] . . . (2) Since if the narrow scope readings are true in such cases, so are the wide scope readings, we cannot simply appeal to the fact that the ascriptions seem true to defend the claim that there are narrow scope readings in these cases. (3) For an opponent could claim that the intuition about truth in such a case arises from the *wide* scope reading (or a reading that is equivalent, or nearly equivalent to the wide scope reading—e.g. a reading arising because the 'that' phrase is claimed to be directly referential). (4) Since appeal to simple intuitions about truth of ascriptions wouldn't supply us with evidence of narrow scope readings in these cases, we have had to, e.g., consider whether [39] in the described situation *explains* Sherry's behavior. . . (2001, p. 193 n. 23).

In effect, King is here pointing out that his postulation of (39S) is based on its explanation of the pair of facts, **A** and **B**. In sentence (4), I suspect King means '[39]' to be understood as 'my utterance of [39]'. See the discussion in footnotes 63 and 64 above.

<sup>75</sup> See previous footnote.

The sceptic's current position, then, is that the existence of (39S) is *not* justified because (i) the facts in need of explanation are **A**, **B**, and **C**, (ii) this combination of facts is readily explained if (39) is read as (39L), and (iii) this combination *cannot* be explained if (39) is read as (39S).

## 16. Second formulation of the argument for a small scope reading

There is another argument for (39S) we need to examine, an argument put forward by \*King, who thinks that the positions of both 'King and the sceptic are confused about what needs to be explained.

\*King agrees with 'King and the sceptic that we cannot afford to overlook the distinction between the content of the proposition I *expressed* by uttering (39) and the content of any propositions I *pragmatically implied*. But \*King argues that both 'King and the sceptic have drawn the line in the wrong place and that when it is drawn in the right place the facts that need to be explained are slightly different.

\*King agrees facts **A** and **B** have to be explained. But \*King argues that the *reason B* needs to be explained is because something *stronger* needs to be explained, viz. the *more specific* fact \***B**:

\***B**: By expressing whatever (true) proposition it was that I expressed, by uttering (39), I provided a satisfactory response to your question about Sherry's behaviour because I *expressed* the proposition that Sherry's behaviour is to be explained by her belief that Alan (is a guy who) has just been named CEO and hates her (a proposition that is, in fact, true).

\*King accepts (or at least *can* accept) that the sceptic has provided a respectable pragmatic explanation of fact **B**. But, he points out, the more specific fact \***B** is left unexplained by the sceptic's pragmatics because \***B** is a fact about the proposition I *expressed* and so not, like **B**, merely a fact about a proposition I communicated that can be explained in terms of a proposition I pragmatically implied.

What does \*King make of 'King's explanation of **B**? Well, if 'King appeals to (1) the Pragmatic Implication solution for completing his explanation of fact **B**, then \*King rejects the explanation because it is \*King's contention that I *expressed* (rather than pragmatically implied) the proposition that Sherry's behaviour is to be explained by her belief that Alan (is a guy who) has just been named CEO and hates her. But if, by contrast, 'King appeals to either (2) Heavy-handed Semantics (Syntactic Ellipsis and LF) or (3) Heavy-handed Pragmatics (Utterance Ellipsis, Underdetermination, Unarticulated Constituents) to complete the explanation of fact **B**, then 'King is, in fact, explaining **B** by virtue of explaining the *stronger* fact, \***B**, and \*King has no complaint

whatsoever. Indeed, one of 'King's ellipsis-based explanations of fact **B** is going to function as part of \*King's explanation of \***B**.

What does \*King say about **C**? He has to say, with 'King, that the third fact in need of explanation is not **C** but \***C**. So what we really have on our hands is another down and dirty fight about the semantics-pragmatics distinction, or rather the distinction between propositions expressed and propositions merely pragmatically implied:

- The sceptic about (39S) maintains that (i) the facts in need of explanation are **A**, **B**, and **C**, (ii) this combination of facts *can* be explained if (39) is read as (39L), and (iii) it *cannot* be explained if (39) is read as (39S). So there is no reason to posit (39S) and every reason to reject it. In order to explain **B**, the sceptic must solve the Missing Piece problem, of course, and happily adopts the Pragmatic Implication solution, happily assuming a distinction between the proposition I expressed by uttering (39) and any propositions I pragmatically implied.
- 'King, who quickly gave up on explaining **C**, maintains that (i) the facts to be explained are **A**, **B**, and **C\***, (ii) this combination of facts *can* be explained if (39) is read as (39S), and (iii) it *cannot* be explained if (39) is read as (39L). (But (iii), as we have seen, is just false.) In order to explain **B**, 'King must appeal to one of the three solutions to the Missing Piece Problem: (1) Pragmatic Implication, (2) Heavy-handed Semantics, or (3) Heavy-handed Pragmatics. This yields three distinct versions of 'King's position. If 'King opts for (2) or (3), he ends up explaining something stronger than **B**, viz **B\***, along with \*King, and indeed his final position may be identical to \*King's depending upon whether (2) or (3) is selected. In order to explain **C\***, 'King must assume a distinction between the proposition I expressed by uttering (39) and any propositions I pragmatically implied.
- \*King maintains that (i) the facts in need of explanation are actually **A**, \***B**, and \***C**, (ii) this combination of facts *can* be explained if (39) is read as (39S), and (iii) (which is obviously true) it *cannot* be explained if (39) is read as (39L). In order to explain \***B**, \*King must solve the Missing Piece problem like everyone else.<sup>76</sup> Obviously

<sup>76</sup> Recall reading (39) as (39S) provides an explanation of fact \***B** *only if* the proposition I expressed when (39) is read as (39S) entails the proposition that *Sherry's behaviour is to be explained by her belief that Alan has just been named CEO and hates her*. But as already noted, it manifestly does *not* entail that proposition because it entails *no proposition whatsoever about Sherry's behaviour* unless the proposition I express is at least as strong as the proposition I *would* have expressed had I uttered (39"). And that means endorsing either the Heavy-handed Semantic (Syntactic Ellipsis and LF) solution or the Heavy-handed Pragmatic (Utterance Ellipsis, Enrichment, or Unarticulated Constituents) solution.

Given the question you asked me, certainly I intended to *communicate* to you, by uttering (39), an explanation of Sherry's behaviour (i.e., I intended you to construe me as giving you an explanation for her behaviour). But if (39) is read as (39S), then although I expressed a proposition that contains Sherry having a certain thought, which itself has as part of its content the property expressed by the matrix 'guy who was just named CEO', and although, as a good, cooperative Gricean, I intended to be communicating to you in some way or other the proposition that Sherry's behaviour is to be explained by her belief that Alan has just been named CEO and hates her, I did not, on \*King's account actually *express* that proposition unless his position is beefed up with either the Heavy-handed

he must appeal to either (2) Heavy-handed Semantics or (3) Heavy-handed Pragmatics (He cannot appeal to (1) Pragmatic Implication, of course, because that solution is based on *abandoning* the idea that the proposition I expressed is the proposition that Sherry's behaviour is to be explained by her belief that Alan has just been named CEO and hates her.) In order to explain C\*, like 'King, \*King must assume a distinction between the proposition I expressed by uttering (39) and any propositions I pragmatically implied. But, remember, both versions of \*King's theory, like all three versions of 'King's theory, still predict, counterintuitively, that A still obtains in scene  $\sigma'$ , which differs from  $\sigma$  in one simple respect: Alan has not been named CEO but Sherry and I both *think* he has.

Of course, some versions of 'King's position are identical to some versions of \*King's, but it has proved useful to construct them separately, as I have in response to the (purported) facts that need to be explained.

The cogency of either of \*King's positions (and two of 'King's) require either (i) that the logical form of the sentence I uttered when I uttered (39) is identical to the logical form of (39''),

(39'') Sherry is behaving like that because Sherry thinks that that guy who was just named CEO hates her

or (ii) that the proposition I expressed when I uttered (39) contains enough unarticulated constituents to make it identical to the proposition I would have expressed had I uttered (39''). So for \*King's argument to successfully demonstrate *anything* about the semantics of (39), the following must be true:

(i) The proposition I expressed by uttering (39) is identical to the proposition I would have expressed had I uttered (39'') because either (a) I really did utter a sentence whose LF is identical to the LF of (39''), or (b) the proposition I expressed contains as unarticulated constituents the behaviour of Sherry's that you were talking about in your question and the relation I could have put into that proposition by uttering the word 'because'.

(ii) The proposition I expressed by uttering (39) is the proposition obtained by reading (39'') as (39''S), where this is a reading upon which the demonstrative description 'that man who was just named CEO' occurring in the sentence 'Sherry thinks that that guy who was just named CEO hates her' occurring on the right-hand

---

Semantic solution or the Heavy-handed Pragmatic solution to the Missing Piece Problem. The point is simple: whether (39) is read as (39L) or (39S), as originally portrayed, the proposition I expressed by uttering (39) is *not* the proposition that Sherry's behaviour is to be explained by her belief that Alan has just been named CEO and hates her. So reading (39) as (39S), as originally portrayed, can provide only *part* of an explanation of \*B. \*King needs additional machinery to finish the job, i.e. to make the proposition I expressed by uttering (39) much richer than (39S), as originally portrayed.

side of ‘because’ has small scope in that sub-sentence. But what is the argument that this sub-sentence sentence can be read in this way? \*King’s argument for a reading of (39) as (39s)? Obviously not. And what is it about the sub-sentence that prevents it from being read as (39’’) itself, generating a regress?

In summary, if King = \*King, then (a) his theory makes intuitively incorrect predictions (see the discussion of  $\sigma'$ ), (b) he has not demonstrated that (39) can be read deictically as (39S), as originally portrayed, and (c) he must appeal to either (i) a controversial syntactic claim about the sentence I uttered, or (ii) a raft of unarticulated constituents in the proposition I expressed by uttering (39). And if King = 'King, then (a) he still has a theory that makes intuitively incorrect predictions (again, see the discussion of  $\sigma'$ ) and (b) he must either (i) appeal to the Pragmatic Implication solution to the Missing Piece Problem and make a scene-reading error, or (ii) appeal to either ( $\alpha$ ) a controversial syntactic claim about the sentence I uttered, or ( $\beta$ ) a raft of unarticulated constituents in the proposition I expressed by uttering (39), and so hold one of the positions \*King holds.

It is worth noting finally that even if King had demonstrated that (39) can be read deictically as (39S), this would not have sealed the matter as far as some referentialists are concerned, in particular those who, following Smiley’s lead in connection with a referential semantics of ‘the  $\phi$ ’, distinguish readings of the forms (S’) and (L’):

- (S’)  $\exists \psi(\text{that } \phi)$   
 (L’)  $(\lambda x \exists \psi x)(\text{that } \phi)$ .

The diagnosis of error has been rewarding. King’s argument that (39) can be read deictically as (39S), however it is spelled out, is a bad argument that should not worry the direct reference theorist about demonstrative descriptions or anyone else—which is not to say there might not be *other* arguments against direct reference analyses that *are* worrying.

There are three morals in all this. The first is that some of what passes for heavy-handed semantics isn’t, even by its own lights, heavy-handed enough to explain the data apparently motivating it. The second is that sometimes, as in the case of my utterance of (39), the best way of explaining certain important communicative facts about utterances is not to look for propositions expressed that have been concocted by semantically heavy-handed appeals to scope ambiguities, aphonics in syntax, or syntactic ellipsis, or by pragmatically heavy-handed appeals to enrichment, unarticulated constituents or utterance ellipsis, but to look at how mental states involving propositions expressed and propositions implied *interact* to produce results that speakers are seeking. One can easily overlook the obvious by focussing on just propositions expressed or just propositions implied. A third moral is that, despite the rhetoric, every semanticist appeals to pragmatic magic in determining the propositions we express, even the most

dogmatically heavy-handed. One can only sigh when encountering claims to the effect that linguistic meaning, formal contexts, and compositional machinery do all the work when a sentence is used on a given occasion, a context—actually, a sequence of shifting contexts—magically assigning “salient” objects, properties, sets, or functions to enough aphonic, non-constant, non-perspectival, non-descriptive, elements in that sentence to ensure the utterance has precisely the truth conditions the theorist judges it to have. Magic is magic, by whatever name, even when it can’t be seen or heard.

## REFERENCES

- Almog J., Perry J. & H. Wettstein eds. (1989), *Themes from Kaplan*, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Anderson S. & E. Keenan (1985), “Deixis”, in Shopen 1985, pp. 259–308
- Ayer A.J. (1936), *Language, Truth and Logic*, London: Victor Gollancz
- Ayer A.J. (1946), *Language, Truth and Logic*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. London: Victor Gollancz
- Bach K. (1981), “Referential/Attributive”, *Synthese*, 49, pp. 219–244
- Baldwin T.R. & T.J. Smiley eds. (2004), *Studies in the Philosophy of Logic and Knowledge*, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Barwise J. (1981), “Scenes and Other Situations”, *Journal of Philosophy*, 77, pp. 269–397
- Barwise J. & R. Cooper (1981), “Generalized Quantifiers and Natural Language”, *Linguistics and Philosophy*, 4, pp. 159–219
- Barwise J. & J. Perry. (1983), *Situations and Attitudes*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press
- Bezuidenhout A. & M. Reimer eds. (2004), *Descriptions and Beyond*, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Borg E. (2000), “Complex Demonstratives”, *Philosophical Studies*, 97, pp. 229–249
- Braun D. (1994), “Structured Characters and Complex Demonstratives”, *Philosophical Studies*, 74, pp. 193–219
- Carston R. (2002), *Thoughts and Utterances*, Oxford: Blackwell
- Christophersen P. (1939), *The Articles: A Study of their Theory and Use in English*, Copenhagen: Munksgaard
- Cole P. ed. (1981), *Radical Pragmatics*, New York: Academic Press
- Comrie B. (1997), “Pragmatic binding: demonstratives as anaphors in Dutch”, in Juge & Moxley 1997, pp. 50–61
- Cooper R. (1979), “The Interpretation of Pronouns”, in Heny & Schnelle 1979, pp. 61–92
- Crimmins M. (1993), *Talk About Belief*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press
- Crimmins M. & J. Perry (1989), “The Prince and the Phone Booth: Reporting Puzzling Beliefs”, *Journal of Philosophy*, 86, pp. 685–711
- Davidson D. (1967), “The Logical Form of Action Sentences”, in Rescher 1967, pp. 81–95, reprinted in Davidson 1980, pp. 105–148
- Davidson D. (1980), *Essays on Actions and Events*, Oxford: Clarendon Press
- Davidson D. & G. Harman eds. (1972), *Semantics of Natural Language*, Dordrecht: Reidel
- Davies M. (1981), *Meaning, Quantification, Necessity*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul
- Davies M. (1982), “Individuation and the Semantics of Demonstratives”, *Journal of Philosophical Logic*, 11, pp. 287–310
- Dever J. (2002), “Complex Demonstratives”, *Linguistics and Philosophy*, 24, pp. 271–330

- Devitt M. (1981a), *Designation*, New York: Columbia University Press
- Devitt M. (1981b), "Donnellan's Distinction", in French, Uehling Jr. & Wettstein 1981, pp. 511-524
- Devitt M. (2004), "The Case for Referential Descriptions", in Bezuidenhout & Reimer 2004, pp. 280-305
- Devitt M. & R. Hanley eds. (2005), *The Blackwell Guide to the Philosophy of Language*, Oxford: Blackwell
- Diessel H. (1999), *Demonstratives. Form, Function and Grammaticalization*, Amsterdam: Benjamins
- Dineen F. ed. (1996), *Report on the Seventeenth Annual Round Table meeting in Washington on Linguistics and Language Studies*, Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press
- Elbourne P. (2005), *Situations and Individuals*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press
- Elbourne P. (forthcoming) "The Existence Entailments of Definite Descriptions"
- Evans G. (1977), "Pronouns, Quantifiers and Relative Clauses", Part I, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 7, pp. 467-536. Reprinted in Evans (1985), pp. 76-152; Part II, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 7, pp. 777-797. Reprinted in Evans (1985), pp. 153-175
- Evans G. (1979): "Reference and Contingency", *The Monist* 62, pp. 161-189
- Evans G. (1982), *The Varieties of Reference*, Oxford: Clarendon Press
- Evans G. (1985), *The Collected Papers*, Oxford: Clarendon Press
- French P.A., Uehling Jr. T.E. & H.K. Wettstein eds. (1977), *Contemporary Perspectives in the Philosophy of Language*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press
- French P.A., Uehling Jr. T.E. & H.K. Wettstein eds. (1981), *Midwest Studies in Philosophy, Volume VI: The Foundations of Analytic Philosophy*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press
- Geach P.T. (1962), *Reference and Generality*, Ithaca: NY: Cornell University Press
- Geach P.T. (1963), "Referring Expressions Again", in Geach 1972, pp. 97-102
- Geach P.T. (1965), "On Complex Terms" in Geach 1972, pp. 102-106
- Geach P.T. (1967), "Intentional Identity", in Geach 1972, pp. 146-153
- Geach P.T. (1972), *Logic Matters*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press
- Givón T. (1984), *Syntax: A Functional-Typological Introduction*, Amsterdam: Benjamins
- Gödel K. (1944), "Russell's Mathematical Logic", in Schilpp 1944, pp. 125-153
- Graff D. (2001), "Descriptions as Predicates", *Philosophical Studies* 102, pp. 1-42
- Grice H.P. (1961), "The Causal Theory of Perception", *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 35, pp. 121-52
- Grice H.P. (1981), "Presupposition and Conversational Implicature", in Cole 1981, pp. 183-198
- Grice H.P. (1989), *Studies in the Way of Words*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press
- Hawkins J. (1978), *Definiteness and Indefiniteness*, London: Croom Helm
- Heny F. & H. Schnelle eds. (1979), *Syntax and Semantics, vol. 10: Selections from the Third Gröningen Round Table*, New York: Academic Press
- Hornstein N. (1987), (1984), *Logic as Grammar*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press
- Husserl E. (1913), *Logische Untersuchungen, Zweiter Band*. 2nd ed., Halle: Niemeyer. English tr. by J. N. Findlay, (1970), London: Routledge and Kegan Paul
- Irvine A.D. & G.A. Wedeking eds. (1993), *Russell and Analytic Philosophy*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press
- Juge M.L. & J.L. Moxley eds. (1997), *Proceedings of the Twenty-Third Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society*, Berkeley, CA: Berkeley Linguistics Society
- Kaplan D. (1989), "Demonstratives", in Almog, Perry & Wettstein 1989, pp. 481-563
- Kaplan D. (2005), "Reading 'On Denoting' on its Centenary", *Mind*, 114, pp. 934-1003
- Kaplan D. (2008), "Complex Demonstratives, QI Uses, and Direct Reference", *Philosophical Review*, 117, pp. 99-117

- Keenan E. & J. Stavi (1986), "A Semantic Characterization of Natural Language Determiners", *Linguistics and Philosophy*, 9, pp. 253-326
- Kempson R. (1988), "Grammar and Conversational Principles", in Newmeyer 1988, pp. 139-163
- King J. (1999) "Are Complex 'That' Phrases Devices of Direct Reference?", *Noûs* 33, pp. 155-182
- King J. (2001), *Complex Demonstratives: A Quantificational Account*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press
- King J. (2008), "Complex Demonstratives, QI Uses, and Direct Reference", *Philosophical Review* 117, pp. 99-117
- Kripke S.A. (1972), "Naming and Necessity", in Davidson & Harman 1972, pp. 253-355, pp. 763-769
- Kripke S.A. (1977), "Speaker Reference and Semantic Reference", in French, Uehling & Wettstein 1977, pp. 6-27
- Kripke S.A. (1980), *Naming and Necessity*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press
- Kripke S.A. (2005), "Russell's Notion of Scope", *Mind*, 114, pp. 1005-1037
- Lakoff R.T. (1974), "Remarks on *This* and *That*", in *Papers from the 10th Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistics Society*, Chicago: Chicago Linguistics Society, pp. 345-356
- Lepore E. & K. Ludwig (2000), "The Semantics and Pragmatics of Complex Demonstratives", *Mind*, 109, pp. 199-240
- Levinson S.C. (1983), *Pragmatics*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press
- Linsky L. (1966), *Referring*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul
- Loar B. (1972), "Reference and Propositional Attitudes", *The Philosophical Review*, 81, pp. 43-62
- Ludlow P. & S. Neale (1991), "Indefinite Descriptions: In Defence of Russell", *Linguistics and Philosophy*, 14, 2, pp. 171-202
- Ludlow P. & S. Neale (2005), "Descriptions", in Devitt & Hanley 2005, pp. 288-313
- Lyons J. (1977), *Semantics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Lyons C. (1999), *Definiteness*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Maclaren R. (1982), *The Semantics and Pragmatics of English Demonstratives*, PhD dissertation, Cornell University
- Marsh R.C. ed. (1956), *Logic and Knowledge*. London: George Allen and Unwin
- Mates B. (1973), "Descriptions and Reference", *Foundations of Language*, 10, pp. 409-418
- May R. (1985), *Logical Form: its Structure and Derivation*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press
- Moore G.E. (1944), "Russell's 'Theory of Descriptions'", in Schilpp 1944, pp. 177-225, repr. in Moore 1959, pp.151-195
- Moore G.E. (1959), *Philosophical Papers*, London: George Allen and Unwin
- Murasugi K. & R. Stainton eds. (1999), *Philosophy and Linguistics*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press
- Neale S. (1989), "On *One* as an Anaphor", *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, pp. 353-354
- Neale S. (1990), *Descriptions*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press
- Neale S. (1993a), "Logical Form and LF", in Otero 1993, pp. 788-838
- Neale S. (1993b), "Term Limits", *Philosophical Perspectives*, 7, pp. 89-123
- Neale S. (1993c), "Grammatical Form, Logical Form, and Incomplete Symbols", in Irvine & Wedeking 1993, pp. 97-139
- Neale S. (1999), "Coloring and Composition", in Murasugi & Stainton 1999, pp. 35-82
- Neale S. (2001), *Facing Facts*, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Neale S. (2004), "This, That, and the Other", in Reimer and Bezuidenhout 2004, pp. 68-182
- Neale S. (2005a), "A Century Later", *Mind*, 114, pp. 809-871
- Neale S. (2005b), "Pragmatism and Binding", in Szabo 2005, pp. 165-286
- Neale S. (2007), "On Location", in O'Rourke & Washington 2007, pp. 251-393
- Neale S. (forthcoming a), *Linguistic Pragmatism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

- Neale S. (forthcoming b), "Pragmatic Intrusion, Semantic Delusion"
- Neale S. (forthcoming c), "That Guy Schiffer." To appear in G. Ostertag (ed.) *Essays in Honor of Stephen Schiffer*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press
- Neale S. (forthcoming d), "Term Limits Revisited". To appear in J. Hawthorne and D. Zimmerman, *Philosophical Perspectives* 2008
- Newmeyer F.J. ed. (1988), *Linguistics: The Cambridge Survey, Vol. II*, Cambridge University Press
- O'Rourke M. & C. Washington eds. (2007), *Situating Semantics: Essays in Honour of John Perry*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press
- Otero C. ed. (1993), *Noam Chomsky: Critical Assessments*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul
- Panagiotidis P. (2000), "Demonstrative Determiners and Operators: The Case of Greek", *Lingua* 110, pp. 717-742
- Partee B. (1972), "Opacity, Coreference and Pronouns", in Davidson & Harman 1972, pp. 415-441
- Patton T. (1997), "Explaining Referential/Attributive", *Mind*, 106, pp. 245-261
- Peacocke C. (1983), *Sense and Content*, Oxford: Clarendon Press
- Perry J. (1986), "Thought Without Representation", *Supplementary Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 60, pp. 263 - 283
- Platts M. ed. (1980), *Reference, Truth, and Reality*, London: Routledge
- Postal P. (1966), "On So-called Pronouns in English", in Dineen 1966, pp. 177-206
- Quine W.V. (1940), *Mathematical Logic*, Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press
- Quine W.V. (1960), *Word and Object*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press
- Quirk R., Greenbaum S., Leech G.N. & J. Svartvik. (1985), *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*, London: Longman
- Récánati F. (2002), "Unarticulated Constituents", *Linguistic and Philosophy* 25, pp. 299-345
- Récánati F. (2004), *Literal Meaning*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Reimer M. & A. Bezuidenhout (2004), *Descriptions and Beyond*, Oxford: Oxford University Press,
- Rescher N. ed. (1967), *The Logic of Decision and Action*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press
- Richard M. (1993), "Articulated Terms", *Philosophical Perspectives*, 7, pp. 207-230
- Roberts C. (2002), "Demonstratives as Definites", in van Deemter & Kibble 2002, pp. 89-196
- Russell B. (1905), "On Denoting", *Mind* 14, pp. 479-493, repr. in Marsh 1956, pp. 41-56
- Russell B. (1921), *The Analysis of Mind*, London: Allen and Unwin
- Russell B. (1948), *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth*, Harmondsworth: Penguin
- Salmon N. (1994), "Being of Two Minds: Belief with Doubt", *Noûs* 29, pp. 1-20
- Salmon N. (2002), "Demonstrating and Necessity." *Philosophical Review* 111, pp. 497-537
- Salmon N. (2006a) "Terms in Bondage", *Philosophy of Language: Philosophical Issues*, 16, pp. 263-74
- Salmon N. (2006b). "A Theory of Bondage", *Philosophical Review*, 115, pp. 415-48
- Salmon N. (2007), *Content, Cognition, and Communication: Philosophical Papers*, New York: Oxford University Press
- Salmon N. (this volume), "About Aboutness"
- Schiffer S. (1995), "Descriptions, Indexicals, and Belief Reports: Some Dilemmas but Not the Ones You Expect", *Mind* 104, pp. 107-131
- Schiffer S. (2005), 'Russell's Theory of Definite Descriptions', *Mind*, 114, pp. 1135-1183
- Schilpp P.A. ed. (1944), *The Philosophy of Bertrand Russell*, Evanston and Chicago: Northwestern University Press
- Schilpp P.A. ed. (1944), *The Philosophy of Bertrand Russell*, New York: Tudor
- Sellars W. (1954), "Presupposing", *Philosophical Review*, 63, pp. 197-215
- Shopen T. ed. (1985), *Language Typology and Syntactic Description*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

- Smiley T. (1981), "Russell's Theory of Descriptions", *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 67, pp. 331-37
- Smiley T. (2004), "Russell's Theory of Descriptions", in Baldwin & Smiley 2004, pp. 131-161
- Soames S. (1989), "Review of Gareth Evans' *The Collected Papers*", *Journal of Philosophy*, 86, pp. 141-156
- Soames S. (2002), *Beyond Rigidity*, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Sperber D. & D. Wilson (1986), *Relevance*, Oxford: Blackwell
- Stanley J. (2000), "Context and Logical Form", *Linguistics and Philosophy* 23, pp. 391-434
- Stanley J. (2002a), "Making it Articulated", *Mind and Language* 17, pp. 149-168
- Stanley J. (2002b), "Review of *Complex Demonstratives: A Quantificational Account* by Jeffrey C. King", *Philosophical Review*, 111, pp. 605-609
- Stanley J. (2005), "Review of François Récanati, *Literal Meaning*", *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*
- Stanley J. & Z. Szabo (2000), "On Quantifier Domain Restriction" *Mind and Language*, 15, pp. 219-261
- Stebbing S. (1936), Critical Notice, *Mind* 45, pp. 355-364
- Stockwell R., Schachter P. & B. Partee (1973), *The Major Syntactic Structures of English*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston
- Strawson P.F. (1950), "On Referring", *Mind*, 59, pp. 320-344, repr. in Strawson 1971, pp. 1-27
- Strawson P.F. (1954), "Reply to Mr Sellars", *Philosophical Review*, 63, pp. 216-231
- Strawson P.F. (1971), *Logico-Linguistic Papers*, London: Methuen & Co. Ltd
- Szabo Z. ed. (2005), *The Semantics-Pragmatics Distinction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Taylor B. (1980), "Truth-theory for Indexical Languages", in Platts 1980, pp. 182-183
- van Deemter K. & R. Kibble eds. (2002), *Information Sharing: Reference and Presupposition in Language Generation and Interpretation*, CSLI Press
- Wilson G. (1991), "Reference and Pronominal Descriptions", *Journal of Philosophy*, 88, pp. 359-87

---

Received: March 25, 2007

Accepted: January 28, 2008

Department of Philosophy  
 CUNY Graduate Center  
 The City University of New York  
 365 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10016, USA  
 sneale@gc.cuny.edu