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Holmes, Perry, and Reference

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I am bound to say that in all the accounts which you have been so good as to give of my own small achievements you have habitually underrated your own abilities. It may be that you are not yourself luminous, but you are a conductor of light. Some people without possessing genius have a remarkable power of stimulating it.

I confess, my dear fellow, that I am very much in your debt.

[Sherlock Holmes to Dr. Watson]

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, Chapter 1.

1 Introduction

Dr. Watson admits that these words gave him “keen pleasure” for he “had often been piqued by his [Holmes’s] indifference” to his admiration and to the efforts he had made to let the public know about Holmes’s methods and achievements. According to Watson, Holmes “had never said as much”, so he had good reason to get keen pleasure from those words. He doesn’t tell, though, how he took Holmes’s assessment of his attempt to apply the detective’s methods:

I am afraid, my dear Watson, that most of your conclusions were erroneous. When I said that you stimulated me I meant, to be frank, that in noting your fallacies I was occasionally guided towards the truth. (Ibid.)

After some years collaborating with John Perry, I wouldn’t mind if it turned out that I had played Watson’s role and stimulated and guided John towards the truth, just by producing, and showing him, the fallacious reasoning he shouldn’t follow.

The Signifying Self: Introduction to the Philosophy of John Perry.

Albert Newen and Raphael van Riel (eds.).

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The Holmes and Watson analogy can well illustrate many aspects of my collaboration with Perry. He is a philosophical genius, a luminous mind; I'm not. His findings might not seem obvious, *prima facie*. But it's certainly very difficult not to be convinced by the simplicity and clarity of his arguments, which make you wonder, 'How did I not think of that myself?'

On the other hand, Perry, unlike Holmes, does write about his findings and methods, so there is no need for a Watson here. But there might be no harm if I play one; in giving my version of Perry's findings, I might again incur fallacies that help Perry and others to avoid some ways of reasoning they shouldn't follow.

I've been commissioned to do a presentation of John Perry's views on reference here. We may have a little problem, though. Due to my work with Perry on pragmatics during the last decade (Korta and Perry 2006c, 2008, 2009, 2011B), I'm not sure I can distinguish my own thinking from Perry's thinking on the matter. But the Holmes-Watson case may be helpful again. Once he knows about Holmes's view on any subject under investigation, Watson has no separate thoughts of his own; hence, all interesting findings he tells about cannot be his, but Holmes's. Nobody would think otherwise. Just apply the same principle here.

I'll start, in §2, by presenting what I think constitutes Perry's overall pragmatic picture on reference: Referring to things is not something that words do, but something that people do using words, and sometimes even without using words. The last point gives rise to one of the most debated issues in the recent philosophy of language: the issue of unarticulated constituents, an idea that Perry introduces when discussing the content of some of our thoughts in "Thought without Representation" (Perry 1986d). This article is widely interpreted as advocating a thesis about reference without words. I'll discuss his view, so interpreted, at the end of the chapter in §7. But first, in §3, I'll try to locate the origins of Perry's view on reference with respect to the dominant paradigm of reference that derives from the contrast between proper names and definite descriptions. Indexicals and demonstratives, instead of being a hybrid of them, provide an alternative approach to reference that naturally explains the meaning and use of our referential devices and, thus, the cognitive motivation and impact of utterances containing them. Indexicals and demonstratives are the topic of another chapter in this volume, and I don't want to be redundant. However, to give an accurate picture of Perry's view on names and descriptions, a brief discussion on roles, cognitive fixes and referential intentions is required, which naturally stems from an account of indexicals and demonstratives. I'll do that in §4. The longest section of the paper, §5, will be devoted to the referential expressions *par excellence*: proper names. I'll present Perry's concept of 'name-notion networks', the various contents of an utterance

containing names that explain their cognitive motivation and impact, and his approach to vacuous names. §6 will be devoted to definite descriptions, whose *referential* use is naturally explained, I think, within Perry's approach. As we said above, §7 will discuss his concept of unarticulated constituents, when it comes to accounting for cases of reference without words. Finally, I'll draw some general conclusions in §8.

2 Semantics and Pragmatics of Reference

The name 'John Perry' designates John Perry, just as the definite description 'the author of "Reference and Reflexivity"' does.¹ I refer to John Perry when I utter the name 'John Perry', and I refer to John Perry as well when I utter the description 'the author of "Reference and Reflexivity"'. One can assume that it is in virtue of a two-place semantic relation between words and things that reference is possible: That seems to be the dominant view in much of the traditional philosophy of language, as influenced by formal semantics. The case of indexicals and demonstratives would just show that the referring relation is sometimes relative to a context of utterance, but reference would basically be a semantic relation between words and things.

The semantic view was challenged by Strawson (1950), who famously claimed that referring is not something that expressions (types) do, but that people do by using expressions. Kent Bach (2007) complains that Perry (2001B2) sometimes uses phrases like 'what an indexical refers to', suggesting the opposite. He rightly insists that we should not use phrases like 'what an indexical refers to', except as a shorthand of 'what a speaker refers to in using an indexical'. In his response to Bach, Perry makes explicit his agreement with Strawson:

I believe it [Strawson's remark] is reflected in my theory in a number of ways: reference is a concept connected with content, which is a property of utterances, which are acts by people, not expression types. I do not say that indexicals such as 'I' refer, but that utterances of them do. ... One might say more generally, I suppose, that people accomplish things by acting, their acts don't accomplish anything. The National Rifle Association tells us that guns don't kill, people do; Bach can say, Charlton Heston-like, "acts don't refer to people, people do." But I can reply, "That's true, but people refer by performing intentional acts, that is, utterances, and utterances have properties that make it much easier to refer." If we want to cut down on murder, regulating guns is a good idea; if we want to cut down on reference, eliminating utterances would go a long way. (Perry 2007c: 514)

¹ From now on, 'to designate' should be taken as a neutral verb in contrast with 'to name', 'to denote', 'to describe', and 'to refer,' which are used to distinguish among different particular ways of designation. As we will see, Perry contributes to clarifying the differences.

Hence, there is no issue between Bach and Perry about whether referring is something words do (the semantic view) or something speakers do (the pragmatic view). They both adopt the second stance.

Still, there seems to be some difference in their view on reference; a difference that has to do with the role they attribute to the speaker's intention (and the hearer's uptake) in determining the referent. Bach says:

... there is no fact of the matter, independent of the speaker's referential intention, as to what a discretionary indexical refers to. There is no question as to what the reference is beyond what the speaker intends to refer to and what his audience takes him to refer to. (Bach 2007: 407)

According to Bach, then, with discretionary indexicals, the speaker refers to what he intends to refer to. And I think that Perry would again agree in this case, since Perry calls 'discretionary' precisely those indexicals whose referent is determined by the speaker's intention, contrasting them with 'automatic' indexicals whose referent is determined whatever the speaker's intention, by the meaning of the expression and objective facts of the context of utterance, except perhaps the intention to use the indexical with its conventional meaning (see Perry 2001B2: 58–63). Now, the only purely automatic indexical expression seems to be the first-person singular pronoun 'I'—the 'essential indexical'. And the only purely discretionary indexical expressions seem to be the demonstratives 'this', 'that', 'it', and (with some qualifications) 'he' and 'she'. Other expressions like 'you', 'here', 'now' and even 'today,' 'yesterday', or 'tomorrow' require both contextual facts and speaker's intention to fix their reference. And anyhow, except in the case of purely discretionary demonstratives, in which, according to Perry² it is the speaker's *directing* intention that determines reference, there is more than the speaker's intentions involved in the determination of the reference of a referential expression: The conventional meaning of the expression used plays its role, and the circumstances of the utterance. That is, the context of utterance plays its role as well.

The latter derives from Perry's view of language as action, and from the corresponding central place acknowledged to utterances as the proper unit of study of semantics and pragmatics. As acts, utterances get their contents from three different sources: the plans (goals, beliefs, intentions) of the agent/speaker, the tools/words used, and the circumstances of the execution. One single movement by an agent can be taken to constitute various acts, relative to different aspects that are taken as given: In a single act we can distinguish a number of contents. I move my forefinger downwards; I press the letter 'J' on my computer keyboard; I produce the letter 'J' on the screen; I write the first letter of the name 'John'; I write the first letter of

² Following Kaplan 1989b (not Kaplan 1989a).

John Perry's name. By a single movement of my forefinger, I accomplished various things, given my intentions, the tools I used and various contextual facts. Not all those things would count as what I *did* in the relevant sense of doing at hand; but it is worth distinguishing them as relevant contents of my action, for an account of what I *did*.

Similarly, consider that I produce the sound 'jon\'; I utter the English name 'John'; I refer to John; I try to get John's attention. I accomplish various things by moving my mouth and tongue and other parts of my vocal articulatory system. Not all of them count as referring to John Perry, but they are worth distinguishing for an account of what I said, or whom I refer to and how.

In any event, we can say that all this results in a speaker-oriented theory of reference. Referring is something that speakers do; reference is determined as the joint product of the speaker's intentions, the conventional meaning of the words she uses, and the context of utterance; but the hearer's understanding plays no role. The hearer's uptake does not determine reference (as relevance theorists, for example, seem to suggest; Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995, Carston 2002); though, in a communicative setting, the speaker's intentions are intended to be recognized by the hearer. Reference is not determined jointly by speaker and hearer either (Clark 1996). Reference determination is not a collective action by speaker and hearer; but an individual action performed by the speaker, usually intended to be recognized by the hearer.

Perry's latest view on reference cannot be understood without considering his pluralistic approach to the contents of our utterances and thoughts, most forcefully presented in "Reference and Reflexivity" (2001B2) and further elaborated in "Critical Pragmatics" (Korta and Perry 2011B). In fact, the latter is basically motivated by Perry's elaboration on the proper account of reference, which, in a sense, involves a change of the traditional paradigms of reference.

3 The Paradigms of Reference

Proper names constituted for a long time the obvious paradigm of referential expressions. "The only names of objects which connote nothing are proper names; and these have, strictly speaking, no signification" famously claimed John Stuart Mill echoing medieval philosophy (Mill 1893: Ch. 1, §5). To begin with, proper names of people or places seem in many languages at first sight to be devoid entirely of anything we could call linguistic meaning—the meaning of proper names cannot be consulted in dictionaries. And if there are some that seem to have any—e.g. 'Portsmouth' or 'Dances with Wolves'—their meaning becomes irrelevant once we use

them as proper names.³ Without meaning, the only contribution of a proper name to the proposition expressed by an utterance containing it is its referent.

Proper names constitute the paradigm of referring for many philosophers, with the only semantic role of providing a reference. The natural contrast of the referential paradigm is provided by definite descriptions. A description like ‘the brightest student of philosophy in the 2010-2011 academic year’ has a meaning, compositionally determined by the meanings of its parts, and, if we follow Russell and many people after him, even if it might accurately describe a certain individual, the contribution of a definite description to the proposition expressed by an utterance of a sentence containing it is not an individual but an identifying condition; a property that uniquely identifies the individual. Or, in the now common terminology, descriptions do not refer, but denote.

Contrasting names with descriptions, we are comparing two aspects. On the one hand, we are considering the meaning relation between the expression and the individual that it designates. On the other hand, what is at stake is the contribution of the expression to the proposition expressed by an utterance of a sentence containing it; this amounts to the issue of whether the proposition expressed is a singular or object-dependent proposition instead of a general or object-independent proposition. Following Perry’s terminology, referring vs. describing is a distinction about the kind of contribution terms make to the proposition expressed (an individual vs. an identifying condition); while naming vs. denoting is about the mechanism of designation (a conventional direct relation between the expression and the object *versus* an identifying condition provided by the meaning of the term). Names *name* and *refer*; descriptions *denote* and *describe*.⁴

These two paradigms can be summed up in the following table:⁵

Table 3.1

| | Refer | Describe |
|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Name | Proper names | |
| Denote | | Definite descriptions |

³ It is well-known that Russell went even further claiming that if an alleged proper name had any remnant of meaning, then it was not an actual proper name, but a disguised description. That left natural language without *logically* proper names except for ‘this’, ‘that’, and maybe ‘I’.

⁴ I am ignoring here referential uses of definite descriptions (Donnellan 1966). See §6 below.

⁵ Perry (2001B2) acknowledges Martí (1995) for the insights here.

Now, indexicals do not easily fit in this picture. They look like a hybrid of names and descriptions. An expression like ‘I’ seems to have a linguistic meaning that gives an identifying condition to select a unique individual, something like ‘the speaker of this utterance’. So, in that respect ‘I’ is closer to a description than to a proper name, and the same goes for ‘here’ (‘the place of this utterance’), ‘now’ (‘the time of this utterance’), and so on. They can be said to denote and not name their designata. However, they seem to refer, not to describe: Utterances of sentences containing them express singular or object-dependent propositions. The table including indexicals would look like this:

Table 3.2

| | Refer | Describe |
|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Name | Proper names | |
| Denote | Indexicals | Definite descriptions |

There is another way to look at these matters, though. Instead of starting from the paradigm provided by names and its contrast to descriptions, Perry puts forward an alternative paradigm on reference based on some features of indexicals and demonstratives that, even if essential to them, arguably, are also present in the use of names and descriptions.

The conventional meaning of indexicals exploits certain roles that objects (or places or times) play relative to the speaker producing an utterance: being the speaker of the utterance (‘I’), being the time of the utterance (‘now’), being the place of the utterance (‘here’). These distinguished roles are especially useful for the speaker to refer to objects (or locations or moments) exploiting her *cognitive fixes*⁶ on them. Using indexicals to refer basically consists in the following: using a term that exploits one’s cognitive fix on an object (‘the self’, ‘the present’, ‘the place I am at’) in order for the hearer to get his own cognitive fix on that very object (e.g. ‘the person in front of me’, ‘the present’, ‘the place we are at’).

The case of demonstratives like ‘this’, ‘that’, or ‘he’ and ‘she’ is a bit different. Their conventional meaning gives us little more than ‘the object/person I’m thinking about’, but, in paradigmatic cases at least, the speaker exploits a perceptual cognitive fix she has on the object, intending that the hearer get his own cognitive fix.

⁶ The term is taken from Wettstein 1991. Broadly speaking, a ‘cognitive fix’ on an object is a way of thinking of an object, from perception to thinking of it via a description to a name. One’s cognitive fix on an object involves a role the object plays in one’s life (see Korta and Perry 2011B: Ch. 3).

Perry sticks to a referentialist view on indexicals and demonstratives. But he makes room for a plurality of contents of the utterance. In “Reference and Reflexivity” the main difference is between the *referential* content or truth-conditions and a variety of more or less reflexive or utterance-bound contents that he dubs ‘indexical’ (when indexicals and demonstratives are at stake), ‘intentional’ (for proper names), and ‘designational’ (for definite descriptions).

The ‘official’ or referential content of an utterance of a sentence containing a proper name, an indexical, or a demonstrative is a singular proposition with the object referred to as a constituent. That is why Perry is a referentialist. But, besides the referential content, we have a family of contents which, to use the terms of “Critical Pragmatics,” involve linking the exploited and targeted cognitive fixes one has on the designated object (see Korta and Perry 2009 and 2011B: Ch. 3).

The use of indexicals and demonstratives as role-management devices seems clear and, if Perry is right, is also critical for explaining the use of proper names and descriptions. But before we address names and descriptions, it is worth saying a couple of words about the structure of referential intentions.

4 Roles and Referential Intentions

Perry’s view on referential intentions is basically Gricean: They are hearer-oriented overt intentions intended to be recognized by the hearer. Using an expression *X* to designate an object *O* (the *primary* referential intention), the speaker exploits her own cognitive fix on *O*, involving a particular role *O* plays in her life, and intends the hearer to realize that. This is basically what Perry, echoing Kaplan 1989b, calls the *directing* intention. Now, the speaker’s aim is that the hearer get his own cognitive fix on *O*. This is the *target* intention. The roles involved in the directing and the target intentions are somehow linked and the speaker intends the hearer to realize that. The *directing*, *target* and *path* intentions are the three main aspects that Korta and Perry distinguish in the structure of referential intentions (see Korta and Perry 2011B: Ch. 4).⁷ As we said earlier, indexicals are especially suited to exploit specific utterance-relative roles: the meaning of ‘I’, ‘the speaker of this utterance’, makes it especially suited to exploit the cognitive fix one has on oneself. The meaning of ‘you’ makes it particularly useful to designate the person the speaker is addressing. The meaning of ‘that man’ makes it

⁷ There we also distinguish the *grammatical* and the *auxiliary* intentions, which allow us to talk of the GDTPA structure of paradigm referential intentions. For the sake of simplicity, here I’m leaving these two out, but see footnote 8.

especially useful to refer to a person that the speaker sees (perceptual cognitive fix).

Directing intentions are *determinative*, in the sense that the speaker will designate whatever or whomever plays the role she's exploiting. So, whatever her further intentions, they don't determine the referent:

Basically, the speaker has authority over which role he exploits. But he does not have authority over who or what actually plays that role; if his beliefs about that are wrong, he may refer to a thing to which he does not intend to refer. (Korta and Perry 2011B: 42).

Moreover, the speaker not only attempts to refer to an object exploiting her cognitive fix on it, but typically also aims at some cognitive fix on the part of the hearer, via some more or less vague path. This *targeted* cognitive fix on the object by the hearer is critical for his inference of the (intended) implicatures of the utterance. The particular way of referring (with particular directive and target intentions) will affect the various implicatures carried by an utterance. This, of course, is critical to account for the cognitive motivation and impact of the use of referential terms (see Korta and Perry 2006).

Suppose I tell you in face-to-face conversation, "I leave on the 8:00 am plane." Using 'I', I'm exploiting a particular cognitive fix I have on me, 'self' (directing intention), and expect you to link the roles of 'speaker of the utterance' (path) with 'person I have in front of me' (target). That can be a good way to elicit a response like, "I can give you a ride to the airport." If, instead, I say, "Kepa leaves in the 8:00 am plane", I attempt a more complicated path involving a notion-network (see below), that can easily get an answer like, "So what? Doesn't he or she know the way to the airport?"

Since indexicality is the subject of another chapter, we should focus on other ways of referring. Their differences as role-managing devices, though, will be at the heart of Perry's account of their differences in cognitive motivation and impact.

5 Proper Names

Contrary to what Russell claimed, it seems that in using a proper name to refer to an individual you don't need much information about the individual, once you know the expression is a proper name. Suppose I tell you now, "Larraitz is beautiful." Recognizing 'Larraitz' as a proper name allows you to ask "What is Larraitz?" or "Who is Larraitz?", and thus refer to the person or thing I refer to with my statement.⁸ You can also google 'Lar-

⁸ One can say that this shows that names are not just referential tags, as they present themselves as names. I think Perry would put it otherwise. It is a matter of the speaker's *grammati-*

raitz' and find out that it is a name for a place, where there is a small church devoted to the Madonna with that name, and is traditionally also a name for women.⁹

You may individuate names by their bearers and consider that there are hundreds of homophonic but different names sounding 'Larraitz'. Or you can consider that there are hundreds of female humans, a place and a little church that share a single name. Perry's option is the latter. Proper names, according to him, are nambiguous (with an 'n'), which is a sort of ambiguity characteristic of names. Nambiguity is also resolved appealing to the speaker's intentions in using a name, but here, instead of a limited number of meanings, we can have hundreds, thousands or even millions of meanings. Central to Perry's account of the use of proper names in communication is the concept of a 'name-notion network'.

5.1 Names and Networks

For an individual to be referentially accessible to a speaker via a name 'N', the speaker needs to be able to utter "N" as a part of what Perry calls a 'name-notion network' (or 'network' for short). The idea is similar to Kripke's 'chains of communication', Donnellan's 'referential chains' or Chastain's 'anaphoric chains' (Kripke 1980, Donnellan 1970, Chastain 1975). Except in the few cases in which the speaker performs an act of 'baptism', in using a proper name the speaker intends to co-refer with a previous use of that name by another speaker, or at least intends to co-refer with a previous utterance of the name, if the previous utterance referred to anything. The practices of co-referring and conditional co-referring (or 'coco-referring' using Korta and Perry 2011B's term) form a network that supports a convention to refer to an individual with a name. A use of a name that exploits a convention refers to the origin of the network that supports the convention, if it has one; otherwise, the conventions and the use are empty.

If referring to an object using a name can just consist in an act of coco-referring, it seems to follow that there are very few conditions on referring

cal intention to use a word as a name, or a name as a subject (versus, say, a direct object) in a sentence. In other words, names do not present themselves, but speakers present them in uttering them. Nothing seems to prevent me from referring to a person with 'Swimming with dolphins' or by 'Microsoft'. Thanks to Eros Corazza for raising this issue. Incidentally, the latter was the name of one of the Perrys's cats. The other was called 'Macintosh'.

⁹ In Basque, many personal names come from toponyms, and are genderless, except those where an appearance of the Holy Virgin was reported, like 'Larraitz', 'Arantzazu', 'Leire', 'Olatz', and so many others. For a view of proper names that takes them to include gender and other information, see Corazza 2011.

via names, and this seems right. In particular, you don't need an utterance-independent description that identifies the referent, as we said above.

But names can also point to information that one has about an individual. Names also involve cognitive fixes we have on objects. A nominal cognitive fix involves a name, a (detached) notion associated with the name that involves all sorts of information (and possibly misinformation) about the object, and a network of which that notion is a part. The object plays a role in the life of a person, in virtue of having such a cognitive fix.

5.2 Names, Roles and Contents

Names are not as clearly related to perceptual and utterance-relative roles as demonstratives and indexicals are. But they also work as role-management devices. Suppose the famous actress Julia Roberts sits to my right at dinner, and tells me she wants the salt.¹⁰ The salt-shaker is by my left but out of my reach so I tell John,

(1) Julia Roberts would like the salt.

John, like practically all movie-lovers in the world, has a nominal cognitive fix with the name 'Julia Roberts', a detached notion of her, and an accessible network. In this case, I expect John to link that notion with a buffer or a perceptual cognitive fix of her as 'the person sitting to Kapa's right', so that he hands me the salt-shaker and I satisfy Julia's desire for salt. Here I exploit my nominal cognitive fix on Julia Roberts and aim at John's role-linking between his own nominal cognitive fix on her (path) and his perceptual cognitive fix on her as the person to my right (target).

Suppose now that after the conference reception, John is tired and asks me if someone could drive him to the hotel. I say,

(2) Larraitz is very nice.

Let's suppose he recognizes 'Larraitz' as a proper name for a person but knows nothing about its bearer. On the basis only of his knowledge of English, he would only understand what Perry calls the 'reflexive' or 'utterance-bound' truth-conditions of my utterance:

Utterance-bound truth-conditions

Given that (2) is in English, has the syntax it does, and 'is very nice' means what it does in English, (2) is true if and only if

$\exists x, \exists N, \exists y$ such that x is the speaker of (2), N is the network x exploits with 'Larraitz', y is the origin of N and y is very nice.

¹⁰ This is a variation on an example by Korta and Perry 2009, 2011B.

Of course, he heard me saying it, and recognized me, Kepa, as the speaker of (2), so he understood something like:

Speaker-bound truth-conditions

Given that (2) is in English, has the syntax it does, ‘is very nice’ means what it does in English, and Kepa is the speaker of (2), (2) is true if and only if

$\exists N, \exists y$ such that N is the network Kepa exploits with ‘Larraitz’, y is the origin of N and y is very nice.

Now, suppose that John remembers nothing about $\mathbf{N}_{\text{Larraitz}}$, except that it’s the network I’m exploiting by my use of ‘Larraitz’. In that case, we could describe the content he gets from (2) as:

Network-bound truth-conditions

Given that (2) is in English, has the syntax it does, ‘is very nice’ means what it does in English, Kepa is the speaker of (2), and $\mathbf{N}_{\text{Larraitz}}$ is the network Kepa exploits with ‘Larraitz’, (2) is true if and only if

$\exists y$ such that y is the origin of $\mathbf{N}_{\text{Larraitz}}$ and y is very nice.

Knowing the network-bound truth-conditions doesn’t count as understanding what I said by (2), but John will still be in position to refer to Larraitz, that is, to coco-refer with my utterance, for instance, by asking, “Who is Larraitz?” The network-bound truth-conditions are probably what we most often understand when understanding an utterance containing a proper name. And that is probably all we rely on to produce an utterance containing a proper name. Contrary to what Russell claimed, we need not be acquainted with the bearer of the name to use and understand the use of proper names. Now, for various reasons, we keep the concept of what is said (the proposition expressed, the content) to apply to the content that includes the referent itself; to what Perry calls the referential truth-conditions of the utterance.

If John remembers something about Larraitz, namely, the origin of the network $\mathbf{N}_{\text{Larraitz}}$, he will get what I said, the official content of (2) or its

Referential truth-conditions

Given that (2) is in English, has the syntax it does, ‘is very nice’ means what it does in English, Kepa is the speaker of (2), $\mathbf{N}_{\text{Larraitz}}$ is the network Kepa exploits with ‘Larraitz’ and y is the origin of $\mathbf{N}_{\text{Larraitz}}$, (2) is true if and only if

y is very nice.

To sum up, Perry's view on proper names is a referentialist view, in the sense that he considers the 'official' content of an utterance containing a proper name to be a singular proposition, a proposition constituted by the individual named, and not by any description associated to it.

Now, even though names do not involve any description uniquely selecting the individual referred to, naming involves a network of utterances and (possibly thin) notions that supports co-referring. If the network has an origin, we manage to refer to an individual. If it doesn't, we don't refer (and, then, we don't co-refer) to anything. But the plurality of contents and the use of names as role-management devices explain our use of names in both cases, that is, the cognitive significance of co-referring names, and the content of empty names. We turn to this now.

5.3 Names and Roles

Suppose that John's take on (2) didn't go further than the network-bound truth-conditions of my utterance, and he asked, "Who is Larraitz?", thus co-referring (and co-referring) to Larraitz. My answer could be something like

(3) She is Larraitz.

gesturing towards Larraitz. The traditional referentialist account of demonstratives and proper names has problems in accounting for the cognitive impact and the cognitive effect of identity statements like this. If both the demonstrative and the name refer to an individual, and that's all they contribute to the proposition expressed, then (3) would just express the identity of an individual to herself. But, why should anyone utter an utterance expressing a self-identity? How could anyone get information from an utterance expressing that an individual is identical to herself?

This is how Perry explains it. The referential truth-conditions of (3) involve just the self-identity of Larraitz. I could have expressed the same proposition uttering "Larraitz is Larraitz" or "She is she". Uttering (3), though, I help John link two different roles, or two distinct cognitive fixes, on Larraitz: one perceptual, the other nominal. The former is linked by my utterance of 'she' at the level of speaker-bound truth-conditions: from 'the person Kepa has in mind', through 'the person Kepa is gesturing towards', to 'the woman I see in that corner'. The second is linked via John's nominal notion on Larraitz, which might include some information like, 'Basque linguist, former student of Kepa's' but not enough to identify her in the room. (3) allows him now to identify Larraitz. This explains the informativeness of (3), without giving up the referentialist picture on names and demonstratives.

5.4 Empty Names

Perry's family of utterance-contents gives a natural account of utterances containing vacuous or empty names. These would constitute name-notion networks with no origin; that is, going up in the network from a present use to its origin, we end up in a 'block' (using Donnellan 1974's terminology): we end up finding no origin. This means that utterances containing empty names lack referential truth-conditions. But, of course, in Perry's account this doesn't mean they lack any kind of content at all.

If I sincerely utter something like

(4) Atlantis was a wonderful city.

you would be right in saying that my utterance has no referential truth-conditions, since there is nothing that counts as the origin of the Atlantis network. Still, you could be right in claiming that my utterance is false. You would be judging the network-bound truth-conditions of (4), something like:

Given that (4) is in English, has the syntax it does, 'was a wonderful city' means what it does in English, Kepa is the speaker of (4), and N_{Atlantis} is the network Kepa exploits with 'Atlantis', (4) is true if and only if

$\exists y$ such that y is the origin of N_{Atlantis} and y was a wonderful city.

Now, obviously, the inexistence of such an origin makes (4) false, and makes the statement of such inexistence true:

(5) Atlantis didn't exist.

Again, we cannot explain the (contingent) truth of (5) by its referential truth-conditions (it has none). Our intuitions would be accounted for by appealing to its network-bound truth-conditions:

$\neg \exists y$ such that y is the origin of N_{Atlantis} .

Perry's account of fiction and fictional names in non-existential contexts takes a different route. He takes that an utterance like

(6) Watson asked Holmes to quit the use of cocaine.

should not be judged true or false, but accurate or inaccurate relative to the corpus of Doyle's stories about Holmes. But space limits oblige us to leave these issues for Dr. Watson—or for Perry himself.¹¹

¹¹ Perry briefly discusses the case of fictional names like 'Sherlock Holmes' in 2001B2: Ch. 8, 170–2.

6 Definite Descriptions

Donnellan 1966's distinction between attributive and referential uses is one of the most recurrent in discussions about definite descriptions. Perry's view is quite close to Donnellan's in how it locates the critical difference between the two kinds of use at the level of the speaker's intentions. But it is finer-grained when spelling out the difference. In short, the speaker's directing, path, and target intentions in the attributive use involve a mere descriptive fix on the individual. On the referential use, even if the path intention involves the descriptive fix, the directing and target intentions are about a perceptual or notional fix the speaker exploits and expects the hearer to have.

The distinction can be made clearer using the various kinds of utterance contents. So far we had utterance-bound, speaker-bound, network-bound and referential truth-conditions of an utterance. Referential truth-conditions is the level that usually corresponds to the proposition expressed or the content of the utterance (when mono-propositionalism is assumed). At this level, Perry follows a Russellian (though not exactly Russell's) theory of descriptions, in that they include an identifying condition of the individual, not the individual itself. According to Korta and Perry (2011B: 94), the *referential truth-conditions* of an utterance **u** of 'Smith's murderer is insane' would be the following ones:

Given that **u** is in English, its syntax, the meaning of the words, and the fact that Smith is the origin of the exploited Smith-network, **u** is true if and only if there is a unique person who murdered Smith, and that person is insane.

This would be the content of the utterance when the speaker is looking at Smith's mutilated body, and with nobody in mind, she utters **u**. The content of the belief she wants to impart is that whoever murdered Smith is insane. Her target cognitive fix is just descriptive.

Now, in the referential case, speaker and hearer are at the trial of Jones, who, let's assume, did actually murder Smith. Watching Jones's strange behavior, the speaker intends to impart the belief that Jones is insane by her utterance **u'** of 'Smith's murderer is insane'. In this case, the speaker aims at the *designational* or *referential** *truth-conditions* of her utterance:

Given that **u'** is in English, its syntax, the meaning of the words, the fact that Smith is the origin of the exploited Smith-network, and the fact that Jones murdered Smith, **u'** is true if and only if Jones is insane.

This amounts to a singular proposition with Jones as a constituent. Now, the difference between a referential and an attributive use of 'Smith's murderer'

is in the speaker's intention, as Donnellan suggested. Is the speaker intending to impart the referential* truth-conditions of her utterance? Or is she just intending the hearer's understanding to stop at the referential truth-conditions? Or both?

The last is a real option. Whenever there is an individual uniquely satisfying a description, an utterance containing it will have both referential and referential* contents. The latter has to be true for the former to be true. And that can be the speaker's intention: using a description essentially to designate the individual that uniquely fits the description. So, Perry's account allows a double attributive-referential use of a description. When there is no intention to use the description essentially, but just as a means—as good as a name, a demonstrative, or a complex demonstrative—to designate Jones, we would have a referential use, in which the speaker intentionally imparts the referential* truth-conditions of her utterance. When the speaker just wants to impart a descriptive cognitive fix with no further target intention, her use is merely attributive.

The description 'Smith's murderer' is a complete description, since it provides an identifying condition that applies to one and only one individual. But most often we use incomplete definite descriptions like 'the table', 'my neighbor', 'the book', 'the computer', which are insufficient to pick out a unique individual. Perry's account of incomplete descriptions goes along with his concept of unarticulated constituents. We turn now to discuss them.

7 Unarticulated Constituents

One of Perry's best-known contributions to the toolbox of basic concepts in the philosophy of language and mind is the concept of 'unarticulated constituents', a concept that has been described, somewhat derogatorily, as a 'myth' by Cappelen and Lepore 2007.¹² As Perry says, his original insight in his paper "Thought without Representation" (1986d) was not directly related to the content of utterances, but to the content of a particular kind of thoughts, 'self-less' thoughts, whose truth-conditions seemed to clearly involve the thinker even if they didn't require the self to be represented. Thus a thought expressible by "He's to the right" and a thought expressible by "He's to *my* right" would share their truth-conditional content, involving the thinker, but in different ways: via a representation (articulated) in the latter; without a representation (unarticulated) in the former. Perry thought that

¹² Perry (2007c: 539), quotes from a previous version of Cappelen and Lepore's paper, in which they call the unarticulated constituent position "to say the least, trendy... all the rage in philosophical and linguistic circles". But the phrase was withdrawn from the last and published version. Perry says he loved the paragraph in question too much to give it up (573, Fn. 17)

self-less thoughts were important for theories of perception and action and that they were likely to be the only kind of thoughts of non-human animals, small human children, and even adult humans in many circumstances.

As an illustration, he gives the example of a telephone conversation with his son Joe on their plans to play tennis in Palo Alto. Joe tells John, "It's raining", thereby conveying that they should postpone their plans. Perry remarks:

What my son said was true, because it was raining in Palo Alto. ... In order to assign a truth-value to my son's statement, as I just did, I needed a place. ... So Palo Alto is a constituent of the content of my son's remark, which no component of his statement designated: it is an *unarticulated* constituent. (Perry 1986d/2000: 172)

A vast literature on meteorological reports was thus initiated. And beyond meteorological reports, the analysis of other cases of elements of what is said that get pragmatically determined, or are so considered by many, like grading adjectives, quantifier domain restrictions, incomplete definite descriptions, subsentential utterances, and a long *et cetera*.¹³ Unarticulated constituents have been essentially accepted and considered a case of implicatures (Bach) or part of the explicature via pragmatic enrichment (relevance theory), or neglected to be really articulated in the sentence's logical form (indexicalism), or just considered external to semantic content along with implicatures (minimalists or Cappelen and Lepore).

After all these years, I think that Perry would qualify some of the views that are attributed to him and have some prevalence in the discussion about the topic, at least concerning the case of examples like 'It's raining'. These are cases of utterances of grammatically complete sentences that express a proposition allegedly including an element (a place) that is not designated by any sentential component. The first qualification concerns the claim that without the provision of the unarticulated constituent, the place of the raining event, the utterance lacks truth-conditional content. The quote above says that. And he has often repeated the same idea:

In this case, I say that the place is an *unarticulated constituent* of the proposition expressed by the utterance. It is a constituent, because, since rains occur at a time in a place, there is no truth-evaluable proposition unless a place is supplied. It is unarticulated, because there is no morpheme that designates that place (Perry 2001B2: 45)

This idea has been a salient theme in the debate about unarticulated constituents. Cappelen and Lepore 2005 insist that this is wrong. They

¹³ This literature includes work by Bach (2004, 2006), Barwise (1988), Borg (2005), Corazza and Dokic (2010), Crimmins and Perry (1989b), Neale (2007), Recanati (2002, 2004, 2007a), Stanley (2000, 2002), Taylor (2001, 2007), and many more.

claim that an utterance of ‘It is raining’ expresses the proposition that it is raining, which is true if and only if it is raining. Period. They admit that that is not what the speaker usually means in uttering it. This would usually include the place of the event, but it would not constitute the *semantic* content (the proposition *semantically* expressed) by an utterance of ‘It is raining’, which would be truth-conditionally complete.

Most people disagree. Recanati argues that a process of saturation (or enrichment) is needed to get a truth-conditionally complete proposition. Bach calls the proposition semantically expressed by ‘It is raining’ a *propositional radical*, insisting on its propositional incompleteness. Stanley agrees but poses a *hidden* indexical that would articulate the location of the event. But I think that nowadays Perry would somehow acknowledge that, involuntarily, he might have caused some sterile discussion on semantic *incompleteness*. Following his most recent work on the semantics and pragmatics of reference, he could reformulate his previous claims in the following way:

Joe’s utterance of

(7) It is raining,

without the provision of the raining location, lacks *referential* truth-conditions. But that does not mean that it is truth-conditionally incomplete, because it would have utterance-bound *complete* truth-conditions:

Given that (7) is in English, that it has the syntax it does, and that ‘It is raining’ means what it does in English, (7) is true if and only if

$\exists x, \exists y$ such that x is the speaker of (7), y is the place x has in mind, and it is raining at y .¹⁴

This is not what Joe stated in uttering (7). What he said would be given by its referential truth-conditions:

Given that (7) is in English, that it has the syntax it does, that ‘It is raining’ means what it does in English, and that Joe has Palo Alto in mind, (7) is true if and only if

¹⁴ One can argue that so formulated, we are *articulating* the location at the level of the speaker’s mind. Two qualifications are in order here. First, I am limiting the discussion to the issue of (un)articulation in utterances, and nothing prevents the contents of (7) from having unarticulated constituents that are articulated at the level of the speaker’s thought. Second, ‘to have in mind’ should be understood in a broad sense. Suppose I’m thinking ‘He’s to the right’. The truth-conditions would include me, and, in that sense, I would have myself in mind, without necessarily having myself articulated in my thought. See more about Perry’s recent view on unarticulated constituents in language and thought in Korta and Perry 2011B, Ch. 9. Thanks again to Eros Corazza for raising this issue.

It is raining at Palo Alto.

Both the utterance-bound and the referential truth-conditions (as well as the speaker-bound truth-conditions, given by the fact that Joe is the speaker of (7)) do have an unarticulated constituent—an existentially closed location parameter in the former, a place in the latter—because, *pace* Stanley, it is not articulated in the sentence uttered. But providing the particular place is not required for the utterance to have a truth-conditionally complete content. This only prevents it from having a *referential* content.

What about the semantic content of (7)? I think Perry's answer would be quite straightforward now. Sentences do not have content; sentences do not have truth-conditions. Utterances do. A variety of contents, given by the conventional meaning of the sentence uttered plus various facts about the context of utterance, starting with the fact that an utterance of that sentence has been made. This provides the utterance-bound content of the utterance, which is a natural candidate for the category of *semantic content*, at least from a minimalist approach to semantics that seeks to keep the pragmatic 'intrusion' into semantics to a minimum. On the other hand, the speaker's intentions are critical to determine the *referential* truth-conditions of the utterance, which shouldn't come as a surprise, if we depart *ab initio* from a pragmatic view on reference that assumes that words do not refer, but rather that people use them to refer.

There is much more to say about the various concepts of unarticulated constituents and their multifarious applications, but it will have to wait for another occasion.

8 Conclusions

From "Frege on Demonstratives" (1977) onward, Perry's work on reference has been profound and influential. He focuses on the meaning and use of demonstratives and indexicals, with particular attention to the first-person pronoun 'I', which is central to his reflection on personal identity. It is not surprising then that his view on indexicals as role-managing devices ended up constituting the main paradigm of reference that provides a natural framework for understanding the use of proper names and descriptions. His study on essential indexicals and 'I-thoughts' led him to the concept of unarticulated constituents. I have tried to give a fair account of his current views. But I feel that doing justice to his work, methods and findings exceeds my limited capacities. In "The Adventure of the Abbey Grange," Holmes tells his friend:

I must admit you have some power of selection, which atones for much which I deplore in your narratives. Your fatal habit of looking at every-

thing from the point of view of a story instead of as a scientific exercise has ruined what might have been an instructive and even classical series of demonstrations. You slur over work of the utmost finesse and delicacy, in order to dwell upon sensational details which may excite, but cannot possibly instruct, the reader.

Perry never told me anything like that. And I guess he never will. But he might have thought it. Or he might after reading this. Fortunately, in this case, the readers can and ought to go through Perry's writings themselves, as a corrective to my humble and clumsy mediation.

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