How Demonstratives and Indexicals Really Work

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What determines the *referent* of a demonstrative or indexical expression on a particular occasion of use? Our answer isn't new, but it's insufficiently appreciated: the referent of a demonstrative or indexical on a particular occasion of use is determined by the speaker's referential intentions as constrained, in a way to be explained, by the expression's *meaning*.

This requires us to say what we take these meanings to be, which in turn requires us to say what we take meanings of expressions of any kind to be. We'll take the *meaning* of an expression to be the fixed condition that something must satisfy in order to be the *content* of that expression on a given occasion of use. We take the content of a declarative sentence σ on a given occasion of use to be a proposition, and we take the content of a part of σ on that occasion to be its contribution to the determination of the content of σ on that occasion. For most of this paper we'll pretend (i) that the propositions in question are Russellian, structured entities built up from objects and properties (as opposed to "modes of presentation" of them), and (ii) that the content of a demonstrative or indexical on a particular occasion of use is its referent, so that, for example, the content of 'She is French' on a given occasion of use is a proposition that can be represented as the ordered pair $\langle x, \text{being French} \rangle$, where x is the referent of 'she' on that occasion of use.[1] Therefore, relative to this pretense, we can say that the meaning of a demonstrative or indexical is the fixed condition that something must satisfy in order to be its referent (on an occasion of use).[2] We drop this pretense in §VI.[3]

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[1] A Russellian proposition may be represented as an ordered pair of the form $\langle \langle x_1, \ldots, x_n \rangle, R^n \rangle$, were $\langle x_1, \ldots, x_n \rangle$ is an n-ary sequence of things of any kind and R^n is an *n*-ary relation, and where $\langle \langle x_1, \ldots, x_n \rangle, R^n \rangle$ is true iff $\langle x_1, \ldots, x_n \rangle$ instantiates R^n, false otherwise (it's customary to drop the brackets for one-member sequences).

[2] This pretense allows us to go along with David Kaplan (1989a) as far as propositions and content are concerned. In Kaplan's theory, the role of what we are calling *meanings* is played by what he calls *characters*. As will become clear, we see Kaplan's take on the representation of these "characters" as quite ill-suited to natural language semantics.

[3] The theory we offer will also be presented relative to other idealizations that we won't be dropping in this article. Perhaps the most important is one that is made in the presentation of virtually every semantic or metasemantic theory: just as Galileo ignored friction in his theories of motion, so, in presenting our theory, we ignore the vagueness of vague expressions and the vagueness of vague speech acts. Whether any semantic or metasemantic theory can be

We take the meaning of a demonstrative or indexical δ to be a condition of the form:

(A) x is the referent of δ on an occasion of use o iff

   (1) Cx

   (2) the speaker refers to x with δ on o.

(So we take speaker reference to be a more basic notion than expression reference.) It follows from (A) that we take a difference in meaning between two demonstratives or indexicals to be simply a difference in condition Cx, which in the limit may be null. Two examples that will concern us later:

(B) x is the referent of demonstrative 'she' on an occasion of use o iff

   (1) x is female;

   (2) the speaker refers to x with 'she' on o.

(C) x is the referent of 'I' on an occasion of use o iff

   (1) $x =$ the speaker;

   (2) the speaker refers to x with 'I' on o.

Now we need to explain the notion of speaker reference to which we've appealed; and to do that we need first to explain the notion of speaker meaning.

I. Speaker Meaning

Speaker meaning is the most general kind of illocutionary act, the genus of which all other kinds of illocutionary acts are species. There are interrogative and imperatival acts of speaker meaning, but for ease and economy of exposition we'll identify speaker meaning with *assertoric* speaker meaning (henceforth simply speaker meaning), i.e. a speaker's meaning p, for some proposition p.

For the *Gricean*, speaker meaning is defined wholly in terms of acting with certain audience-directed intentions. There is no official Gricean definition of speaker meaning, and

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revised (as opposed to abandoned) to accommodate vagueness, is a question we will leave open here. For discussion, see Schiffer (2019a, 2019b). There are three further idealizations that we also won't be dropping in this paper: (i) we ignore all issues concerning the possibility of aphonic demonstratives and indexicals (for discussion, see Neale (2016) and Schiffer (2016)); (ii) we make no attempt to show how our talk of "occasions of use" can be extended to answering machine messages and occurrences of expressions in publications; (iii) our definitions of speaker meaning and speaker refence are intended to capture paradigm cases, so we ignore attenuated cases such as those involving the cross-examination of witnesses, giving examination answers, or shouting 'help' even though one doubts one will be heard.

Griceans may disagree among themselves about the exact details, but the following toy conditions illustrate the kind of account favored by many Griceans:

(D) For any person S, proposition p, and utterance u,[4] S meant p in uttering u iff for some person A and feature φ, S intended it to be common ground between S and A that u has φ and at least partly on that basis that S uttered u intending her utterance of u to result in A's actively believing p.

(Here we borrow Stalnaker's (2002) conception of common ground: a proposition p is common ground between two people iff they mutually believe p (or mutually assume p for immediate purposes). Two people mutually believe p iff both believe p, both believe that both believe p, both believe that both believe that both believe p, and so on.[5]) For the Gricean it is no requirement that φ be u's meaning, or even that u have a meaning; but the Gricean is of course aware that normally when S means something in uttering u, u is a sentence and φ is its meaning; and, the Gricean explains, this is because when S means something by uttering a sentence σ, it's by virtue of σ's having the meaning it has that uttering σ is standardly an optimal way for S to make known to A the meaning-constituting intentions with which S uttered σ (if you want to inform your child that Rome is the capital of Italy you can hardly do better than to utter 'Rome is the capital of Italy').

We, however, do not wish to commit to speaker meaning's being definable wholly in terms of a speaker's non-semantic propositional attitudes. We prefer to commit only to the claim that:

(E) S meant p in uttering u only if, for some person A and feature φ, S uttered u intending it to be common ground between S and A that u has φ and at least partly on that basis common ground between them that in uttering u, S meant p.

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[4] Here, following Grice (1957), we use 'utterance' and its cognates as a technical term that applies to both linguistic and non-linguistic items and behavior.

[5] See e.g. Lewis (1969, 1975) and Schiffer (1972). Lewis defined common knowledge but had no expression for mutual belief.

II. Speaker Reference

We take the foundational case of speaker reference, which we'll call *primary* speaker reference (*speaker reference$_p$*) to be a species of speaker meaning:

> (F)   *S* referred$_p$ to *x* in (the course of) uttering *u* iff in uttering *u*, *S* meant an *x*-dependent proposition.

An *x*-dependent proposition is a proposition that is individuated partly in terms of *x* and that wouldn't exist if *x* didn't exist. Relative to the pretense that the propositions speakers mean are Russellian, an *x*-dependent proposition is a proposition that contains *x* (a so-called singular proposition). For example, we may represent the proposition that Romeo loves Juliet as the ordered pair ⟨⟨Romeo, Juliet⟩, loving⟩, so that the proposition that Romeo loves Juliet is both Romeo- and Juliet-dependent.

Let's call the notion of speaker reference$_p$ just defined referring$_p$-*in*. Referring$_p$-in needs to be distinguished from a closely related notion that we'll call referring$_p$-*with*. So consider the following two scenarios:

> 1)   During Jack's cocktail party two guests, Rudy and Trudy, make their way to the upstairs drawing room to steal Jack's Degas statuette. Rudy is the lookout while Trudy is charged with hiding the statuette in her handbag. At one point, Rudy whispers 'He's coming', thereby meaning that Jack is coming, and in so doing refers to Jack.
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> 2)   Same set up, only this time it's in coughing that Rudy means that Jack is coming, a cough being the pre-arranged signal that Jack is coming, and in so doing Rudy refers to Jack.

In both scenarios Rudy refers to Jack in meaning that Jack is coming, but there is the following important difference: in 1) Rudy refers to Jack *in* uttering 'He's coming' *and* there is a part of the sentence uttered—viz. 'he'—*with which* he refers to Jack; but in 2), although Rudy refers to Jack *in* coughing, there is no part of that coughing (or that cough) *with which* he refers to Jack. Thus, the other notion of speaker reference$_p$ we need at this point, referring$_p$-with, is defined as follows, where *e* is an expression that occurs at least once in *u*:

> (G)   In uttering *u*, *S* referred$_p$ to *x with e*, relative to its *i*-th occurrence in *u*, iff for some person *A* and property φ, *S* intended it to be common ground between *S* and *A* that the

i-th occurrence of *e* has φ and, at least partly on that basis, that *S* referred$_p$ to *x in* uttering

u.

φ can vary with kinds of expression. For example, if *e* is a proper name of *x*, φ may be that property that *e* has just in case it's common knowledge in the community to which speaker and hearer belong that there is a practice of referring to *x* with *e*. (This may look circular, but it's not.) If *e* is a demonstrative or indexical … well, we're coming to that.

III. Non-Primary Speaker Reference

Consider utterances of the following sentences and suppose that in producing them *S* meant that Odile was French (i.e. meant ⟨Odile, being French⟩):

(1) That woman is French.

(2) That woman next to that boy is French.

(3) That woman next that boy patting that dog is French.

Then we would say that:

- in uttering (1), S referred$_p$ to Odile *with* 'that woman';
- in uttering (2), S referred$_p$ to Odile with 'that woman next to that boy';
- in uttering (3), S referred$_p$ to Odile with 'that woman next to that boy patting that dog'.

In primary speaker reference, *S* refers to a thing in order to mean something about it. In *non-*primary speaker reference *S* refers to a thing *not* in order to mean something about it, but in order to identify the thing to which *S* is making a primary reference. Primary speaker reference is *first-order* speaker reference, and non-primary speaker reference is speaker reference of any order > 1. In (2) there is a boy *y* to whom *S* makes a *secondary* (= second-order) reference with 'that boy' by virtue of *S*'s referring to *y* in order identify the thing to which *S* is making a primary reference as a woman standing next *y*. In (3) there is a dog *z* to which *S* makes a *tertiary* reference with 'that dog' by virtue of *S*'s referring to *z* in order to identify the thing to which *S* is making a secondary reference as a boy patting *z*. But in *every* case of *non*-primary speaker reference (henceforth speaker reference$_n$), no matter of what order, there is an occurrence of a singular term δ' within the occurrence of a singular term δ that doesn't itself occur within the occurrence of any singular term,

and for some x' S intends it to be common ground between S and A that S referred$_n$ to x' with δ' in order that, for some x, it be common ground that S referred$_p$ to x with δ.

(H) S referred$_n$ to x' in uttering u iff for some person A, thing x and relation R, S utters u intending it to be common ground between S and A that $R(x', x)$ and primarily on that basis common ground between them that S referred$_p$ to x in uttering u.

This defines referring$_n$-*in*—i.e. referring-in for non-primary speaker reference. We can now define referring$_n$-with:

(J)   In uttering u, S referred$_n$ to x *with e*, relative to its i-th occurrence in u, iff for some person A and property φ, S intended it to be common ground between S and A that the i-th occurrence of e has φ and, at least partly on that basis, that S referred$_n$ to x *in* uttering u.

The general notions of referring-in and referring-with may now be defined as follows:

(K)   *In* uttering u, S referred to α iff in uttering u, S referred$_p$ or referred$_n$ to α.

(L)   In uttering u, S referred to x *with e*, relative to its i-th occurrence in u, iff in uttering u, S referred$_p$ or referred$_n$ to x with e relative to its i-th occurrence in u.

IV. The Semantics of Indexicals and Demonstratives

Earlier we said that the meaning of a demonstrative is the fixed condition a thing must satisfy in order to be its referent on a given occasion of use. We illustrated this with two examples, the first of which was:

(B) x is the referent of the demonstrative 'she' on an occasion of use o iff

(1) x is female;

(2) the speaker refers to x with 'she' on o.

For present purposes, we'll assume there are demonstratives 'she' and 'her' that are distinct from any other (e.g. bound) 'she' and 'her'.[6] Suppose the meaning of demonstrative 'she' is given by

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[6] On any particular occasion, the speaker's intentions determine whether or not the occurrences of 'she' and 'her' in, for example, 'Ava hopes she wins' and 'Ava lost her dog' are bound by 'Ava' (though most speakers will, at best, conceptualize the bound anaphora (an asymmetric notion) in such cases as something like sameness of reference (a

(B). Suppose, too, that one is informed that some speaker *S*, using demonstrative 'she', produced an utterance of the sentence 'She is famous' (unembedded) in conformity with its meaning. Then, just by knowing that, one will also know that, unless *S* was deluded, there was some female *x* such that *S* meant that *x* was famous. So suppose Sid said to Ava 'She is famous' and meant thereby that Mary was famous. Then Sid intended Ava to recognize that in uttering that sentence he meant that Mary was famous, and since (roughly speaking) one can't intend one's act to bring about a certain result unless one expects it to bring about that result, Sid also expected Ava to recognize that in uttering 'She is famous' he meant that Mary was famous.[7] How might it be reasonable for Sid to have that expectation? Well, even before he spoke, he and Ava occupied an enormous area of common ground (that is to say, myriad propositions were already mutually believed by them), and included in that common ground was the proposition that if a speaker, using 'she' as a demonstrative, produces an utterance of the (unembedded) sentence 'She is famous' in conformity with its meaning, then (delusion aside) there is some female *x* such that the speaker means that *x* is famous. Perhaps as he uttered 'she' Sid also nodded in the direction of Mary. Then it shouldn't take much imagination to appreciate that the common ground occupied by Sid and Ava before Sid spoke, now updated to include the fact that he produced an utterance of the (unembedded) sentence 'She is famous' while nodding in the direction of Mary, enabled Ava to recognize that in uttering 'She is famous' Sid meant that Mary was famous, just as Sid intended and expected. So, although what we have proposed as the meaning of 'she' may seem sparse, *it's enough to do the job that 'she' needs to do.*[8]

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symmetric notion) rather than, say, binding). Hearers' interpretive processes are geared to making the right call, which is not to say they always do so. We do not need to speculate here about the nature of those processes or the information to which they are sensitive: we are addressing the *constitutive* question of what determines the referent of 'she' or 'her' on a given occasion, not the *epistemic* question of how hearers identify referents.

[7] As Donnellan observed half a century ago, for a speaker to have "a certain complex kind of intention involving recognition on the part of his audience of his intention…may depend upon what expectations he has about his audience and their ability to grasp his intention…and the existence of an established practice may be *usually* required for speakers to have the right expectations" (1968: 212). It is mystery why these points are so often overlooked—in legal and literary theory, as well as in philosophy and linguistics. They are articulated in weaker and stronger forms by Grice (1969: 168), Grice (1971: 266), Schiffer (1972: 43 & 69), Schiffer (1995: 115), Schiffer (2003: 122), Schiffer (2005: 1141), Audi (1973), Pears (1985), Neale (1992: 552), Neale (2005: 181), and Neale (2016: 278-281).

[8] As Evans observes, "All that the conventions governing the referring expression 'he' insist upon, in any given context, is that the object referred to should be male" (1982: 312). And "There is no linguistic rule which determines

We especially want to emphasize that only confusion about the nature and formation of genuine intentions would lead one to suppose that condition (1) in (B) (the meaning of 'she') should invoke *salience*. The heart of such a confusion would be overlooking the fact that a rational person can't perform any act in order to bring about a certain result unless she expects her performing that act to bring it about. The application of this truism to speaker reference is that a rational speaker can't just do anything intending thereby to refer to a particular thing x unless she expects that her hearer will recognize that it's x to which she is referring; "the expectation of such recognition itself entails that the speaker takes the referent to have an appropriate salience" (Schiffer 2005: 1141); consequently, unless the speaker takes it to be common ground between her and her hearer that x is uniquely relevantly salient in a certain way, she can't reasonably expect her hearer to recognize that it's x to which she is referring. Salience belongs with intention, not meaning.[9] To suppose *salience* must be mentioned in specifying the meaning of any demonstrative or indexical is to conflate something that plays an epistemic role in *identifying* content with something that plays a role in *constituting* content (to conflate determining in the sense of *ascertaining* or *identifying* with determining in the sense of *constituting*).[10]

Our account of the meaning of 'I', you may recall, is that:

(C) x is the referent of 'I' on an occasion of use o iff

   (1) x = the speaker;

   (2) the speaker refers to x with 'I' on o.

So, according to us, the only difference between the meaning of demonstrative 'she' and the meaning of 'I' is in their respective conditions (1). Both definitions give the speaker of 'she' or 'I' freedom to refer to anything, provided it satisfies the constraint imposed by condition (1) of the pronoun's meaning. The only difference between the two pronouns is that, whereas the meaning

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that a 'he' or a 'that man' refers to x rather than y in the vicinity, or that it refers to someone who has just left rather than someone who has been recently mentioned" (1980: 348-349).

[9] See also Schiffer (1995: 115), Schiffer (2003: 122), and Neale (2016: 272-73, 301-02).

[10] What goes for salience also goes, *mutatis mutandis*, for prominence, relevance, topic, discourse structure and other things of that ilk. For further discussion, see Neale (2007a: 359n7) and Neale (2016: 269-73).

of 'she' only constrains the literal speaker[11] to refer to a female, the meaning of 'I' constrains her to refer to herself. Because of that difference, it may seem that clause (2) in the characterization of the meaning of 'I' is redundant and hence that the meaning of 'I' should simply determine the content of 'I' on an occasion of use simply to be the speaker of 'I' on the occasion, whatever the speaker's intention might be; there is no need for a further condition requiring that the speaker refer to herself with 'I'. We disagree. Suppose Harold begins singing "You're a pink toothbrush, I'm a blue toothbrush." Only a stubborn attachment to a philosophical theory would lead a philosopher to suppose that on that occasion of utterance 'I' refers to Harold. Linguistic meaning is a means to an end: it's a conventional device for performing acts of speaker meaning. For example, one primary function of language is to impart knowledge; in the normal case, when a speaker acquires knowledge from a speaker's utterance, that knowledge derives from knowledge of what the *speaker* meant in producing the utterance. The importance of sentence meaning is its role in making known what the speaker meant.

Turning to expressions of the form 'that F', we assume for present purposes that, as with 'she', there is a demonstrative 'that F' distinct from any other (e.g. bound) 'that F'.[12] We take the meaning of demonstrative 'that female' to be the same as the meaning of demonstrative 'she'; that is to say:

(M) x is the referent of demonstrative 'that female' on an occasion of use o iff

(1) x is female;

(2) the speaker refers to x with 'that female' on o.

Mutatis mutandis demonstrative 'this female'. This treatment of demonstrative 'she', 'that female' and 'this female' as having the same meaning is consistent with there being other, non-semantic conventions pertaining to their use (cf. *tu* and *vous* in French). And for the meaning of demonstrative 'that F' generally we propose:

(N) x is the referent of demonstrative 'that F' on an occasion of use o iff

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[11] The "literal speaker" is one who in producing an utterance of the unembedded sentence means a proposition that "fits" the sentence's meaning, as, for example, the proposition that Mary is famous fits the meaning of 'She is famous' but the proposition that the sun is setting doesn't fit the meaning of 'Withers once more the old blue flower of day'.

[12] On bound and various other expressions of the form 'that F', see Neale (2007b).

(1) *Fx*;

(2) the speaker refers to *x* with 'that *F*' on *o*.

When we first displayed the schema

(A) *x* is the referent of δ on an occasion of use *o* iff

(1) *Cx*

(2) the speaker refers to *x* with δ on *o*.

we remarked that for some expressions condition *Cx* might be null. We take that to be the case with demonstratives 'this', 'that', and 'it'. So for us:

(O) *x* is the referent of demonstrative 'that' ['this', 'it'] on occasion o iff the speaker referred to *x* with 'that' ['this', 'it'] on o.

V. An Alternative Conception of the Semantics of Indexicals and Demonstratives

The semantics of indexicals and demonstratives we have presented makes no use of any notion of context. In this respect it stands opposed to an alternative conception of the semantics and demonstratives that we will now discuss.

According to Stalnaker:

> What we want from our semantic theory is a mechanism that takes as its input a sentence with a certain meaning together with a *context* and delivers, as its output, a *proposition*—the content that is asserted or expressed with some other force (2014: 22; emphasis added).

It's our impression that virtually everyone working on the semantics of demonstratives and indexicals will accept Stalnaker's declaration; but there are divisions over what contexts and propositions should be taken to be. We will continue pretending that the propositions speakers assert are Russellian, so that won't be an issue for now. There are two dominant positions about what "contexts" are. The first, associated with Kaplan's work (1989a, 1989b), construes contexts as packages (ordered *n*-tuples) of all those things (other than the meanings of expressions) that determine the contents of demonstratives and indexicals relative to occasions of their use. So, for example, according to this view, the context modelling a given occasion of use must include a speaker, a time, and a place in order to determine the contents of 'I', 'here', and 'now' on that occasion. On such accounts, the meaning (i.e. the meaning as determined by linguistic convention)

of a demonstrative or indexical δ is a function—called a *character*—that maps every context for which it is defined onto the content of δ relative to that context. For example, the character of 'I' would be taken to be a function that maps every context onto the *speaker* in that context. This might work well for 'I' and 'me', but it does not extend in any obvious way to other so-called "pure indexicals" such as 'here' and 'now'; nor does it extend in any remotely plausible way to any demonstrative. As regards 'here' and 'now', the Kaplanian theory requires every context to contain a definite place and a definite time to serve as their contents relative to that context, with the condition defining the location coordinate being the same for all contexts. Consequently, the theory has no way to accommodate the fact that on different occasions in which the sentence 'Jane's here' is uttered, the content of 'here' can vary widely — the *room* the speaker is in, the *building* the speaker is in, the *city* the speaker is in, and so on (*mutatis mutandis* for 'now' and temporal locations).[13] But it is the core idea that is wrong: to suppose *context* must be mentioned in specifying the meaning of any demonstrative or indexical is, again, to conflate something that plays an epistemic role in *identifying* content with something that plays a role in *constituting* content.[14]

In Kaplan's original theory, the content of a demonstrative on a given occasion was determined by an "associated demonstration" which was "typically, though not invariably, a (visual) presentation of a local object discriminated by a pointing" (1989a: 490). The caveat is required because Kaplan acknowledges that for some utterances there is only an "implicit demonstration", which is presumably what he would say about Evans's example of an utterance of 'He's had enough', when exactly one soldier in a company standing to attention has just collapsed, thereby rendering himself salient and so an easy referent for 'he' (1982: 312-13).[15]

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[13] To deny that context plays a role in natural language semantics is not to deny that a formal notion of context might play a role in a formal system designed to capture validity in formal languages containing analogues of natural language indexicals and demonstratives.

[14] As Bach observes, "It is one thing for something to be determined by context in the sense of being *ascertained* on the basis of contextual information and quite another for it to be determined by context in the sense of being *fixed* by contextual factors" (2000: 271).

[15] Having collapsed and having been pointed at are two among myriad ways of being salient (though the latter has a conventional aspect for many communities), as is having been mentioned previously in a conversation or utterance. This suggests to Kripke (1977) and Lewis (1979) that sometimes a seemingly anaphoric pronoun is plausibly a demonstrative pronoun that refers to something the speaker has made salient by uttering the pronoun's seeming

But later, Kaplan came to appreciate the hopelessness of the idea of a demonstrative having its reference fixed by an accompanying demonstration and shifted to the view that the reference of a demonstrative, relative to a context, is determined by the speaker's "directing" intention (1989b: 582). However, "he failed to realize that this in effect ruined his conception of characters as functions from *contexts* to contents. For the only way of keeping [contexts] along with the fact that reference is determined by the speaker's referential intentions is to take the referential intentions as a component of the [context] for 'she' *et al*. The trouble is that then the notion of [a context] is rendered superfluous" (Schiffer 2003: 112). In other words, it's trivial to devise a formal notion of "context" that incorporates referential intentions; the problem is that when you frame your semantics that way you've concocted a completely gratuitous Rube Goldberg device. It is rather puzzling that the theory presented in a paper called "Demonstratives" does not work for demonstratives.

So, our objection to this first version of the view that "context" determines the contents of demonstratives and indexicals is that once it's fixed to get it to work it collapses into our position.

The second of the dominant conceptions of context is Stalnaker's notion of context as common ground (see above, p. 3). According to Stalnaker, it's common ground that *determines* the referent of a demonstrative or indexical. The problem with this is that the function of common ground is not and cannot be to *determine* the referent; its function is to provide an *epistemological basis* for recognizing what the speaker is referring to with a demonstrative on an occasion of use. In other words, the proper role of common ground is the one we assigned to it in the definitions we gave above. For example, suppose Sid and Ava are walking in the park and pass a man on a bench who is covered in pigeons. Mistakenly thinking that Ava was aware of the man on the bench, Sid says, 'He must crave attention,' thereby referring to the man on the bench with 'he'. On our account, it follows from this that the man on the bench is the referent of 'he' on this occasion.

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antecedent. Suppose Sid mistakenly thinks that the man talking in French to Odile is Odile's husband. He says to Ava, 'Oh, Odile's husband is French,' and Ava replies, 'He isn't her husband, but he *is* French.' If Kripke and Lewis are right, then we say 'he' and 'her' have on this occasion the meanings our theory assigns to demonstrative 'he' and demonstrative 'her'. A demonstrative 'him' seems to be required to capture the anadeictic reading of 'Odile got married; she met him online' as there is no antecedent noun phrase to serve as the antecedent of an anaphoric 'him'.

Evidently, Stalnaker must either deny that the referent of 'he' is the man on the bench or explain how the man on the bench can be the referent of 'he' when there is no proposition about that man in the common ground.

So our objection to this second version of the view that "context" determines the contents of demonstratives and indexicals is that it mistakenly takes the role of common ground to be the *constitutive* one of determining the contents of demonstratives and indexicals relative to occasions of use, when in fact its role is the *epistemic* one of enabling speakers to intend hearers to recognize their referential (and other communicative) intentions.

VI. Dropping the Russellian Pretense

The theory presented up to this point has been given relative to the simplifying idealization that the semantic content of a declarative sentence relative to an occasion of use is a Russellian proposition, and, further, that if the sentence contains a primary occurrence of an indexical or demonstrative δ, then the sentence's content relative to an occasion of use o, if it has one, is a singular Russellian proposition containing the referent of δ relative to o. We called this provisional idealization a *pretense* for the familiar reason that it's possible for a rational person to believe both the proposition expressed in a literal utterance of 'He flies', when the speaker in uttering 'he' indicates the guy in the monogrammed caped spandex outfit, and the proposition expressed in a literal utterance of 'He doesn't fly', when the speaker in uttering 'he' indicates the nerdy, bespectacled reporter named Clark Kent. But while the pretense has been a useful simplifying device, it's time now for us to drop it and to say how that will affect what we have so far said.

Happily, the view of propositions we favor leaves most of what we have said pretty much intact. We will explain this favored view, and its effect on what we have so far said, with respect to a literal and unembedded utterance of 'She is French' relative to an occasion o in which 'she' refers to Odile, and in which S is the speaker and A the hearer. Our view is that:

1) The proposition—call it Q—that is the semantic content of 'She is French' relative to o is an Odile- and being-French-dependent proposition that has the same modal profile, and thus the same possible-worlds truth conditions, as the singular Russellian proposition ⟨Odile, being French⟩.

2) As well as being partly individuated by Odile and being French, *Q* is also partly individuated by constraints on how one must think of Odile and of being French in order to entertain *Q*. Perhaps to entertain *Q* one must think of Odile as the only female at the time of *o* visible to both *S* and *A* and one must think of being French as the property expressed by the predicate 'is French'. Yet while these constraints partially individuate *Q*, they are also *truth-conditionally irrelevant* in that *Q* has the same possible worlds truth conditions as the Russellian proposition ⟨Odile, being French⟩.

3) Consequently, we may continue to say that the content of 'she' relative to *o* is simply Odile and that the content of 'is French' is simply the property of being French.

4) The definitions of speaker meaning and speaker reference may also stay the same, but with the proviso that, often when, for some thing *x* and property *ψ*, the speaker means an *x*- and *ψ*-dependent proposition, it will to some degree be indeterminate how she intends her hearer to think of *x* and *ψ*, and thus to some degree indeterminate what she means in uttering the sentence she uttered, and thus to some degree indeterminate what proposition is the sentence's semantic content relative to the occasion of utterance. Yet if such indeterminacy in speaker meaning is confined to the constraints on how one must think of the objects and properties that determine a proposition's truth conditions, then it's unlikely even to be noticed, since all the indeterminacy will obtain among truth-conditionally equivalent propositions, and thus won't affect the truth conditions the uttered sentence has relative to the occasion of use.

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