Understanding Evans[1]

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1.0 Introduction

This paper is largely exegetical/interpretive. My goal is to demonstrate that some criticisms that have been leveled against the program Gareth Evans constructs in *The Varieties of Reference* (Evans 1980, henceforth *VR*) misfire because they are based on misunderstandings of Evans' position. First I will be discussing three criticisms raised by Tyler Burge (Burge, 2010). The first has to do with Evans' arguments to the effect that a causal connection between a belief and an object is insufficient for that belief to be about that object. A key part of Evans' argument is to carefully distinguish considerations relevant to the semantics of language from considerations relevant to the semantics (so to speak) of thought or belief (to make the subsequent discussion easier, I will henceforth use 'thought' as a blanket term for the relevant mental states, including belief). I will argue that Burge's criticisms depend on largely not taking account of Evans' distinctions. Second, Burge criticizes Evans' account of 'informational content' taking it to be inconsistent. I will show that the inconsistency Burge finds depends entirely on a misreading of the doctrine. Finally,

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Burge takes Evans to task for a perceived over-intellectualization in a key aspect of his doctrine. Burge incorrectly reads Evans as requiring that the subject holding a belief be engaged in certain overly intellectual endeavors, when in fact Evans is only attributing these endeavors to *theorists of* such a subject.

Next, I turn to two criticisms leveled by John Campbell (Campbell, 1999). I will argue that Campbell's criticisms are based on misunderstandings – though they do hit at deeper elements of Evans' doctrine. First, Campbell reads Evans' account of demonstrative thought as requiring that the subject's information link to an object allows her to directly locate that object in space. Campbell constructs a case in which one tomato (a) is, because of an angled mirror, incorrectly seen as being at a location that happens to be occupied by an identical tomato (b). Campbell claims that Evans' doctrines require us to conclude that the subject cannot have a demonstrative thought about the seen tomato (a), though it seems intuitively that such a subject would be able to have a demonstrative thought about that tomato, despite its location is inaccurately seen. I show that Evans' position in fact allows that the subject can have a demonstrative thought about the causal-source tomato in this case because his account does not require that the location of demonstratively identified objects be immediately accurately assessed. What is crucial is that the subject have the *ability* to accurately discover the location. Second, Campbell criticizes Evans' notion of a fundamental level of thought. I show that this criticism hinges on view of the nature and role of the fundamental level of thought that mischaracterizes Evans' treatment of the notion.

2.0 Burge: Language, thought, informational content and over-intellectualization

Burge (2010) spends an entire chapter on the views of Strawson and Evans, a large portion of which I would disagree with.[2] In this section of this paper, I will not address Burge's interpretations of Strawson, and I will also not address most of the readings of Evans that I take to be questionable. I will focus on only three.

2.1 Causation, language and thought

A major theme of Evans' *VR* is his defense of what he calls *Russell's Principle*, which maintains that in order for a subject to be credited with a particular-thought about an object, the subject must be able to distinguish that object from all others. There are various ways that one can fulfill this requirement. Three are: (for physical objects) one might be able to perceive the object and determine its location in space; one can recognize the object; and one might think of the object as the unique satisfier of some description. As Evans puts it:

> …the subject must have a capacity to distinguish the object of his judgement from all other things. … We have the idea of certain sufficient conditions for being able to discriminate an object from all other things: for example, when one can perceive it at the present time; when one can recognize it if presented with it; and when one knows distinguishing facts about it. (*VR* p. 89)

[2] In the Fall of 2010, I was a participant in a reading group on Burge (2010) at Simon Fraser University (other participants included Martin Hahn, Rob Stainton, Endre Begby, and several graduate students). For the session we were to discuss this chapter, I was tasked as the presented of the chapter.. The points I make in this section of this paper are a subset of the points I discussed in that group. I would like to thank the participants of that group for excellent discussion.

The opposing view that Evans has in mind is what he calls the *photograph model of mental representation* (henceforth PM). This theory emphasizes the role of causal contact with the object of thought, taking such contact not only to be necessary for singular thought about the object, but also *sufficient*. That is, Evans describes

> …a theory which one might call 'The Photograph Model of Mental Representation', in which the causal antecedents of the information involved in a mental state, like the causal relation Kripke was concerned with, are claimed to be sufficient to determine which object the state concerns. (The name 'Photograph Model' is apt, because we do speak of a photograph's being a photograph of one object rather than another solely on the basis of which object was related in the appropriate way to its production.) (*VR* p. 78)

Evans' discussion of Russell's Principle is a successor to Strawson's discussion of identifying knowledge in *Individuals*. Of Strawson's view Burge makes the following criticism:

> To require identifying knowledge as a condition on thought about particulars is, in current philosophy, immediately jarring. Developments in understanding how reference works that came after *Individuals* showed that it is not a necessary condition for thinking about a particular (whether a person, or body, or event) that one know an individuating fact about it. For example, an individual can think about a person through a proper name and lack any individuating knowledge of the person. (Burge 2010, p. 173)

Since Strawson was a description theorist of proper names, criticism of Strawson's position *on proper names* by referencing work by Donnellan and Kripke is perfectly reasonable. But let's turn to Burge's discussion of Evans on this topic. After Burge describes Russell's Principle, which places a requirement on *thought* to the effect that a subject, in order to think of an object, must have discriminating knowledge of the object, he says:

> Are these requirements sound? They are hardly self-evident. … The requirements are instances of the view that to use a concept, one must know a general criterion that explicates what entities it applies to. That is, one must know the fundamental general conditions under which objects (or, as I prefer, particulars) of the relevant kind are the same or different. Evans applies this requirement to demonstrative, perceptually guided, singular

> representations. … This view is not self-evident. For the case of singular representations, it was under attack in philosophy even at the time Evans wrote. (p. 196)

In both quotes — the one addressing Strawson's views and the one addressing Evans' — Burge has footnotes to explain the work he is referring to, the work that came after Strawson's *Individuals*, and which was attacking the position "even at the time Evans wrote." And in both cases the references are to Donnellan and Kripke. The footnote in his discussion of Strawson is:

> Strawson writes: 'One cannot significantly use a name to refer to someone or something unless one knows who or what it is that one is referring to by that name. One must, in other words, be prepared to substitute a description for the name.' This requirement, later clarified to require an individualizing definite description, is defeated by examples supplied by Donnellan and Kripke. (Burge 2010, p. 173, n. 45)

And in his discussion of Evans:

> I have in mind the accounts of singular reference by Kripke and Donnellan. (Burge 2010, p. 196, n.113)

So now that we have the basic thrust of Burge's criticism in mind, let's dig a little deeper into Evans' views. When Evans introduces Russell's Principle (and generally throughout his book), Evans exercises meticulous care in keeping considerations relevant to *thought* distinct from considerations relevant to *language* (something Strawson did not do, at least not as explicitly and consistently). Of course there are connections — one might argue that the semantics of some sentences is to be explained in terms of the thoughts that one must grasp in order to understand those sentences. Or not. But either way, Evans' point is that thought and language are two separate things, and so one cannot assume without argument that considerations applicable to one will automatically transfer to the other.

Evans devotes much of the third chapter of *VR* to looking at the work advocating the importance of *causation* in matters both of thought and of language – precisely the work Burge references in his criticism. Evans distinguishes two threads in this work. First, there is a thread pitched primarily at *language*. The prototype here is Kripke's account of the semantics of proper names, a theory according to which casual connections of a certain kind are *sufficient* (and maybe necessary, but that part is irrelevant for the current topic) to establish the referent of a proper name. Evans takes the lesson of this line of argumentation to be that it is entirely possible for someone to utter a sentence employing a proper name and thereby successfully *refer* to the referent even if the speaker is not able to have any thoughts or beliefs about the referent. And this seems right. That is, the mechanisms detailed in the 'causal theory of proper names' are mechanisms that establish the referent of a *proper name* – a word in a public language – regardless of what someone using that name may or may not believe of, or even be able to think about, the referent. And provided the language user's use of that name has the right causal ancestry, that name, when uttered by that speaker, has that referent. Whether that speaker is able to think about or hold beliefs about the referent is a separate matter, according to Evans. He points out that Kripke's own discussion was primarily pitched at the level of language, and though the issue of belief did occasionally arise, it was not clear that Kripke intended the theory to apply to belief or thought. And even if he did have this intention, the arguments provided only established the theory as applicable to linguistic reference, not the beliefs of the language users involved. Again, whether Evans' arguments on this topic are correct is not the primary issue. The primary issue is that Evans addresses this distinction explicitly, carefully, and at length.

The second thread Evans discusses is one that does explicitly address *thought*. Evans has in mind work to the effect that certain kinds of causal connections are *necessary* for a belief to concern a certain objects. (Evans' own position will agree that in many cases causal connections are necessary for a singular thought to concern its object.) Evans cites Kaplan's "Quantifying In" as an example of such work. The basic idea is that certain kinds of causal

connections between an object and a subject can be necessary to establish the referent of the subject's belief.

It is worth saying a bit about this literature. The parade case is someone at a party who sees a woman drinking water from a martini glass, and makes a statement about "the man drinking a martini" (Donnellan 1966). The point is to argue against a descriptive theory of reference, since if that theory were correct, the speaker would not be referring to the woman, but it is clear that the woman is the referent despite the inaccurate descriptive material (and this is true even if there is an unseen person in the vicinity who fits the description). The suggestion being that the right sort of causal contact with the woman at the bar is, in such cases, sufficient to establish her as the referent.

Understood as a lesson about *language* the conclusion would be that in such cases causal connections can override explicit descriptive material in the referring noun phrase. Evans discusses such cases at length in Chapter 9 of *VR*, but as this issue is not about thought, it is not relevant to the present discussion.

The example could be pitched as a lesson about thought, though. The idea is that it also seems that the woman is the object of the speaker's *thought* despite the speaker's serious misconceptions about her. What this definitely shows is that if you thought discriminating knowledge was required to have a belief about an object, *and* you thought that the relevant discriminating knowledge was provided by this descriptive content (*man drinking a martini*), then you were mistaken. But does it show that this sort of causal contact, even in this sort of case, is *sufficient* for an object being the object of thought? According to Evans it does not, because the situation described is one in which the perceptual contact with the object is providing discriminating knowledge – it is allowing the subject to locate the object in space, and knowing where an object is in space is the relevant sort of discriminating knowledge. (Evans' position, for all information-based thoughts, is that descriptive content of this sort is not what determines the referent, a conclusion he shares with the literature Burge references.) This later sort of discriminating knowledge, *spatial location*, was simply not on the radar of this early literature. The target of this literature was the role of descriptive content expressible in terms of predicates and sortals. This is what

Evans' means when he remarks that the upshot of this literature is that it shows that in the case of belief causal contact is necessary, but it is not sufficient, since the causal link *by itself* does not guarantee that the subject will be able to locate the object. The subject may lack the perceptual or cognitive resources to use the causal link to establish the object's location, or the causal link may be circuitous or otherwise convoluted in such a way as to prevent locating the source (the details of this will be discussed more fully in Section 3.1 below). In any case, this contrasts with the upshot of the Kripke considerations concerning proper names (items in public language), which argue that the right sort of causal connections are *sufficient* to establish the referential properties of proper names (as public words).

Having discussed these two threads separately, Evans claims that some authors have conflated the two – they have not taken proper care to keep considerations relevant to language separate from considerations appropriate to thought. And this conflation has resulted in what he calls the photograph model. According to this theory, a causal connection between an object and a thinker is *sufficient* to sustain a *thought* about the referent. The conflation results in a theory of the referential features of *belief* (where it was established that causal connections can be *necessary* to isolate a specific object as the object of belief), into which is imported the *sufficiency* claim that was only actually established in the case of linguistic reference. And this importation is, according to Evans, the result of a confusion – a lack of care in keeping considerations relevant to language distinct form those relevant to thought – not of argument.

Given that this is the structure of Evans' position, Burge's criticisms are startling since they do not engage with Evans' actual discussion. In particular, Burge runs roughshod over exactly the distinctions that are central to Evans' discussion, eliding thought and language without providing so much as a hint of awareness that avoiding the elision is one of Evans' key points. Let's look again at Burge's criticism of Strawson:

> Developments in understanding how reference works that came after *Individuals* showed that it is not a necessary condition for thinking about a particular (whether a person, or body, or event) that one know an individuating fact about it. For example, an individual

> can think about a person through a proper name and lack any individuating knowledge of the person. (Burge 2010, p. 173, underline emphasis added)

Note first the effortless slide from 'reference' to 'thought' in the first sentence. The claim that someone can "think about a person through a proper name" is a chemically pure encapsulation of precisely the elision that Evans takes such pains to diagnose as problematic.[3] But that point aside, it is not clear what it could mean. A natural interpretation might be that it means to think of a person by a description, as *the person whose name is NN*. This would definitely be one way of thinking about someone 'through' a proper name. But of course this will not work as a criticism of Evans' view that thought requires discriminating knowledge, since such a definite description would provide precisely such discriminating knowledge.

It isn't obvious what else could be meant by the expression 'think about someone through a proper name', though I suspect that one picture that could be motivating it is the following. It is not uncommon for people's thought to be accompanied by what might be called *verbal imagery*. And this might invite one to suppose that one's thinking a thought is *nothing but* an internal utterance of a sentence. And if this were correct, then the account of the semantics of public language expressions might be pressed into double-duty an account of the relevant semantics of thought, since the latter would be no more than internalized

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[3] But it is not the only locution that codifies the conflation. For example, Burge states, concerning Russell's Principle:

> The requirements are instances of the view that to use a concept, one must know a general criterion that explicates what entities it applies to. That is, one must know the fundamental general conditions under which objects (or, as I prefer, particulars) of the relevant kind are the same or different. Evans applies this requirement to demonstrative, perceptually guided, singular representations. … This view is not self-evident. For the case of singular representations, it was under attack in philosophy even at the time Evans wrote. (Burge 2010, p. 196)

Note that Burge discusses 'using' a concept, though of course using a concept *word* (such as 'arthritis'), and using a concept in thought, are different things, a difference we are invited to not notice by assimilating both to 'use'. Note also how the generic 'singular representations' (words? thoughts?) in the last sentence is required to maintain the elision of language and thought.

deployments of the former. But there is no reason to think that thought is adequately analyzable as just internal verbal imagery. Note that Kripke's account, as an account of the semantics of proper names, has the consequence that even names used in sentences in a foreign language have their semantic properties in terms of causal antecedents. Is an inner repetition, via verbal imagery, of what the subject would describe as a meaningless phonological string from a language she does not understand, sufficient to credit her with a *belief about* the object that might in fact be the referent of a proper name in the sentence she repeated? Ruling out such an unacceptable consequence is among the benefits of keeping considerations relevant to language distinct from those relevant to thought. Though verbal imagery may accompany thought, this is more plausibly explained in terms of the automaticity with which we typically verbalize thoughts, as opposed to thought being constituted by (mere) verbal imagery.

The issue isn't whether Evans' analysis is ultimately correct or not. Rather, it is that since Evans' entire discussion is built on keeping these issues distinct. Given this, criticisms of Evans that slide from reference to thought within single sentences, and hinge on locutions like 'think about someone through a proper name' can't be taken as engaging with Evans' program in any meaningful way.

2.2 Informational content and singular content

As I mentioned in the previous section, Evans agrees with the literature that both he and Burge discuss to the effect that causal contact with the object is necessary, in the relevant sorts of cases, for a thinker's thought to be about its object. The 'relevant cases' proviso is in recognition of the fact that not all beliefs have this requirement — beliefs based purely on definite descriptions for example. Evans calls thoughts of the relevant sort 'information-based thoughts', and he captures the necessity by making a certain kind of causal connection between the object and the thinker one of the requirements for grasping such a thought. The sort of causal connection is via what Evans calls an *information link*, a

causal pathway through which the subject receives information about the object. Such links can be implemented in perceptual contact with an object, but also through testimony and memory. The subsequent discussion concerns the special case of demonstrative thought involving perception.

The information link serves a number of functions on Evans' account, but two of them are relevant for the current discussion. First, as noted in the previous section (and to be explored more in Section 3.1 below), in favorable cases of demonstrative thought it allows the thinker to locate the object in space. Second, it provides the thinker with information from the object. The current issue concerns the nature of the information the subject receives. Evans provides a characterization of this *informational content* (a technical term for Evans, which is different from the more usual sense of 'information' made central in the philosophy literature by Dretske (1981)), and Burge argues that Evans' program is unworkable because the characterization Evans provides of this fundamental notion is inconsistent.[4] Evans introduces his notion in a discussion of a photograph of a red ball (sphere) on a yellow square (cube):

> A certain mechanism produces things which have a certain informational content. I shall suppose for the moment that this content can be specified neutrally, by an open sentence in one or more variables (the number of variables corresponding to the number of objects in the photograph). Thus if we are concerned with a photograph of a red ball on top of a yellow square, then the content of the photograph can be represented by the open sentence
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> Red(x) & Ball(x) & Yellow(y) & Square(y) & On Top Of(x, y) (*VR*, pp. 124-5)

The important point is that this content is not *singular*, meaning that for a full specification of the informational content no mention of the specific objects that were involved in its production is needed, or even allowable. But Evans does want to do justice to our intuition that, even if a full specification of the informational content makes no mention of the

[4] On the second point, it must be emphasized, because this is a common point of confusion for those who read Evans, that *Evans is not a description theorist*. The referent of an information-based thought is not determined by any sort of description constructed from the informational content. The informational content may, on Evans view, not accurately reflect properties of the referent at all.

particular sphere and cube, the content is nevertheless *of* that cube and sphere. He goes on to specify this sense of *of*-ness. Evans says that

> …we can say that the product of such a mechanism is *of* the objects that were the input to the mechanism when the product was produced. Correspondingly, the output is of those objects with which we have to compare it in order to judge the accuracy of the mechanism at the time the output was produced. Notice that I have explained the sense in which a photograph is of an object, or objects, without presupposing that a specification of its *content* must make reference to that object, or those objects. (*VR*, p. 125)

So a piece of informational content can be *of* some specific objects, even if it is not *about* those objects, in the senses of 'of' and 'about' that Evans defines. Burge thinks this is misguided, and indeed inconsistent:

> According to Evans, an informational state can be *of a* without having a singular content that represents (or misrepresents) *a*. In such cases, the particular entity *a* causes the informational state and the state has to be evaluated for accuracy with respect to *a*; but *a* is not singularly represented. (Burge 2010, p. 184)
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> ...
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> There is an incoherence in Evans's specification of informational content. He takes the content of an informational state not to involve singular elements that represent any particular entity. He holds that an informational state, and its content, can be *of* a particular without there being any element of the content that represents the particular. He formulates the content of an informational state as a conjunction of open sentences—such as 'Red(x) & Ball(x) & Yellow(y) & Square(y) & OnTopOf(x,y)'—or as an existential quantification of such a conjunction.
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> Evans thinks that either of these forms of content can be of a particular, even though they have no singular element that represents the particular. This view is incompatible with his account of *ofness*. The contents that he cites are not of any particulars at all. The second clause in his explication of *ofness* is that to be of a particular, a content has to be evaluated for accuracy, at the time the state was produced, by reference to whether the particular satisfies its content. (Burge 2010, pp. 184-5)

The core of Burge's criticism is that Evans wants to have it both ways. He wants the content to be of the open sentence or existential variety (which is not tied to specific

individuals), but then his account of *of*-ness requires that the content be evaluated for its accuracy by reference to the particulars that were involved in its production.

If this were Evans view, it would indeed be harboring an inconsistency. But it is not. Let's put Evans' definition and Burge's gloss on it back to back (underline emphasis added in both cases):

> …the output is of those objects with which we have to compare it in order to judge the <u>accuracy of the mechanism</u> at the time the output was produced. (*VR*, p. 125)

> The second clause in his explication of ofness is that to be of a particular, <u>a content has to be evaluated for accuracy</u>, at the time the state was produced, by reference to whether the particular satisfies its content. (Burge 2010, pp. 184-5)

So Burge's gloss is simply factually wrong. Evans' definition appeals to judging the accuracy of the mechanism that produces a content, while Burge glosses it as involving the accuracy of the content. These are entirely different things. To see the difference consider the following analogy. I am a witness to mafia malfeasance, and I produce a transcript of what I have witnessed, but I redact it so as to leave the identities of the people involved in the event I witnessed out of the transcript. So instead of saying "Fat Tony handed to loot to Two-Gun Rathbone" (which is what I witnessed), I write "X handed the loot to Y". In this case, I am the mechanism producing a content, and the redacted testimony is the content I produced. The informational content (on Evans' view) of *my* testimony might be identical to the similarly redacted testimony of someone else who witnessed Corky Sivella hand loot to Bootsie Tomasulo, namely, "X handed the loot to Y". This is what Evans means by his technical notion of *informational content*. It is the open sentence in two variables that applies equally well to the two different witnessed events. We might even specify a sense of 'accurate', call it $accurate_c$, (for *content accurate*) according to which the redacted report I produced $accurately_c$ describes both events.

Now here is a question: am I, *as a witness*, doing a good job? Am I functioning well, in the sense of being a good reporter of events? In order to determine this, you would need

to compare my redacted report to something. But what? Clearly, you would need to compare it to the exchange between Fat Tony and Two-Gun Rathbone. The mechanism in this case is me, and I am functioning 'accurately' if the content I produced accurately$_c$ depicts the event I witnessed. It may also accurately$_c$ depict other events, but that fact would be irrelevant to whether I am functioning well as a witness. Call this sort of accuracy, the accuracy of the mechanism, *accuracy$_m$*. In order to assess my accuracy$_m$ as a witness, you would need to consult those objects that I was in causal/perceptual content with when I produced the content.

With this perhaps-too-long analogy in hand, it should be clear why Burge's objection rests on a confusion. Evans is clearly and explicitly arguing that assessing accuracy$_m$ requires us to compare the produced representation to the objects causally responsible. But this is quite a different thing from saying that the accuracy$_c$ of a representation *produced by* such a mechanism in a given case must be assessed for 'accuracy' by comparison to these causally-antecedent objects. It is perhaps unfortunate that Evans used a conjugate of the word 'accurate' here, when discussing "the accuracy of the mechanism". Though a bit later on, he describes the same thing in this way:

> It is with x that the predicative material in the informational state has to be compared if we are to evaluate how successfully the system has worked. (*VR*, pp. 127-8)

In summary, there is no incoherence in Evans' account of *of*-ness. Burge's argument to the effect that there is depends on attributing to Evans something he didn't say.

2.3 Interpretation and over-intellectualization

The final Burge-related exegetical point I want to discuss is connected with Evans' explanation for why many people have intuitions that support the photograph model over Russell's Principle. The rhetorical situation is this: The topic is information-based thoughts.

Evans claims that for such thoughts, in order for a thinker to think *a* is *F*, the thinker must stand in a suitable casual relation to the object *a*. This is a necessary condition for Evans, not a sufficient condition. In addition to the causal connection, the thinker must have discriminating knowledge of the object as per Russell's Principle (and recall, as mentioned above, for information-based thoughts, especially demonstrative thoughts, this discriminating knowledge is not in terms of descriptive content, but typically in terms of the object's location). Evans' opponent, who he calls the proponent of the photograph model of mental representation (and Burge counts as a proponent of PM for purposes of this discussion) takes it that such a causal connection is sufficient, and in particular that there is no need for discriminating knowledge.

Evans agrees that in some cases there is a strong intuitive pull to credit to thinkers a thought about *a* when *a* is the causal source of information the thinker has about *a*, even though the thinker does not have discriminating knowledge of *a*. So part of Evans' defense of Russell's Principle is to provide an explanation of those intuitions — an explanation other than that they reflect the falsity of Russell's Principle.

Evans points out that knowing someone's overarching goals can play a role in how we interpret intentional aspects of their behavior. In particular, knowledge of such goals often encourages us to attribute to a thinker intentional states that strictly speaking the thinker cannot have. Evans gives two examples. The first is a person who goes into an office and says to the receptionist "I'd like to register a complaint" and the receptionist replies "Then you want to see Mr. X." The second example is a student in an auto mechanics class who is reading a report out loud and says "A spark is produced inside the carburetor." The teacher asks the other students if this is right, and one says "he means the cylinder" (*VR*, pp. 130-1).

The examples are perfectly intuitive even if we assume that in neither case is the person actually able to have the intentional state being attributed to them. The person going into the office may have never had any contact with Mr. X, and in fact may have assumed that there was just a form to be filed out. And the student may have never even

heard of a cylinder. But in both cases, the interpreter knows what the thinker's over-arching goal is, and knows what would satisfy that goal: the receptionist in the office knows that the person who came in has the over-arching goal of registering a complaint, and knows that seeing Mr. X will satisfy that goal. Given this, attributing to this person a 'desire to see Mr. X' is all but irresistible. And the second student knows that the first student has the over-arching goal of saying something true about where the spark is produced, and knows that saying that it is in the cylinder is what will satisfy that goal. And given this, the second student's attribution to the first student of "meaning the cylinder" is motivated.

The upshot is that we can see how there are circumstances in which it can seem very natural to attribute to a thinker an intentional state relating to a particular object — *wanting* to see Mr. X, *meaning* the cylinder — even when sober reflection on the case makes it highly doubtful that the subject is genuinely in any position to have the intentional state as described.

Evans next points out that, for information-based thoughts, thinkers have the over-arching goal of thinking about the objects that are the causal source of the information their thoughts are based on. Suppose I have a vague memory of a person in a clown suit at a party when I was five years old. When I wonder if that person had a successful career as a clown, my intention is to be thinking about the person who is the causal source of that memory. And you, as an interpreter of, or theorist of, the semantics of my thoughts can know that this is an over-arching goal I have. And so quite independently of whatever considerations might be brought forward for or against the view that I am capable of genuinely having a thought about that person, there is going to be a pull to interpret me as thinking 'of' that person.

Evans introduces his line of thinking here, and the examples, in this passage:

> Now we need to understand why we are inclined to say, in this and in similar cases, that the subject is thinking of … — always citing, here, the object from which the relevant information derives.

> I think we should realize, first, that these idioms (and, perhaps, all ordinary cognitive idioms) have their home in the activity of interpreting, or making sense of, the speech of others. We envisage our subject uttering a sentence: 'That ball was F'; we ask ourselves 'What can he be thinking of?', and answer 'He has the second ball in mind', or – making the concern with interpretation explicit – 'He means the second ball'. Now when we interpret the remarks of another person, we aim to make sense of his act of uttering them, rather in the way that we aim to make sense of his other acts. We try to fit them into a pattern, to find the project to which they belong. We attribute a purpose to the speaker. When we say 'He means x', or 'He must be thinking of x', we are attributing to the speaker a purpose which explains his linguistic act: his purpose is to be referring to x. (*VR* pp 129-30)

So that's the set up. Here is Burge's response:

> Evans holds that idioms that attribute singular reference in perceptual belief 'have their home in the activity of interpreting, or making sense of, the speech of others'. While there is perhaps a narrow sense in which this claim is true, *the claim illustrates Evans's concentration on perception's relation to thought, especially thought expressed by language.* Evans's discussion of perception almost totally ignores the science of perception. No empirical theory of perception or perceptual belief gives language anything like the prominence that Evans gives it in his discussion. To assume that perceptual belief is to be understood in terms of linguistic understanding is to be out of step with the empirical study of perception and perceptual belief. Empirical psychology attributes—on the basis of considerable evidence—perception and perceptual belief to non-linguistic animals and children. (Burge 2010 p. 183-4, emphasis added)

The remarks about what lessons should be drawn from perceptual psychology can be passed over.[5] Two points are currently relevant. First, it is actually a distinctive feature

[5] Or at least tucked away from the main line of discussion in a footnote. It is doubtful whether philosophers interested in the semantics of language or thought — questions pitched against a set of background considerations and desiderata concerning the sorts of questions that are being asked and what sort of answers are adequate — should want to have those questions settled by perceptual psychologists. Despite some overlaps, these latter theorists are asking and answering different questions from those being asked by philosophers (even if in some cases the wording of these questions looks superficially the same). And this is reflected in the kind of expertise they have, and lack. What theory of the semantics of proper names would one expect to get from a perceptual psychologist? Even if we restrict attention to 'perceptual belief', it is unlikely that most perceptual psychologists will have any clue about the difference between *de re* and *de dicto* belief attributions, or the difference between denotation and singular reference. Surely they are highly intelligent and could be coached up, but these aren't the things they care about. In the good old days of the

of Evans' entire account that, unlike virtually the entire analytic tradition before him, he argues that the semantics of some expressions in language, such as demonstratives, is to be explained in terms of the semantics of thought, and not vice versa.[6] Suffice it to say that Evans' does not try to understand perceptual belief in terms of linguistic understanding.

But a more specific objection to Burge's remarks is in order. On the topic at issue, Evans is not making any point about the *subjects* whose perceptual beliefs or singular thoughts are under discussion. His points here are aimed at explaining something *about the PM proponents*, or more generally, about those who are *theorists of those subjects*. So Burge is missing the point entirely when he complains that "the claim illustrates Evans's concentration on perception's relation to thought, especially thought expressed by language." The discussion does involve subjects who are expressing their thoughts in language, but that is inessential to the point being made. The point would apply equally well to theorists discussing the 'beliefs' of an animal, and the point would be that there is a strong pull for theorists to interpret the animal's 'beliefs' as being about the object that is the causal source.[7]

UCSD interdisciplinary cogsci program, at least one philosophy faculty member and graduate student would hang out at the cogsci Friday afternoon receptions and engage the cognitive scientists in discussions about Twinearth and so forth. A few cogsci faculty would find the discussion mildly amusing if completely irrelevant to anything they cared about. Most would find a polite excuse to walk away. But my definite, though informal, sense is that most felt strongly that the sort of perceptual content they were interested in was such that I and my Twinearth twin would be in the same perceptual content state. They could see the point of Twinearth, etc., but this point as irrelevant to what they were doing or cared about. It would be empirically irresponsible not to take seriously what the relevant scientists say when it comes to questions they are asking and answering. But on this topic they aren't asking or answering these philosophical questions. And accordingly it isn't obvious that Evans' minimal deferral to what perceptual psychologists say on the topic of singular thought amounts to any sort of intellectual irresponsibility on his part.

[6] The typical approach of analytic philosophy was that the analysis of mental states goes via an analysis of language, and so Evans' reversal of priority (in some cases) is why Dummett described Evans as not being an analytic philosopher (Dummett 1993, pp. 4-5).

[7] Imagine scouts, from a bee colony in the process of relocating, find a suitable location in a hollowed out log (see Seeley et al. (2006) for a discussion of bee hive location scouting). But after the scouts return, and before the hive moves, experimenters replace the hollowed out log with a different one that has similar features. The hive moves into the new log (since it is at the location it scouted), but it would be natural to say that the hive wanted to move to the original log.

One might try to defend Burge's criticism in the following way. Though the doctrine is aimed at theorists, it depends on the assumption that subjects of thought do in fact have an 'over-arching goal' of referring to the object that is the causal source of their belief. And it might be thought that even this is an over-intellectualization. There are two responses to this version of the objection. First, the over-arching goal need not be one that is explicitly acknowledged by the subject, so long as they evince sensitivity to that factor. And such sensitivity need not require anything overly intellectualized. Infants show sensitivity to the ability of perceived objects to pass through barriers, for example, which is taken to say something about their grasp of objects (or proto-objects), despite there being no question of over-intellectualization. Second, for purposes of the point Evans is making here, it is not even required that the subject in fact have that over-arching goal. All that is required, to explain why theorists feel compelled to attribute intentional states based on causal antecedents, is that the theorists attribute this over-arching goal to the subject.

3.0 Campbell: Location, demonstratives, and the fundamental level of thought

John Campbell has criticized Evans' account of demonstrative thought by way of attempting to show that several pillars upon which it rests are shaky.[8] I think that

[8] My discussion concerns interpretations made in Campbell (1999), though his views on this surface in several other places. The main topic of Campbell (1999) is the phenomenon of *immunity to error through misidentification*, and the remarks on Evans' views on the role of space are secondary in this article. I also think that Campbell's analysis of IEM fails to provide an accurate interpretation of Evans on the phenomenon of immunity to error through misidentification (Evans calls the version of the phenomenon he is interested in *identification freedom*). But I won't discuss that here, in part because it is not clear whether Campbell takes himself to be giving an account of Evans' notion of IF, or if he is rather providing an alternative. And if he isn't taking himself to be providing an analysis of Evans' notion of IF, then the fact that his analysis differs from Evans is no criticism of Campbell's analysis. Though a good deal of what happens in Campbell (1999) strongly suggests that he has Evans' views on the topic in mind. See Grush (2007) for a detailed treatment of Evans' notion of identification freedom which provides an analysis of the phenomenon that differs from Campbell's analysis, and which is explicitly intended as an interpretation of Evans' notion.

Campbell's criticisms rely on uncharitable interpretations of some key aspects of Evans' doctrines, aspects which admit of charitable and sustainable interpretations.

The first objection concerns the role of spatial localization in demonstrative reference. Campbell argues that Evans' position is inconsistent with cases in which we demonstratively refer to an object whose location we are not accurately aware of. I will argue that Evans' view allows that a subject's perceptual contact with an object can support demonstrative thought even when its location is not immediately perceptually apparent, or is even apparently misleading. The pivot of Evans' account is the suite of *abilities* a subject can bring to bear for locating things in space. And so Evans' account allows for demonstrative reference even when the subject is unsure of, or even wrong about, the object's location, so long as the subject has the ability to locate the object.

The second is the nature of fundamental Ideas and their relationship with demonstrative Ideas. Campbell's criticism is that the importance Evans places on fundamental Ideas is unsustainable in the case of "perceptual demonstratives", because for physical objects it is *demonstrative* identification, not Evans' 'fundamental' identifications, that do certain kinds of work that Campbell identifies as crucial. It is not obvious that Evans must insist that the fundamental level is the exclusive province of all the work Campbell interprets is as being (in particular, predicate introduction), nor that the replacement level Campbell appeals to is up to the work that Evans assigns to the fundamental level of thought.

3.1 Location and demonstrative thought

According to Evans, demonstrative thoughts are *information-based*, which means that the Idea (a technical term) of the object employed in the thought has, as part of its functional characterization, one or more information links to the object. There are two features of these information links that are relevant for the current discussion. First, the information

links provide to the subject information about the object. Second, the information links allow the subject to locate the object in space.

As Campbell correctly notes, successful demonstrative reference on Evans' account requires a convergence of these factors – the object that the subject is enabled to locate (second factor) must be the very object that is in fact the causal source of the information link (first factor). And 'locate' of course means to *locate in space*. But what space? And why? The answer is more complicated than it at first might seem, but it will be worth going through the main details.

There are, for Evans, two kinds of spatial representation involved: egocentric spatial representation and objective spatial representation. *Egocentric* space is what is made manifest to the subject in perception, with the origin vaguely on the subject and the directions and magnitudes provided in perceptual/behavioral terms. It is important to note that egocentric space is not, for Evans 'visual space'. This latter notion and various cognates ("visual location", "visual demonstratives") makes no appearance in Evans' work. We will return to this point later. The contrast with egocentric space is *objective space*, a space that is conceived of as the space of the world independent of the subject, in which relations between objects are given in terms of objective units, e.g. magnitudes such as *kilometers* and directions such as *north*.

With this in mind we can provide a quick gloss on Evans' account of demonstrative thought. A subject perceives an object, thus establishing an information link to it. The link gives the subject information about the object (color, volume, temperature, and so forth depending on modality), and it will also allow the subject to locate the object in egocentric space. But the subject needs, in order to think about the object, discriminating knowledge of the object (see Section 2.1 above). In the case of material objects it is their location in *objective* space that provides this discriminating knowledge, or as Evans will put it, a *fundamental identification* of the object. So long as the subject can coordinate her egocentric space with objective space, then the subject will be able to place the object in objective space in virtue of knowing its location in egocentric space. We will return to the importance of objective space in the next section.

What does it mean to say that the information link allows the subject to locate the object in egocentric space? The most brittle interpretation here would be that the information link must make the object's location precisely and immediately manifest to the subject. Such straight-forward localization often occurs, of course. But sometimes things are not so easy. Campbell provides an example:

> ... suppose that tomato A is directly behind a mirror set at 45 degrees to the subject's line of vision, so that tomato A is at the position at which tomato B, reflected in the mirror, appears to the subject to be. Though the subject can see tomato B in the mirror, the presence of the mirror is not suspected by her. (Campbell 1999, p. 103)

Campbell takes it that an utterance by the subject about "that tomato" would be a successful demonstrative reference to tomato B (the causal source). And he also takes it that Evans' theory is prevented from agreeing because in this case there would not be the required convergence of the object that is the causal source and the object at the apparent location.

But things aren't quite as straightforward as Campbell's analysis suggests. In particular it is not clear that in this example, on Evans' view, the two factors are really diverging. It depends on how one understands the second factor, the subject's ability to locate the object. Campbell interprets this as something like a requirement that the information link provide an immediate and accurate localization – the brittle interpretation mentioned above. If that were true, then Campbell's analysis would stand. But Evans position is not so brittle. Here is one of Evans' examples:

> ... in a great many cases a subject may make a demonstrative identification of an object without *actually* knowing where it is. The information-link with the object may *enable* the subject effectively to locate the object without providing very specific information about its location – for example, when one is able to home in upon the beetle eating away in a beam. (The information-link places the subject in a position rather like that of the man who feels something tugging at the end of his fishing line. In such cases we are placed in a position in which we have the *practical ability* to locate the object; it is not necessary to construct some

> *concept* ('the one at the end of my line') in order to allow the subject's thought to reach out to its object, when he can so effectively do so himself.) (*VR* p. 172)

So Evans explicitly rules out the brittle interpretation mentioned above. The information link need not simply present the object as being at some manifest and determinate location in egocentric space. Rather, what is required is that information link, together with various *practical abilities* that the subject has, jointly enable the subject to locate the object in egocentric space. In the happiest case the combination will in fact allow for immediate determinate placement, but this is just the happiest case, not the necessary case.

Tellingly, Evans also provides examples in which there is an information link, but for whatever reason the subject does *not* have a practical ability to locate the object. An example Evans provides is a soccer player seen on television, or an announcer heard over the radio (*VR* pp. 148-150). In such cases Evans' position is that a subject can think about the relevant object, *but only by means of a surreptitious descriptive element*, such as 'the person who is the causal source of this information', and in such a case, the appearance of the demonstrative 'that' would not signal that the subject is actually entertaining a (proper) demonstrative thought.

So a careful reading of Evans' text makes it clear that on his account, the requirement for successful demonstrative thought is that the information link must put the subject in a position *to be able*, with the exercise of appropriate skills, to locate the referent. His position is not, as Campbell's analysis presupposes, that the information link must, on its own, make the intended referent's actual location immediately perceptually apparent to the subject. The point is not to defend Evans' doctrine, just to get clear on what it is.

Let's return to the beetle and tomato cases. Campbell might rightly point out that his example is unlike the beetle or fish on the line in two important respects. First, in the beetle and fish cases, the subject is not initially presented with any apparent location for the object, though the subject *is* presented with an apparent location for the tomato. Second, and relatedly, in the beetle and fish cases it is clear to the subject that he has not (yet) located the object, and so the subject knows that if he wishes to do so, he will need to employ some

practical skills; while in the tomato case, the subject has no reason to suspect that locating skills need to be employed. Campbell might well claim that one or both of these differences is crucial.

We get a little exegetical help in a passage where Evans follows up on the beetle example:

> Another case of this kind arises when the subject wears prisms which distort his field of vision – either shifting it to one side or inverting it. In such a situation the subject can give no definite location to an object in egocentric space. Nevertheless he can be said to know which object is in question – as long as he keeps his eye on it – because he has an effective method for locating the object. [p. 172, footnote 43]

Evans does not specify whether in the example he intends the subject to be aware or unaware of the presence of the prisms, though the claim that the subject would be unable to give a definite location to the object in egocentric space suggests that he is aware. In any case, let's take both possibilities in turn.

Suppose the subject *is* aware of the presence of the prisms. In this case, the object is seen as being at a determinate location in egocentric space, but the subject knows that this is in fact not its location (unlike the beetle), and moreover, the subject does not know exactly where the object is in egocentric space. And yet Evans allows that this suffices for demonstrative reference. Why? Because the subject has practical abilities that are obviously sufficient for determining the object's true location, abilities that involve moving around, following the line of sight, and so forth. And crucially, Evans is here explicitly pointing out that on his account even if the object appears to be in a location where it in fact is not, and even if the subject does not in fact exercise the practical abilities that would make its actual location apparent, the fact that the subject has those abilities licenses the attribution of a genuine demonstrative thought.

Now to the situation where the subject is unaware of the prisms. Admittedly Evans does not explicitly discuss this sort of case. But all he would need to do to accommodate it (and the tomato case) would be to be allow that what counts for successful demonstrative identification is the full set of (perhaps unexploited) localization skills, even when their

exercise would yield a location in conflict with the *prima facie* location that is, unbeknownst to the subject, incorrect. And this full set of skills obviously includes a capacity to *discover* that one is in a situation like the tomato case. Normal perceptual capacities don't let one determine where the object that a distant video camera is pointed at is located. But normal perceptual capacities will reveal to a subject wearing inverting prisms almost immediately that something is amiss. And the same is true of the tomato case. Many carnival tricks and illusions require the subject to be in a specific spot – it is no accident that an Ames room includes a viewing hole in one particular spot. These are all ways of depriving subjects of their use of practical skills that normally are in play, skills that typically quickly reveal the presence of, for instance, a mirror.

Again, this may or may not end up being the correct account of what is happening with English demonstratives referring to physical objects. But the point is that Evans' position has resources available that can address Campbell's case.[9]

Before moving on to the next topic, let me point out that there are two options here for filling out Evans' account. One is as I mentioned above, to argue that even if the subject is unaware of the fact that the object's apparently location is not its actual location, what matters is whether the engagement of the full set of practical abilities would suffice for locating the object. The other possibility, also consistent with everything Evans says, is that success in such cases requires that the subject be aware of the misleading nature of the *prima facie* location, and if the subject is unaware, then there is a failure of reference. On this interpretation, the person knowingly wearing inverting prisms would demonstratively refer, but the person in Campbell's tomato case wouldn't (if they were unaware of the subterfuge). It is not as obvious to me, as it is to Campbell, that the person in the tomato case is in fact

[9] It is also quite likely that Evans was aware of the sort of case Campbell raises. Grice, in 'The Causal Theory of Perception' (Grice 1961) provides an exactly similar example, though using clocks rather than tomatoes. And while Evans does not discuss this Grice article, it is unlikely he was not familiar with it. And moreover that Grice article, and the clock example, are discussed at length in George Pitcher's *A Theory of Perception*, with which Evans was quite familiar, and which played a significant role in Evans' development of his own theory. So either via Grice's article or Pitcher's discussion of it, it is likely that Evans was familiar with this sort of case.

making a successful demonstrative reference to the reflected tomato. This strikes me as a borderline case, but then again, my intuitions may be atypical. Any way you slice it, it is an empirical matter concerning English usage, and I wouldn't be surprised if Campbell's intuitions about the case turn out reflect those of most English speakers'.

I won't here say any more — providing a full commentary on Evans treatment of these topics is beyond the scope of this paper. My goal has simply been to provide some plausibility to the claim that if one keeps in view features of Evans' larger program, and remains sensitive to its details, it is by no means obvious that Campbell's objection is as decisive as it might at first have seemed.

3.2 The fundamental level of thought

I turn now to Campbell's criticism of the centrality of the fundamental level of thought in Evans' account. Evans' doctrine is that thought of any object requires that the subject have discriminating knowledge of that object. This is Russell's Principle, discussed above. And discriminating knowledge is provide by knowing an object's fundamental ground of difference, which is (more or less) the individuation conditions for that object. Numbers are individuated by their location in an infinite ordering, and so I know which number is in question when I know (or can determine) its location on that ordering. Physical objects are located by their location in objective space, and so I know which object is in question when I know (or can determine) its location in objective space. The point is not to squabble over precisely what the individuation conditions are for this or that type of object. The point is that *whatever* the individuation conditions are, one knows which object of that type is in question when one knows the features it possesses that in fact distinguish it, as per those conditions, from all other objects of that type. So understood, the claim is not obviously controversial.

In addition to giving the subject discriminating knowledge of the object, the fundamental ground of difference is also crucial for our ground-level *understanding* of how predicates relate to objects of the relevant types, and relatedly it is the explanation,

according to Evans, for the ability to satisfy the generality constraint. And again roughly, the fundamental level of thought is thought about objects *as the possessors of their fundamental ground of difference* – for example, thinking of the number 3 as *the number at a location on the number line between 2 and 4*, as opposed to thinking of it as *Frege's favorite abstract object*). My understanding of a predicate such as ' ... is prime' is one whose understanding requires that I know what it would mean, for an object individuated by fundamental grounds of difference appropriate to numbers, to have this property. And obviously my understanding of ' ... is prime' depends on my knowledge of the things it applies to *as numbers*. For instance, if my only knowledge of numbers is that they are individuated by the geometric features of the numerals that represent them (imagine here someone who, misunderstanding their mathematics teacher, understands numbers as numerals), then I can get no cognitive grip on the meaning of a predicate such as ' ... is prime'. But when I understand what numbers are, understand their criteria of individuation, then I am in a position not only to understand how the predicate can apply, but I also have all that is needed to grasp the thought of any arbitrary number being prime (though I might grasp the thought as being false in many cases), and hence I would satisfy the generality constraint.

The gist of Campbell's criticism is that the work that Evans claims is done by the fundamental level is in fact done by "visual demonstratives" without the need for a 'fundamental level'. Campbell says:

> The background problem is Evans's explanation of why location matters for visual demonstratives, and in particular his conception of the "fundamental level of thought." It seems evident that we cannot sustain this conception of a level of thought, more fundamental than the level of perceptual demonstratives, at which predicates of physical things are first introduced and explained. In the case of physical objects, we have to acknowledge that predicates such as "flashing" must be first introduced and explained at the level of perceptual demonstratives, in the context of judgments such as "that light is flashing." The idea that observational predicates have to be first introduced in the context of some other level of thought than demonstrative thought, so that the importance of location can be explained in terms of its link to that level, cannot be sustained. (Campbell 1999, p. 104)

Campbell is correct that the fundamental level is what Evans employs to ensure that singular thought about objects, including demonstrative thought, satisfies Russell's Principle and also the Generality Constraint. And it is also the level at which we come to understand what it means for a proposition such as *a* is *F* to be true; that is, it is the ground of our understanding of how predicates apply to their objects.

But crucially Evans nowhere mentions the *introduction* of predicates, nor their 'explanation' (though he comes close ... see below). And this is not a simple omission on Evans' part which Campbell is charitably supplying. A careful reading of the relevant parts of *VR* make it clear that the issue is the *understanding* of predicates (and singular terms, for that matter), not their introduction or explanation. Of course one hopes that the way a predicate is introduced and explained will facilitate understanding, but that connection doesn't mean that the latter is no more than the former. In order to satisfy the generality constraint, a person must be able to *understand* the application of a predicate to *any object* of the appropriate sort. This is not guaranteed by how a predicate is introduced. I might introduce someone to the predicate ' ... has mass' by getting them to lift a heavy object, or by suspending a weight form a spring. But in order to *understand* the predicate – to pass the generality constraint – the subject must be able to grasp the thought that *electrons* have mass, that *black holes* have mass, and so forth. This is not guaranteed or even obviously supplied by the manner in which we might initially introduce the predicate.

The ability to grasp the thought, for some categorially appropriate *a*, *Fa*, requires that the subject understand the category and how the predicate applies to objects of that category. Demonstration of a few values of *Fx* in the introduction of the predicate by no means guarantees this. Someone who is only prepared to apply ' … has mass' to visually perceptible objects does not understand the predicate. Campbell's example of a predicate, ' ... is flashing', is perhaps not the best one to highlight the aspect of Evans' proposal I am trying to highlight, because in such a cases where the application of a predicate seems to be entirely decidable by (and its meaning all but exhausted by) easily detectable sensory features, the difference between introducing a predicate and providing an ability to understand sentences predicating it of any appropriate object shrinks. Though arguably

even there it does not vanish – objects I currently cannot see can be flashing, as can things I could not possibly see, such as atoms (which can be induced to periodically emit EM in the visible range, though a single atom would not emit enough to be visible). And so if my understanding of the predicate doesn't outstrip what was provided in my introduction to it, then my understanding is inadequate. The proposal that my an *understanding* of the predicate ' ... is flashing' makes contact with physical objects at the fundamental level is not obviously misguided. As Evans says:

> ... the evidential component of the functional characterization of a demonstrative Idea of a material object based on a visual information-link with it would deal only with judgements involving concepts whose application can be determined on a visual basis. But the Idea characterized will be susceptible also to employment in other connections (recall the Generality Constraint: 4.3). (*VR*, p. 262)

Interestingly, Evans actually addresses the interface between the fundamental level of thought and the mechanisms and situation that get us started on the path to understanding. He says:

> Our acquisition of one of the Idea-types in question takes the form of, first, being trained on the lines of the functional characterization, and then approximating, partly on the basis of what the training has yielded, to a more general grasp of how the thoughts we have learned to deploy relate to the world. The general conception is not something prior to the behaviour characterized by the functional characterization — something from which that behaviour could be deduced. Rather, it is something built up partly on the basis of that special behaviour. (*VR*, pp. 262-3)

Here the 'functional characterization' is referring to the information link (perception) between the Idea of the object and the object, which provides the subject with information about it; the 'more general grasp' is the *understanding* of the predicate. The clear upshot is that when it comes to how we are introduced to predicates, how we actually go about learning them, Evans' view seems consistent with the thrust of Campbell's proposal.

The difference is that Evans' fundamental level of thought is pitched at our (full, mature, adequate) understanding of such predicates and objects.

4.0 Concluding remarks

Anyone who has grappled with Evans' book knows that it is not an easy read. And the fact that researchers who have spent many years engaging with it and the secondary literature can arrive at such different interpretations of core aspects of his position underscores the difficulties. But difficulty notwithstanding, the book is one of the most significant contributions to philosophy to come out of the 20th Century, and so there is a high premium on getting it right, or at a minimum not dismissing any of its core pillars too quickly. It is my hope that the above defenses of Evans' position, if correct, will help to make his work better understood and ultimately more widely appreciated;[10] and if not correct, will at least spark a fruitful continued conversation.

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[10] To this same end, I am also writing a completely revised version of my *Guide to Gareth Evans' The Varieties of Reference* (Grush, in preparation). I highly recommend the revised version (dated 2018) over previous versions, because it corrects many shortcomings of previous versions of the guide. Draft versions of the revised chapters are currently available online, as will the final version when finished, sometime in 2019.

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