

Chapter 3: The Context of Introduction Thesis

1. Introduction

In this chapter, I motivate and explain the specific theory of names being defended in this book. To be known as “The Context of Introduction Thesis,” or the CIT for short.

The motivation I offer here is not, however, the strongest motivation for the view. Its strongest motivation will come in later chapters where I argue that the CIT is, in fact, the only theory of names capable of resolving certain puzzles about proper names, which have plagued philosophers since at least Frege (1892). The theory’s elegance and power can only be fully appreciated in that context. The main purpose in this chapter then is not to provide the reader with a particularly strong motivation for adopting the view, instead the main point is to give the reader a grasp on the theory’s nuts and bolts, how it is distinct from other theories, and illustrate how it works in a specific case.

At its core, the CIT is a historical thesis about proper names, already defended most famously by Keith Donnellan. But while it is a historical account, it is developed in much more detail than others are, and its potential is fully exploited. In addition, the CIT also challenges at least one of the historical theory’s core assumptions, which characterizes nearly every theory of proper names – that names are fundamentally for picking out individuals, an idea that has largely gone unchallenged for over a hundred years. While the CIT rejects this key assumption – that names are de jure rigid designators – it does endorse a weaker related thesis – that they are de jure rigid expressions. In other words, the CIT accepts that names are de jure rigid expressions, but it rejects that they are essentially referential, or even designative for that matter.

Before we can even begin to offer a theory of the nature of proper names, we must recognize that they have certain undeniable characteristics. And that these characteristics serve as constraints on any correct theory of proper names.

First, proper names must be expressions that allow a single individual speaker an almost unrestricted degree of freedom in introducing them into the language, and in stipulating for them a semantic value. Why allow an individual speaker such an unprecedented degree of control over the lexicon of what is commonly thought of as a public language? Well, the answer is that proper names enable speakers to sustainedly coordinate their discursive focus on some idea, concept, belief, or even individual on an as needed basis. Without this unrestrictive account of name introduction and the stipulative nature of how they get their semantic value, it would be difficult to see how speakers could accomplish this previous feat. This undeniable ability that we in fact have dictates that any correct theory of names will make them at least *de jure* expressions, then.

However, names are not simply *de jure* expressions, they are also, as noted, expressions that enable speakers to sustainedly coordinate their discursive focus on some idea, concept, belief, or even individual on an as needed basis. This fact also requires that names are not only *de jure* expressions, but that they are rigid *de jure* expressions. Names are not expressions that allow speakers to coordinate their discursive focus in a given moment, but over time. If we never had the need for this, we could likely just get by with other *de jure* expressions, such as demonstratives, but we do have such a need, and therefore, we have a need for *de jure* rigid expressions.

A view like the CIT can respect the previous constraints, but it will take some explaining to see why. Ultimately, however, it is because names derive their meanings from

past events of having been introduced into the lexicon by those with the authority to do so, what I will call a “context of introduction.” As we will see, it is this core thesis that allows names to be de jure rigid expressions.

The structure of the chapter will be as follows: first, I will discuss some general problems with the reference/designation assumption about the role of a proper name; second, I will introduce some terminology important for fully grasping the CIT; third, the CIT will be presented and explained; fourth, we shall examine its implications for semantic compositionality; and last, I will consider the motivation for a complex view of the semantic value of a proper name.

2. The Common Assumption: Names Designate Individuals

As we saw in Chapter Two, there are many proposals about the nature of proper names. The two most prominent, however, have it that names are either for (a) uniquely identifying individuals by their uniquely identifying properties or (b) referring to particular individuals independent of their uniquely identifying properties. Thesis (a) is associated with descriptivist theories, and thesis (b) is associated with views that have their roots in Kripke, Donnellan, and Kaplan's work. It has been supposed that these two theses are largely incompatible. However, despite the fact that there are major differences between these two approaches, they do in fact share a common core assumption. Specifically, the assumption that names are devices whose primary semantic function is for picking out individuals in the world, however that picking out occurs.

2.1 Problems with Reference Determination

Assume we are discussing the most recent versions of these views on which the problematic differences between the predictions of the kinds of truth conditions sentences

containing names have are minimized, or even erased. Suppose we are comparing, not a classical descriptivist view with a Kripkean view, but rather we comparing that view with wide-scope or rigidified descriptivism, or perhaps essentialist descriptivism. Now, if we also take a purely truth-conditional view of these two approaches, we might argue that the primary difference between descriptivist views of proper names – views faithful to thesis (a) – and non-descriptive views – views faithful to thesis (b), is not at bottom a semantic difference, but is arguably epistemic, or perhaps even pragmatic in nature: concerning how reference determination occurs.

Descriptivists maintain that reference determination is a matter of an individual's satisfying some set of characteristics that uniquely identify that individual as a name's target, thereby ensuring that name's do have referents, and therefore provide the right kind of semantic content for determining the truth value of a sentence containing a proper name. But non-descriptivists reject this account, often on the grounds that its requirements for what speakers would have to know to ever identify a name's referent are so stringent that no ordinary speaker would likely ever be able to meet them.

Non-descriptivists will then turn to substituting causal connections as the mechanism of reference determination. Once again, we have a relation that ensures that a name has a definite referent, and ensures, just as descriptivism does, that names have the right kinds of semantic contents contributing in the right way to the truth conditions of sentences that contain them. However, does it get us any further ahead on the epistemic issues that theories of reference determination pose for theorists of natural language? As we just saw, referentialists suggest that it is a causal link between the original referent and the name that determines reference, but the problem here is that people typically also are not in the know

about these causal chains. Sometimes mistakes are made. Causal chains can be quite intricate, as the phenomenon of reference shift clearly illustrates.

The real issue between the descriptivist and the referentialist, then, does not appear to be about the truth conditional role a proper name plays in determining truth values at all, but rather about which theory of reference determination is the most plausible in terms of linguistic competence, or speakers' understandings of linguistic expressions. But this was not what should distinguish different semantic accounts of proper names. What should distinguish different semantic accounts of proper names are, well, the semantic features of those expressions.

Perhaps another designative view of proper names can address this previous issue of distinguishing itself from other views. In addition to views like (a) and (b), there are other views, views that hold that names are (c) context-sensitive expressions, like demonstratives or variables.¹ At first glance, at least view (c) is on more solid ground than either (a) or (b). It is easy for example for us to know what someone is talking about when they use the word 'that' or utter a token of the word 'I'. A problem with this view, however, is that it does not account for the rigidity of names, nor does it seem to put any constraints on acts of naming whatsoever.² This would make it difficult to keep track of which name supposedly picks out which individual as names do not have a character like indexicals, nor do they require an ostensive act to use them felicitously. We have returned once again to the problem of reference determination as an epistemic issue, and view (c) fares no better than either views (a) or (b).

¹ Not all views of proper names are designative. A predicative view of names is not so committed. It faces different challenges than designative views do, which I deal with when I present this theory in Chapter 8.

² In fact, my own view I would say is a kind of context-sensitive view, though names are still very different from demonstratives or indexicals.

Again, it is not clear what the semantic differences are supposed to be between views (a)-(c). Debates about which designative thesis to take up as a semantic account of the nature of names, then, are really not debates about the semantics of name at all, a rather surprising result for those who have spent a significant amount of time arguing in favor of one of these views as the correct semantic account of the nature of a proper name. Furthermore, it seems that no matter what one says about designative theories of proper names, they all face the epistemic challenge of determining the reference of a name, and an answer to this question seems to be far from the point at which we can claim to have sighted land of any kind. So there are at least two surprising reasons for rejecting the designative thesis: it is not in and of itself a very substantive semantic thesis, at least not if what distinguishes the various versions of it are really epistemic issues, rather than semantic issues, and secondly, we are still very much at sea when it comes to dealing with the epistemic difficulties concerning reference determination.

Of course, analyses of meaning ought to be concerned with epistemic issues. However, it is also important to be aware of those issues, and their role in and influence on semantic theorizing. Clearly, concerns about reference determination, itself inextricably bound up with linguistic competence, understanding and knowledge, have had an enormous influence on theories of proper names. In fact, so much so that it might even lead some of us to think of much of the literature on these various designative views as containing pseudo-debates about the semantic character of proper names.

2.2 The Differences Between Naming and Referring

Independently of the reference determination issue, we can see simply by examining naming processes, events, and acts, that most theories of proper names commit a

fundamental mistake in characterizing their semantic function as that of allowing for talk about particular individuals: not all names are like this, even if many are. In fact, as we will see, several kinds of names cannot be understood this way, including fictional names, certain kinds of descriptive names, and certain kinds of empty names. Fictional names are especially challenging since not only is referring inessential to their meaning, neither is even attempting to refer. These names are not introduced with even an intention to refer; they have no reference whatsoever, and yet, if any empty names have meaning, surely fictional names do. We are then left with the task of providing a theory of the meaning of a proper name that takes this information into account.

One way to make it clear that using a name is not to use an expression to refer is to compare the nature of naming with the nature of referring. There are, in fact, differences between these two kinds of linguistic behaviors. We can see these differences by attending to the conditions for successfully engaging in these kinds of actions. A successful act of referring requires the existence of something to which to refer. In contrast, a successful act of naming has no such requirement. We know this, because many names make it into the language successfully without the need for something to name. The conditions for acts of reference, and acts of naming, then, differ. Names can be introduced into the language when, for instance, a speaker with a certain kind of authority stipulates that that expression will serve as a center of gravity for tracking a certain idea, concept, belief, or individual within a linguistic community. This way of thinking of naming entails that its felicity conditions contrast quite sharply with those associated with acts of reference. For instance, suppose I have a hallucination of a little green man and I point at him. Have I succeeded in referring to the object of my hallucination? Of course not. Now suppose, instead, I decide

to name my hallucination. I call it 'Gazoo'. Now, haven't I succeeded in an act of naming? Of course, some theories of names will predict that I have not. But, so much the worse for those theories, since they are, shall I say even obstinately, failing to track the data: assuming such an event occurred, my interlocutors would happily engage in conversations about Gazoo, and all of his various properties, during a dinner party hosted by myself. In sum, while names can be used to refer, they need not be so used. Naming is different from referring.

3. The CIT: Terminology and Definitions

Now that I have illustrated some of the problems with the designative theory of naming, it is time to explore an alternative – the CIT. Before explaining it in detail, however, we must first examine some distinctions key for understanding it, its import, and its differences from its rival(s).

There are two relevant categories of distinctions. The first category concerns distinctions between what I will call "name token uses", name types, and name tokens. The second category concerns differences between contexts of introduction, and contexts of utterance. We will now look at each category in turn.

3.1 Name Types, Name Tokens, and Name Token Uses

Some of the following explanations will be familiar territory – the difference between name types and name tokens. The difference between these concepts, however, and the concept of a name token use will not be so familiar, as it borrows from some of Strawson's early work on referring that never quite got picked up in quite the way it should have been.

First, the seemingly familiar: just as we recognize a difference between types of expressions and tokens thereof for verbs, prepositions, common nouns, letters, and cetera,

so too will we do so for proper names. While there are many ways of characterizing the type-token distinction, at this point, we will keep it fairly intuitive. For example, consider the expression 'John and John are here.' In this sentence, it would seem that there is only one name type, but two tokens of that type. Tokens are individual concrete items, whereas types are abstract. On this simple picture, we might think of name types as just sets of their tokens. However, we know, upon consideration, that this cannot be correct, since surely there are name types that have never been inscribed, uttered, or otherwise physically instantiated. Name types then are something more than simply sets of their tokens.

A less simple picture, then, might have it that we can think of a name type as the set of its instances, possibly including its notational variants. An instance here is not to be understood as the end product of an instantiation of some kind, instead, an instance is intended here as an example of some kind, which may or may not be instantiated. So 'Elizabeth' is an example of the name type E-l-i-z-a-b-e-t-h whether anyone has ever used that name in the entire history of our linguistic community or not. Clearly, however, instances of this name type can be instantiated. Say, for example, when a speaker utters the sentence 'Elizabeth Bennet had a sharp wit'. In this case, the speaker has now introduced a token of the name type E-l-i-z-a-b-e-t-h. Tokens are the physical instantiations of name types. On this picture, then, name tokens can be seen as the set of all of those instances of a name type that are actually uttered, making name tokens a proper subset of the instances that make up a name type.

We will now turn away from familiar distinctions and introduce a different distinction, required if we are to properly understand the nature of proper names. On the CIT, there are, of course, name types and name tokens, but there are also what will be known as name

token uses. Name token uses are established in virtue of the occurrence of a token of some name type in a context of introduction, in which a speaker stipulatively associates some content with that name token, thereby creating a name token use – an expression such that when uttered in a specific context of utterance has as its meaning whatever its context of introduction determined it to be.

That there is a difference between name tokens and name token uses was argued for by Strawson quite some time ago. We might, for example, token the same name in the same context of utterance, but have no intention of using them to refer to one and the same thing. Likewise, we might token a name type in different contexts of utterance, and yet, intend for the referent of that name to remain stable. Strawson shows that we cannot simply rely on the idea that name tokens occurring within a given context of utterance will be sufficient to determine their meaning, since we can use tokens of the same type within a single context of utterance, and yet those tokens might have different meanings. Furthermore, we can also use tokens of the same type in different contexts, and yet those tokens might have the same meaning.

In contrast with relying simply on name tokens, when we rely on the token use of a name in a given context of utterance, that context will determine the meaning of that proper name because of its association with a particular context of introduction – the event that determined that name's semantic content. This would allow for tokens within the same context to be mapped to different meanings, since tokens of the same name type might invoke different token uses. And, likewise, it would also allow for tokens of the same name type that occur in different contexts of utterance to have the same meaning, since those tokens might invoke the same token use, and it is the token use that determines the

meaning of a name in a context of utterance, not simply a token with a context of utterance.

It is also clear, however, that in order for a context of utterance to determine the meaning of the use of a particular proper name – that is, for a token of a proper name to count as a token use of that name – a token of that name must have previously occurred in a context of introduction. But not all tokens do so occur, so we can think of name token uses, then, as proper subsets of name tokens, which themselves are proper subsets of the set of instances that constitute name types. Name token uses then are just instances of names that happen to have been tokened in a certain kind of context – a context of introduction. A name type, then, can be tied to different contents via a specific type of instance – a name token use.

3.2 Contexts of Introduction and Contexts of Utterance

The next distinction to be drawn, already presupposed, but now to be dealt with explicitly, is that of the difference between contexts that initiate uses for proper names – contexts of introduction – and contexts in which expressions are used with already established meanings – contexts of utterance. The key relationship between these two contexts with respect to proper names is that contexts of utterance are contexts in which names are used after they have had their meanings established via contexts of introduction (of course, not all words have explicit contexts of introduction, but it is one of the explicit claims here that names do).

Given that one of the key notions in the CIT is a context of introduction, defining it, at least in general terms, for now, is required. A context of introduction is an event in which the name token of a specific name type gets mentioned and is stipulated to have a certain meaning, consistent with the function of a proper name as a center of gravity for sustained

discourse about an idea, concept, belief, or individual, as described earlier. A context of introduction, then, I understand as a meta-linguistic performative act.³ In other words, a context of introduction is an event the occurrence of which guarantees that a name with a specific meaning gets introduced into the language.

4. The Context of Introduction Thesis

With these distinctions in place, we can now see how the CIT is can respect the constraints that names ought to be both de jure and rigid expressions. And it can do so without appealing to the designative conception of proper names.

4.1 The De Jure Nature of Name Tokens

As we previously hinted at, name tokens of the same name type can occur in different contexts of introduction producing distinct name token uses for that same name type. A given context of utterance that contains a token of that name type, must then be used to determine which, if any, of the multiple name token uses is the one relevant in that particular context of utterance. This will allow us to determine the semantic content of that name in a context of utterance – that is, which name token use is being invoked in that context.

And of course, it is also true that a token need not occur in any particular context of introduction of any kind. A name token could be used for no reason at all, simply to make a noise. Tokens and token uses then differ in that all token uses will have meaning, but not all tokens will. This fact is key for understanding the de jure aspect of the meaning of proper

³ More analysis here is required as there are notorious difficulties with relying on meta-linguistic accounts in any way in any semantic account. This later analysis will occur when we examine critiques of meta-linguistic accounts of the nature of names as predicates. As we will see, however, this specific proposal, because of its performative nature, and the accompanying felicity conditions that go along with such a performative act, can avoid the standard objections.

names. Name tokens, without being related to a context of introduction have no meaning at all. They are however apt for having their meanings stipulated in such contexts. A token use of the name type spelled M-o-n-t-a-g-u-e may designate the logician, but it might also refer to nothing, if used, let us say, in a work of fiction. Each of these uses are name token uses whose legitimacy derives from a context of introduction, which itself is a context that allows for speaker to specify a meaning for a name token via de jure act. And this is as it should be. Names are precisely the kinds of terms whose express purpose is to allow us to expand our lexicon, over which we have control, so as to allow us to allude to, mention, or reference common points of focus uniformly across speakers. Names token uses ought to be able to be introduced in a context of introduction with very little in the way of felicity conditions. The CIT then can accommodate the de jure nature of the meaning of proper names.

4.2 Names Token Uses as Rigid Expressions

We now have a grasp of the nature of names tokens, and their uses in meta-linguistic performative acts of stipulating a meaning for a name – aka a context of introduction. Once this occurs the introducer of the name has now established a name token use for a specific expression. This allows us to see how a name could be a rigid expression. It is rigid precisely because its meaning is fundamentally tied, once and for all, to a specific context of introduction. In other words, it is a context of introduction that gives a name token use its content. These contexts establish a token use for a name that makes its history or origin essential for appropriately deploying it. And, these contexts determine whatever content a specific name token use contributes to what is said when using that expression in a sentence. Of course, when we use a name in a given context of utterance, it won't always be clear which token use we have in mind. But this issue gets settled the same way as any

issue of ambiguity would be settled, or the use of a demonstrative would be without any clear accompanying act of ostension. This is a matter of pragmatics, not semantics.

As before, the use of name tokens is not constrained in the way as the use of name token uses. And again, as before, it is this feature that makes names de jure expressions. Once we combine that mentioned token of a name with an associated semantic content, it becomes rigid. It now follows that proper names really are de jure rigid expressions.

However, none of what's been said thus far changes the fact that at least some tokens of names in acts of introduction are referential in the same way that Kripke and others claim they are, and in fact, denying this is not intended. Some name token uses do fit the Kripkean theory of how proper names function. However, I have also claimed that there is a difference between the CIT and Kripkean theories of proper names. The fact that names are linguistic devices that can be used to refer to an individual does not entail that they must be so used. As previously mentioned, names are used in a variety of ways that do not easily fit the Kripkean mould.

Now what would make it clear that referential token uses of names are not the only way a name might get its content in a context of introduction? Well, one way is to have it that names, which are referential, come marked as such. These markings, we shall call "modes of introduction." The claim of the CIT is that all names come with such markers. There are, then, two parts to a name's semantic value. There is the content with which a token use is associated, but there is also some aspect of that name's architecture that tells us whether the kind of name we are dealing with is referential.

This concept that names come with markers as to the nature of their context of introduction – their mode of introduction – I will represent this semantic structure proposed

as ordered pairs of the form $\langle M, C \rangle$, where M is the mode of introduction, and C – that de jure aspect of token use’s meaning – is the component that most closely corresponds to the traditional content of a name. For now, I will assume that there is only one mode of introduction – a referential mode – which I will refer to as REF.⁴

But what role does the mode of introduction play in this theory? The simple explanation is that if we allow modes of introduction into our theory, we can have rigid expressions without needing to make those expressions rigid designators. Only those names carrying the tag REF function in this way. And, this of course, will become very useful, once I begin to explore the nature of other kinds of names. For now, I simply want to explain the nature of a proper name according to the CIT and to illustrate the mechanics of the view.

As we’ve seen, one of the unifying features that characterize all proper names on the CIT is that they will, of necessity, function as rigid expressions, given that the meaning of a name token use is determined by its particular context of introduction, and the content with which it was associated in that context. This is not new and is easily explained by Kripke’s competing theory. The second unifying feature we saw, however, is not so easily explained – that on this view, all names are de jure expressions. This is where the earlier Strawsonian three-part distinction between name types, tokens, and name token uses comes in handy. The reason is that speakers can mention name tokens in contexts of introduction in order to stipulate for them a new name token use, something never explained on Kripke’s view. In short, the CIT is an account of the meaning of proper names that maintains the importance of their history for determining their appropriate application or use, does not make referring

⁴ Recanati [1993] likewise uses the tag REF to indicate an essential component of a name’s semantic value; see also Taylor [2000]. Although I borrow the REF tag, I put it to a different use in the current theory.

to an individual an essential property of their meaning, and yet, still respects Kripke's insight that names are de jure rigid expressions. For the sake of clarity, I will now apply this idea to the simple case in which a name's mode of introduction is REF.

4.3 The Simple Referential Cases

On the CIT view, name types like M-o-n-t-a-g-u-e are not infinitely ambiguous expressions. There is only one name type M-o-n-t-a-g-u-e. However, as we've seen, the meanings of tokens of that name are sensitive to contexts of utterance. A name token, all on its own, can take on different values depending upon which established token use of that name, which of its contexts of introduction, or what I will now call "dubbings", is salient in a given context of utterance.

To understand how a name's interpretation in a context of utterance – a name's token use – depends on the nature of the dubbing with which it is associated, consider an example. It is natural to take the instance of 'Bertrand Russell' in the sentence 'Bertrand Russell smokes a pipe' to refer to the great philosopher, Bertrand Russell. On my view, while this use of the name is referential, it is not referential simply because the semantic function of a name is to refer to an object. Rather, this token use of this particular name is referential because the dubbing associated with it is one in which a particular individual, the great philosopher himself, is assigned to the name as its content by an act of reference. That is, the semantic structure of this name is <REF, Bertrand Russell>.

To take another example, consider the name type E-l-i-z-a-b-e-t-h, which may be used to discuss Elizabeth Taylor, the frequently married movie star, or Queen Elizabeth II, the current monarch of England. It is crucial to the current theory that one of these dubbings must be selected before any particular name can be properly interpreted.

Imagine then that a speaker utters the words ‘Elizabeth wore a rather fetching hat at the ceremony yesterday’. I think we can safely assume that this token of ‘Elizabeth’ is mapped to the dubbing in which the Queen Elizabeth was an essential part of the dubbing that occurred by mentioning a token of the name type E-I-I-Z-A-B-E-T-H in her presence, upon her birth, by those imbued with the authority to make it true that ‘Elizabeth’ is the name by which she is now known. That is, that dubbing created a token use for the name ‘Elizabeth’ which is the correct interpretation of that name given certain contexts of utterance. We can imagine a similar situation for the famous actress Elizabeth Taylor.

The intuitive idea is roughly this: the meaning of a token use of a proper name (that is, the meaningful use of a proper name in a context of utterance) has its semantic content derived from applying a function to a name token that maps that token given a context of utterance to a particular dubbing – a name token use with rigid content, as determined by the context of utterance. If the function maps a particular token of a name to particular dubbing, then the name in question will be interpreted as having that value it was assigned in the conversationally salient context of introduction. If a token of a name has no associated context of introduction, it is not mapped to any particular contextually salient semantic content, and is therefore without content. However, those names will be few and far between. Even, as we’ll see, for names that do not map to traditional referential dubbings.

4.2 The Nature of Dubbings

What must the semantic interpretation of a name be like in order to reflect the picture sketched thus far? I have claimed that a meaningful name token is an expression that is equivalent to a set containing a variety of acts of introduction, or dubbings, and also with a

function that maps each context of utterance into one of these dubbings – just like contexts of utterance, themselves complex entities, so too are dubbings complex entities.

Dubbings, then, are themselves structured entities – they have parts. But what parts? Just like a context of utterance, an actual dubbing considered as an event in the world may have any number of features – not only the agent of the dubbing, but its time, the place, what the weather was like that day, and so on. For now, however, we will assume that the only semantically relevant feature of a dubbing is the kind of content it assigns to a name. This component of a dubbing is what we will think of as its traditional content – as that which plays a direct role in determining the truth value of a sentence embedding a proper name. In the case of a referential dubbing, I rely on the standard assumption that this content will be an individual.

4.3 A Formal Application of the CIT to the Simple Case

Let us now turn from dubbings in general to the set of dubbings D that allow us to determine the meaning of a particular name token use of the name type *E-l-i-z-a-b-e-t-h*, once again. As we saw, among the set of these various dubbings will be one that occurred upon the birth of Queen Elizabeth II, the Queen of England. This dubbing would contain Elizabeth herself, the current English Monarch, as its content, and the tag REF to represent the referential mode of introduction. The dubbing, then, could be represented as the pair $\langle \text{REF}, \text{Elizabeth} \rangle$.

Having introduced the set D of dubbings associated with a name n , the next question is: how does a particular dubbing get assigned to the use of the name n in some particular context? As noted earlier, the process is mysterious, or at least unexplained, but as is often the case, it can be useful to abstract away from the mystery and suppose that the relevant

information is carried by the dubbing selection function here represented as f_n that can be taken to map any particular token of a name in a context of utterance to the dubbing appropriate for that context, resulting in a name token use.⁵

So, for example, if j is some context in which the English Monarch herself is under discussion, we can suppose that the function f 'Elizabeth' (j) – the dubbing selection function associated with the name 'Elizabeth' – maps the context j into the dubbing that contains the English Monarch as its content, and the tag REF as its mode of introduction. More formally, we have:

$$f \text{ 'Elizabeth' } (j) = \langle \text{REF, Elizabeth} \rangle.$$

Likewise, if the context k involves, perhaps, a book club devoted to the biography of Taylor the movie star, we can suppose that the function f 'Elizabeth' (k) will map the context k into the dubbing containing the appropriate set of properties along with the tag REF – or, again, more formally:

$$f \text{ 'Elizabeth' } (k) = \langle \text{REF, Elizabeth} \rangle.$$

⁵ My treatment of names raises the following question: why should we treat names as context-sensitive expressions, rather than treating them as ambiguous? That is, why think there is only one word 'Elizabeth' rather than multiple homophonous, but distinct words, one for each Elizabeth? There are, in fact, several considerations against treating names as multiply ambiguous. The first is simply methodological: in theorizing about natural language, we must always be constrained by questions of acquisition. For this reason, positing ambiguity should always remain a mechanism of last resort, because acquiring a highly ambiguous language is more difficult than acquiring a less ambiguous language. Another consideration comes from natural language usage itself: ordinary speakers would tend to say that Queen Elizabeth and Liz Taylor share the same name. Of course, neither of these considerations is conclusive evidence against the ambiguity theorist. Indeed, the matter is controversial: for further arguments against the ambiguity hypothesis, see Pietroski's [2010]; for the opposition, see Segal's [2001]. Although the matter is controversial, I still choose, in this paper, to treat names as context-sensitive expressions. It would be possible, however, to adopt the ambiguity hypothesis while still maintaining the essentials of the current approach: the nature of a proper name's semantic value, as well as the way in which its semantic content is derived from a dubbing. The sole difference would be that, instead of being associated with many dubbings, each name would be associated with only one.

With this machinery in place, we can now define a semantic interpretation function v that maps a particular instance of a name n in a context i into its semantic content $v_i(n)$. The proposal is simply that the semantic content of a name in a particular context should be identified with the dubbing associated with that name in that context. Given this proposal, our task of defining an interpretation function v is absolutely straightforward, since we can simply identify the semantic content of the name n in the context i with the dubbing that the appropriate dubbing selection function f_n associates with the name in that context. Put generally, this gives us:

$$v_i(n) = f_n(i).$$

Applying to this to our different cases of the meaning of a proper name like 'Elizabeth' in contexts j and k we get:

$$\begin{aligned} v_j(\text{'Elizabeth'}) &= f_n(j) \\ &= \langle \text{REF, Queen Elizabeth} \rangle; \\ v_k(\text{'Elizabeth'}) &= f_n(k) \\ &= \langle \text{REF, Liz Taylor} \rangle. \end{aligned}$$

5. Names and Predication

Thus far, there is nothing the referentialist could disagree with, save for the semantic hypothesis of a mode of introduction as constituting part of a name's semantic value. Ultimately, the truth conditions of simple sentences embedding proper names on the CIT view are the same as that of the referentialist. Returning to an earlier example, on both the referentialist thesis and the CIT, a sentence like 'Bertrand Russell smokes' is true just in case the referent of the name 'Bertrand Russell' can be properly said to smoke.

Nevertheless, the semantic process of arriving at that truth condition on the CIT is

different from that of the standard referentialist's process. For the standard referentialist, it simply follows from a simple axiom of predication, plus the combination of the semantic types name and predicate, and the referentialist evaluation is entailed. The CIT, however, has it that predication is not this simple. For the subscriber to the CIT, the activation of a predication rule is sensitive to what we've been calling a "mode of introduction." Our predication rule, then, for the CIT does not respond only to traditional truth-conditional content. In other words, we cannot reverse engineer semantic axioms for predication merely based on the intuitive truth-conditional content of a simple sentence embedding a proper name. There is more to it than this. To see the distinction, let us look at the differences between the two rules of predication: the referentialist understanding of it and the CIT understanding of it.

5.1 Referentialist Predication

One way of putting the referentialist axiom is as follows:

(RP) 'Bertrand Russell smokes' is true just in case the referent of 'Russell', Russell himself, is a member of the set of the things to which 'smokes' applies – the things that have the property of being smokers.

More formally, $v_i(\text{'Bertrand Russell smokes'})$ is true just in case $v_i(\text{'Bertrand Russell smokes'}) = \langle \text{Bertrand Russell}, \{\text{smokes}\} \rangle$ in i .

The valuation function v relative to a context here is admittedly crude and reveals little about the actual mechanics of combination. Of course, any way of spelling this out will be controversial, but for the sake of comprehension, I'll give just one example of how we might do this.

The semantic content of a proper name like 'Bertrand Russell' then in a context i would be nothing but the man himself. And, on a set-theoretic understanding, the value of

'smokes' in a context i is simply the set of smokers.

I explicate the nature of at least simple referentialist predication as that of a mechanism for pairing objects with the respective sets of which they are members. Predication, then, pairs an individual with different sets of other individuals. The result is an ordered pair to be understood as conveying the information that the first member of that pair is a potential member of the second member of the pair. Predication then is simply a function that produces ordered pairs, ultimately understood in terms of set membership relations. To predicate is to relate the semantic values of expressions to one another in particular ways, ways ultimately reducible to set-theoretic relations between those items semantic values.

5.2 CIT Predication

On the CIT view, predication is slightly more complicated than the standard referentialist picture of it, and this is because the semantic value assigned to a name is non-standard. Typically, the semantic value of a name is identified with its traditional content – the component of our semantic value $\langle M, C \rangle$ represented here by C , in the simple case, an individual. Therefore, typically, what combines with a predicate to produce something truth-evaluable is exactly what one would expect, something that can contribute to a sentence's truth-theoretic properties.

But on the present view, the semantic value of a name is more complex, containing as before both a component corresponding to the name's traditional content and a tag representing its mode of introduction. For this reason, the CIT must distinguish between semantic value and content. The rule for predication, therefore, must accommodate the fact that a name's semantic value includes, in addition to its traditional content, a tag

representing its mode of introduction. In contrast with referentialist predication, we might think of the predication rule for the CIT this way:

(CITP) 'Bertrand Russell smokes' is true just in case the semantic value of 'Russell' contains both REF and Russell. If REF is present, then the sentence is true just in case the referent of 'Bertrand Russell' is a member of the set of smokers.

More formally, $v_i(\text{'Bertrand Russell smokes'})$ is true just in case $v_i(\text{'Bertrand Russell smokes'}) = (1) \text{'Russell' has as the first member of its semantic value REF, and (2) } \langle \text{Bertrand Russell, \{smokes\}} \rangle$ in i .

Note that it is the mode of introduction, not the mere combination of semantic types plus an axiomatic rule concerning their combination that determines the nature of predication in play for the CIT. That is, the mode of introduction serves as a meta-semantic trigger instructing speakers about the mode of combination they ought to use to evaluate the truth-theoretic properties of an expression. Thus far, since the examples we have seen thus far all have REF as their mode of introduction, the truth-conditional result of applying the predicative axiom is the same as when we apply the standard referentialist axiom.

Some may object that this account is not compositional, or ad hoc, or some such thing, but I see no reason why this should be the case. On the CIT view, all names have a tag, and all names are evaluated by responding to the input of that tag and the individual referent, and the same tag will always output the same predication rule. This issue will become more pressing, however, in the next chapter in which I will deal with problem of fictional names.

6. Motivations for a Bipartite Account of a Proper Name's Meaning

Worries about compositionality aside, there is a more obvious worry I will now consider. It concerns the reasoning behind offering such a complex account of names in the first place.

At first glance, we might think that the hypothesis that a name has two aspects to its semantic value, both some content and a mode of introduction, unnecessarily complicates the semantics of those lexical items thereby violating the norm of simplicity or parsimony for semantic theories.

In reply, consider the fact that the idea of making the semantic value of a name complex rather than simple has been drifting around since Frege (1892), and with good reason. For instance, historically, adding an additional aspect to a name's semantic value is motivated by the problems that arise when embedding proper names in propositional attitude contexts.

Consider the classic Fregean example of the two distinct names for the planet Venus, 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus', respectively corresponding to the planet's appearance in the evening and the morning sky, thereby allowing for the possibility that speakers might believe that Hesperus rises in the evening, but fail to believe this of Phosphorus, despite the fact that these names are co-referential. Wrestling with these problems has led many theorists to posit some kind of Fregean ingredient as part a proper name's meaning in order to explain its varying substitutional roles in extensional and intensional contexts. But in addition to these motivations, there are more contemporary considerations in favor of complicating a name's semantic value, like those that motivate my own theory. None of this, of course, justifies my specific proposal yet, but it does go some way to taking the edge off the claim that a name's semantic value is bipartite.

Consider also the difference, initially noted by Kripke, between *de jure* and *de facto* rigid designators, a difference that cries out for explanation. Some definite descriptions, such as 'the square root of four', will designate rigidly as a matter of their content. A rigid

definite description like this counts as a de facto rigid designator. Since it is not plausible to claim that all names are associated with rigid definite descriptions, but because all names are rigid, Kripke distinguishes proper names as a separate kind of rigid designator, and ultimately concludes that these expressions must be rigid in virtue of a stipulation. In other words, proper names are de jure rigid. This fact might be thought to argue, all by itself, for including more in a name's semantic value than simply its traditional content, which is usually thought to be an individual – the object to which the term refers.

Recanati (1993), for instance, reasons that if names are rigid designators, and yet are semantically distinct from de facto rigid designators, there must be something in their semantics to indicate this fact. He argues that even ordinary referential names must have as part of their semantics something that indicates their status as de jure rigid. For Recanati, such names are marked in a way that tells a speaker that, as a matter of stipulation, they are rigid designators. We therefore have at least one reason for believing that a name's semantic value is more complex than we might initially be inclined to think.

Another reason to suppose that a name's semantic value is complex emerges in light of the semantic differences between variables and proper names. Both variables and proper names have individuals as their semantic values, and both retain their values for the purposes of truth-conditional evaluations. However, unlike a variable, whose nature it is to allow for arbitrary value re-assignments, a proper name's value is traditionally represented as a logical constant, an expression whose value is not open for arbitrary re-assignment. Since the contents of both kinds of expressions are comprised of individuals, the question arises as to what distinguishes them from one another. Three different possible answers are available: distinguish between the kinds of contents the two expressions can have, claim

that there is no distinction, or add another dimension to their respective semantic values that does distinguish them.⁶ I choose the latter option.

The resulting picture is, in some ways, reminiscent of a debate between Michael Dummett and Ernst Tugendhat concerning the interpretation of Frege's notion of *Bedeutung*, commonly translated as "reference" [Dummett 1993; Tugendhat 1970]. Tugendhat argued that a name's reference, in Frege's sense, should be identified, not necessarily with its bearer, but with what he called its "truth-value potential" – an abstract representation of the role played by that name in determining the truth value of a sentence in which it occurs. Apart from the term "truth value potential."

I believe that Tugendhat was onto something. There is a difference between characterizing an expression's role in determining meaning, and that expressions actual content. Tugendhat thus wanted to divorce the notion of reference from the name/bearer relation. Reference was properly an abstract notion used in characterizing the functional role of an expression in determining a sentence's truth-value. Dummett argued, by contrast, that it is the bearer of a name itself that determines its truth-value potential.

If we identify the current understanding of the content of a name with Tugendhat's idea of truth-value potential – that is, with its contribution to determining truth value – and if we identify the referent of a name with its bearer, we can, in a sense, split the difference between these two writers. We can agree that all names have a truth-value potential, a content, while allowing that, in the case of referential names, this truth-value potential can indeed be identified with the bearer of that name, its referent. However, while all of this might be true if we stick to the truth-value potential talk, it misses something deeply

⁶ In contrast with my approach, Cumming (2008) argues for the second option – that proper names just are variables. I do not here deal with the data he offers in favor of this hypothesis, but I do believe that it must be explained even though I cannot do so here.

important about this debate. How I see the debate is that Tugendhat wanted a purely abstract relational account of meaning, whereas Dummett, for lack of a better word, a more realist interpretation.

One might still feel – as indeed Dummett did – that the name/bearer relation, the relation of a name to its referent, is a more well-understood idea than any abstract notion of truth-value potential. Indeed, it is this name/bearer relation that is taken as primitive in most semantic theories. Here, however, I would have to take Tugendhat's side, instead favoring the relation of a name to its content, as the more fundamental semantic relation.

The advantage I claim for my approach is this: working with the more general relation of association between names and contents, we are now able to define what had previously been taken as a primitive name/bearer relation as the special case of this more general relation. As we will see in the next chapter, however, it is much harder to move in the opposite direction, trying to extend the standard name/bearer relation from referential uses of names so that it applies to names more generally, since not all names are referential.

7. Conclusion

The CIT allows names to have referential uses without making this use of names constitutive of their semantic character. The theory is thus strongly Kripkean in nature, and indeed, can be seen as a generalization of Kripke's own view. As in Kripke's theory, it relies on the notion of a dubbing to determine the content of a name, and identifies that content with a referent, at least for referential uses of names; but the current theory also allows for non-referential uses in which the content of a name is not identified with its referent the usefulness of which will be thoroughly illustrated in the following chapters on fictional,

descriptive, and empty names. Thus, the theory works like referentialism where referentialism works, but it does not force the referentialist into performing feats of acrobatics in order to sustain the referentialist thesis, which if I am correct, was never needed in the first place in order to capture the Kripkean data.