Names Are Not Predicates

Abstract: There are many examples offered as evidence that proper names are predicates. Not all of these cases speak to a name's semantic content, but many of them do. These include attributive, quantifier, and ambiguity cases. We will explore those cases here, and we will see that none of them conclusively show that names are predicates. In fact, all of these constructions can be given alternative analyses that eliminate the predicative characteristics of names they feature. These analyses do not involve having names functioning as predicates in any way at all. In attributive cases, the names within them are to be understood as occurring in a comparative construction, not an attributive construction. In the last two sorts of cases, the names that occur are analyzed as part of a more complex referring device for a specific domain, rather than functioning as predicates. Both paraphrases can be given plausible semantic treatments that have significant advantages over their competitors. For this reason, there is less motivation to focus on predicative views of proper names. The alternative semantic treatments are tailored to the different cases, and are therefore different from another, but the treatments do not entail an ambiguity hypothesis, since the second of them is not a semantic treatment of the specific proper names occurring within them, but instead of a more complex phrase that only mentions specific proper names that is not itself understood as structured.

1. Motivation

Let us consider two contrasting views about the semantic nature of proper names. The first view, known as the predicative view, offers an analysis of names as expressions that have properties as their semantic values.[1] The second view, known as the referentialist view, offers an analysis of names as expressions whose semantic values are singular individuals. Both views are justified, since we have conflicting data supporting each of them equally well. A defender of a predicative account, then, needs to explain how and why proper names are used referentially, whereas a defender of a referentialist account needs to how and why name are used predictively. If we find that we can eliminate the evidence in favor of one of these views, we could focus instead on the other approach, or perhaps even a new view. As we will see, there is a way to eliminate at least some of the data that favors

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[1] I assume throughout that the semantic value of a predicate is a property of some sort. This is done merely for economy of expression. The points here go through independent of any particular conception of the semantic value of a predicate.

one of these views. Specifically, we can reject much of the data that favors the predicative view.[2]

2. Names as Predicates

One of the most well known discussions of the fact that we should think of names as predicates — as expressions associated with properties rather than with individuals that have properties — comes from Quine (1953). There, Quine gives us two distinct understandings of a predicative view of proper names. On one understanding, we could take name-predicates as associated with singleton sets — as having as their semantic values properties that apply uniquely to a single individual. On the second understanding, we could take name-predicates as associated with sets containing all of those individuals that bear the name in question, along the same lines as common nouns. There have been numerous developments of these two views the details of which we need not go into here.[3] Our aim is not to evaluate any particular name-predicate view, but instead to provide an alternative explanation of the typical constructions used to show that names are predicates, constructions that serve as common motivations for almost every proponent of the predicate

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[2] There are other constructions that challenge the referentialist view that are not considered. Given that this strategy here is to treat each case one by one, there are only so many cases that can be considered at one time. However, the cases we will consider cases are the most heavily relied on to support predicative accounts, at least up to this point.

[3] With respect to the singularly applying predicate, one possible Moorean (1899) analysis of what such a predicate might be is that the meaning of each name is equivalent to that of a simple, un-analyzable concept, one for each named individual in a domain of discourse. The common noun approach is developed by Burge (1973) who posits a tacit demonstrative to resolve referential ambiguities. Another common answer is provided by the meta-linguistic approach, according to which the meaning of a name like 'Tyler' is analyzed in terms of what it is to be called "Tyler" (Kneale 1962; Katz 2001). A fourth answer to the question of how the meaning of a name might be given as that of a predicate is offered by Fara (2011a), (2011b) and (2015). According to this account, a name's meaning likewise depends -- as in the meta-linguistic account -- on a calling relation, but on one that is not itself meta-linguistic.

view of names.[4]

3. Why Believe Names are Predicates

The motives for treating names as predicates are varied. However, the classical reason comes from the same source as before — Quine. According to Quine, names should be treated as predicates because doing so allows us to avoid the traditional problems associated with analyzing the content of empty names. Up until Russell's (1905) claim that names are nothing but disguised definite descriptions, philosophers struggled to explain how to understand the meaning of expressions containing proper names that fail to refer. It appeared, that in order to say of Pegasus that it was the winged horse of Bellerophon, and to say something sensible and true, Pegasus must in fact exist. Even worse, take the sentence

(1) Pegasus does not exist.

On the referentialist theory of names prevailing at the time — that names are used as labels for singular individuals — a name must refer in order to have meaning. But given the truth of sentence (1), and the non-existence of Pegasus, surely this must be a mistake. However, if we treat a name as a predicate, then we can assert sentence (1) without paradox. We can say that it is false that there is anything that instantiates the property of being Pegasus. While this is an important reason for adopting a predicativist view of the meaning of a proper name, let us now turn to more contemporary reasons for supposing that this is the case.

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[4] Save for those such as Pietroski (2010) whose motivation is to reduce the number of semantic categories in a theory of meaning. I should also say that some of these examples are used as counterexamples to particular predicativist theories — to argue that they cannot offer a unified view. However, all the examples are examples of predicative uses of names, and as someone rejecting predicativism, I must explain them all.

These more contemporary reasons include the following: at times, we appear to use names as if they indicate a mode of being — as connoting certain properties that we can attribute to individuals — instead of simply referring to individuals themselves, showing that they are more than mere tags for singular individuals; we also sometimes use names as if they can be bound by quantifiers — as expressions that can take individuals as arguments — again showing they are more than mere devices of reference for singular individuals; last, sometimes the use of a name can engender which-questions in certain conversational contexts — as in which person bears a particular name — showing that names might be better thought of as common nouns, not as devices of reference. These uses of proper names give us good reasons for thinking of names as predicates, even though each sort of use is slightly different. In fact, as we'll see, one of these sorts of uses is somewhat simple to deal with, whereas the others are not. For this reason, most of the emphasis of the paper is on providing a semantic account of the more difficult cases, though we will see a semantic account offered for the simpler case as well.

3.1 Attributive cases

The first case, as mentioned, involves using names as if they can be used to attribute properties to individuals. Take, for instance, the sentence

(2) Frank is a real Napoleon,[5]

or

(3) Here comes Lena with her two little Lenas.[6]

In these sentences, it appears that the names are being used to express properties, not to

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[5] See Burge (1973) for pointing out this kind of use of proper names.

[6] See Jeshion (2015a and 2015b).

refer to things at all. In sentence (2), 'Napoleon' is being used to attribute Napoleon-ness to Frank, for surely what's being said is not that Frank is literally identical to Napoleon. Sentence (3), of course, is obviously not making an identity claim, as this would clearly violate the law of transitivity. Instead, it appears to be attributing Lena-ness to Lena's two children.

3.2 Quantifier cases

At times, we bind names with quantifiers. This suggests that they are in fact predicates, since only expressions that can, in principle, apply to more than one object are open for binding. Common examples of this phenomenon are as follows:

(4) All Franks are real chatterboxes

(5) Some Franks are real chatterboxes

(6) The Frank I know is a real chatterbox

Sentences (4), (5), and (6) treat the names contained within as expressions that can be modified by a quantity operator to make explicit how many of those in a specific domain have some property or other. In these cases, to indicate that a particular quantity of Frank's have the property of being chatterboxes.

3.3 Ambiguity Cases

Ambiguity cases are those in which there is a group of individuals properly understood as belonging to a set to which a certain predicate applies — in this case, to which a name-predicate applies. A sentence that might be used to express the problem of ambiguity with respect to proper name is

(7) That Frank is a real chatterbox.[7]

In this case, we can understand sentence (6) as making it explicit which Frank it is that is in fact a chatterbox, not the one sitting quietly taking notes, but that one over there making jokes to his friends.

4. Why Names Are Not Predicates

Now the question is, ought we to take the previous reasons as conclusive reasons for believing that names have a predicative function? Of course, the answer we will now explore is negative. For each case that apparently shows that names are predicates, there are alternative ways of understanding that case that do not have names playing predicative roles at all.

4.1 Attributive Cases as Comparatives

In attributive cases, when we assert a sentence like (2), apparently asserting that Frank is a real Napoleon, we are not actually attributing the property of being Napoleon to Frank. Instead, we begin with individuals as semantic values for our embedded proper names, and we understand those individuals, not as simples, but instead as sets of properties (Montague, 1973).[8] We can then get a compositional formal analysis that represents the content of sentence (2). Instead of understanding a sentence like (2) as a subject-predicate sentence, we should instead understand the 'is' in such constructions as comparative.[9] That is, we take the semantic value of the name 'Frank' — the set of all of those properties Frank

[7] It is important not to read the 'that' in this sentence as merely playing a pleonastic — a semantically empty, but syntactically required role — rather than a demonstrative role — one with semantic consequences.

[8] For more defense of this view taking into consideration different issues, see Tiedke (2011).

[9] Why appeal to such abstract theories of names such as Montague's here? Well, if we were focused solely on this case alone, in the end, it would be the theory that applies most straightforwardly to the apparent syntax of sentences with this form.

has — and compare those properties with Napoleon's properties. The content of sentence (2) then is understood as comparing the properties of Frank and Napoleon and saying of those properties that they are similar. This eliminates the predicativist view of names under consideration, since, on this proposal, the semantic values of names are not not first-order predicates in any sense — they do not take individuals as arguments, and that is exactly what the predicativist claims.

Other examples in which we use the expression 'is' in a similar fashion include constructions like these:

(8) Boating is Heaven,

(9) Necessity is the mother of invention,

(10) Love is not a victory march,

(11) Cleanliness is next to godliness.

Like sentence (2), sentences (8)-(11) also resist standard predicative analyses of their meanings — that, in predicating, we attribute a property to some subject or other. Sentence (8) neither expresses an identity claim, nor does it express a property that boating literally has. Similar things can be said for sentences (9)-(11). Sentence (2), then, is not the only example that pushes for sometimes giving a comparative analysis of sentences containing the expression 'is', plenty of others do as well.

Now what of sentence (3)? We do not, in this case, simply have two different names embedded within it. Rather, we have a more complex construction, 'two little Lenas'. For this reason, we cannot straightforwardly rely on our previous analysis. A different strategy must be invoked before we can rely on it. This strategy is to paraphrase the complex construction in sentence (3) into a form that makes each use of each name explicitly represented.

Sentence (3) is now rendered as having the following form:

(3)' Here comes Lena$_1$ with little Lena$_2$ and with little Lena$_3$.

Now we can give a straightforward analysis of (3)' as a comparative relying on our previous treatment. That is, we can now assign sets of properties to each of the embedded names as their semantic values. So, what we are actually doing in sentence (3) is comparing the properties of Lena$_1$ with the properties of the other two individuals temporarily dubbed 'Lena' in this particular context, even if it is not their true name, and saying that each of them are similar — share common properties.

Could we think of the rendition of sentence (3) as merely ad hoc? The answer is "no." Why? Because no one would assent to having asserted that, in sentence (3), they intended to attribute the property of actually being Lena to Lena's daughters. So the sentence naturally calls for reinterpretation.

4.2 Quantifiers, Ambiguity, and Domain Specifiers

Quantifier and ambiguity cases require a different sort of treatment from the attributive cases. Our sample quantificational sentences (4), (5), and (6) invite us to infer that because we can bind only predicative expressions with quantifiers, names must be this sort of expression. Similarly, our ambiguity case involving sentence (7) suggests that having a particular name is something that more than one individual object can have. This again suggests that names are more like predicative expressions than originally thought, assuming we take the previous sentences at face value. But suppose we don't. Suppose that constructions like 'All Franks' are not understood as being composed of a quantifier and a common noun, but are understood instead as complex devices of reference that specify a domain of discourse. Furthermore, suppose these domain specifiers do not even contain

the use of a proper name at all. To clarify, let us look at what a paraphrase of our problem cases might look like. Take sentence (4) All Franks are real chatterboxes. We can paraphrase this sentence as

(4)' Of those named 'Frank': they are real chatterboxes.

Mutatis mutandis for sentence (5). 'Some Franks are real chatterboxes' becomes:

(5)' Of a number of those named 'Frank': they are real chatterboxes.

Sentence (6) 'The Frank I know is a real chatterbox' we can paraphrase in the following way:

(6)' Of whom I know named 'Frank': he is a real chatterbox.

Lastly, sentence (7) — 'That Frank is a real chatterbox' — becomes

(7)' Of that one named 'Frank': he is a real chatterbox.

These syntactic reconfigurations allow us to paraphrase away the apparent evidence that names are predicates.

Our syntactic reconfigurations, however, are merely that — syntactic reconfigurations. We have yet to provide a semantic analysis of them. And nothing has been said about the relationship between the original construction and its reconfigured version. Of course, given the stated goal of eliminating a predicativist account of proper names, there is only one thing to say about the second of these issues — that our paraphrases, whatever their semantics might be, must give the actual meanings of their paraphrased counterparts. Otherwise, any semantic account of such paraphrases would not accomplish our stated goal. For the sake of argument, we will simply assume an analytic relationship between sentences (4)-(7) and (4)'-(7)', and move on to exploring the semantics of the latter. Though it is important to note that the analysis offered is never intended to

correspond isomorphically to the parts of the analysandum. We are not here offering an analysis of the meanings of the names within, for example, quantified constructions, but rather of the entire construction itself.

5. The Domain Specifier View of Quantifier and Ambiguity Cases

The semantic account we will consider treats the material that comes prior to the pronouns in sentences (4)'-(7)' as domain specifiers, or as explicit specifiers of a universe of discourse. It treats the pronouns occurring within these sentences as anaphoric expressions that have the specified domain as their value, and the predicates are functions that take these domains as arguments and map them to true or false.[10] We will call this view the "Domain Specifier" view.

Our domain specifier, in particular, is in need of more detailed semantic treatment, since it is easy to claim that the domain specifier 'Of those named 'Frank'' is really an expression with a tacit quantifier: All of those named 'Frank'. Similarly, we might think that the phrase 'Of a number of those named 'Frank'' ought to be understood as: Of some of those named 'Frank'. If correct, it would be tempting to believe that there has been no progress here, that we still have a predicative analysis of proper names, only a meta-linguistic one. A semantic account of our domain specifiers that avoids this consequence must be sought.

5.1 The Semantics of Domain Specifiers

The initial hypothesis is that the domain specifiers in sentences (4)'-(7)' are to be treated as complex devices of reference akin to Kripke's treatment of complex names like 'The Holy Roman Empire' whose semantic value is not determined compositionally by the syntax and

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[10] We are here going to take anaphoric reference as unproblematic, at least for the cases we are looking at, and assume that an anaphor takes on its antecedent as its value.

meanings of the parts of the expression that make it up.[11] This hypothesis is the reason for having used the preposition 'of' in the domain specifier. They are intended to pick out domains via acts of reference.[12] If this is the case, then even if there is any tacit syntactic quantification, it has no effect on the semantic interpretation of our domain specifiers, since they are not semantically complex items.

5.2 Motivations for Treating Domain Specifiers as Devices of Reference

Clearly, there are theoretical advantages to thinking of domain specifiers as complex names — it avoids the previous objection from the predicativist, and it allows us to avoid giving an analysis of the mentionings of names contained within them. But these are not the only reasons for treating them in this way, nor can it be, since mere theoretical advantages are insufficient to warrant belief in a theory, given that such motivations are ad hoc without further independent motivations coming from outside the theory itself. An independent reason for thinking that domains can and do serve as referents is that they are individuals in their own right. Another independent reason involves our intuitions about the semantic reference of the relevant domain specifiers. And a last independent reason relies on our intuitions about the modal profiles of sentences containing our particular domain specifiers.

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[11] But isn't whether names function in the way Kripke argues the very idea at issue? How then can I rely on this idea? Well, I can rely on this idea because I am not claiming that the relevant domain specifiers are proper names as we identify them syntactically in the language, but rather that they are devices of reference — logically proper names — not something the predicativist is out to deny, at least, not most.

[12] Sentence (6)' causes some complications for this claim, since its extension is indefinite. How then could it be a device of reference? Well, even though its extension is indefinite, this odes not entail that its extension is non-specific. The domain specifier in (6)' could function as a context-sensitive indefinite device of reference in the same way as other expressions with indefinite reference do, such as 'this', 'it', 'a man I met', and cetera. We'll come back to this issue later when giving the truth conditions for sentences (4)'-(7)'.

5.2.1 Domains as Objects of Reference

Can we treat domain specifiers as complex devices of reference? Why not? There is no reason for thinking that we cannot pick out domains by referring to them equally as well as we can anything else. Still, simply because we can do something, does not mean we should, or that we do. So why should we treat such complex phrases like 'Of those individuals named 'Frank':' as devices of reference? One reason is that we can and do refer to domains of discourse as entities in their own right. To simplify things, for now let us think of a domain of discourse as a set. In set theory, we usually use qualitative conditions, or properties, to define the boundaries of a set, determined by the individuals satisfying those conditions or having certain properties. These are the individuals who count as members of that set. If we have a nominalist bent, it is tempting to conclude that sets have no existence independent of their members and the properties of those members. However, just a simple glance at Leibniz's Law of the Indiscernability of Identicals shows that sets are not merely individuated by their members, since sets can have properties that individuals do not and vice versa.[13] A set, for instance, has a cardinality, but its members need not. The singleton set containing Frank as a member, has the cardinality number 1, but Frank does not. Likewise, Frank has the property of being a smoker, but the set containing him certainly does not. Sets, then, appear to have their own identity conditions that are independent of their members, and so there is more to a set's identity than a mere qualitative specification of its members can capture. Sets are individuals in their own right, and individuals in their own right are those to which we can refer.

This previous line of reasoning does not, of course, prove that our domain specifiers

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[13] Assume, for now, that there are atomic elements of sets that are not themselves sets.

are indeed complex devices of reference, only that they could be, that domains are apt for being named.[14] To show that we, in fact, ought to treat our particular domain specifiers as complex devices of reference, we must turn to other considerations.

5.2.2 Domain Specifiers and The Semantic Role of Complex Names

To offer some evidence that our domain specifiers are functioning as devices of reference akin to Kripke's complex names, let us now turn to some arguments from Kripke himself, and reconsider sentence (4)' Of those individuals named 'Frank': they are real chatterboxes.

Suppose we misidentified the group of individuals named 'Frank'. The individuals we thought were named 'Frank' were really named 'Harry', and they were the real chatterboxes. The individuals who were actually named 'Frank' were in fact quietly reading books. Now, what do we want to say in this situation? We have two options. The first is to evaluate sentence (4)' as not having been about the domain we thought it was about — it was actually about another domain and what we said about that domain was false. The second option is to say of the domain specifier that, even though we did not identify the correct domain by description, that domain specifier nevertheless still refers to the set of individuals who are real chatterboxes. Call the first option, the predicativist response, and the second option the referential response.

If the hypothesis that our domain specifiers are functioning as devices of reference is correct, we should expect the referential response to prevail. Does it? Well, imagine a teacher attempting to point out to a class monitor a particular set of students who need to be disciplined. In this case, we would say that we were still talking about the group of

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14 In fact, there is a historical precedence for this idea. Boole (1854) thought that domains should be thought of as ultimate subjects. And, later, Montague (1973) pushed the idea that even individuals should be thought of as sets, things we uncontroversially name all the time.

chatterboxes, even though our manner of referring to them was mistaken. This example shows that, at least sometimes, our domain specifiers function as devices of reference. And the hypothesis is that in cases in which names are mentioned in domain specifiers, this is always the way they should be interpreted.

5.2.3 Domain Specifiers and Modal Profiles

Let us now consider some modal properties of a sentence properly interpreted as containing a domain specifier in the relevant sense:

(12) It is possible that all Franks were not chatterboxes,

which would translate, on the Domain Specifier view, as the following sentence

(12)' Of those individuals named 'Frank': it is possible that they were not chatterboxes.

Now if the domain specifier is a device of reference, as is represented by the placement of the modal operator, then sentence (12)' ought to be about the individuals in the actual world named 'Frank'. In fact, this should be true even if we have the modal operator in sentence (12)' take wide scope. When we ask about the scenario represented by sentence (12)', we are interested in the properties of the actual individuals named 'Frank', not in the possibilities for any and all persons named 'Frank' who may or may not be chatterboxes. In other words, the properties of other people in other worlds with those name properties are not relevant for evaluating the truth of this sentence. The only individuals that matter are those referred to in the actual world by the domain specifier, and the Domain Specifier approach captures this intuition. This is, then, further evidence that our domain specifiers

behave as devices of reference.[15]

5.3 Reference and the Domain Specifier View

Now that we have seen at least some evidence for the idea that the domain specifiers in (4)'-(7)' are referential in nature, we need to know in what sense they are referential. We also need to understand the relationship between these devices of reference, the pronouns that have values assigned to them, and the predicative element of sentences (4)'-(7)'.

5.3.1 Domain Specifiers, Reference, and Predication

We've already seen that sets have different properties from the individuals that compose those sets. We have also seen that our domain specifiers refer to sets. The problem that arises is that the properties predicated of those sets are not properties that hold of sets, but rather hold of the individuals that make up that set. Domains cannot be chatterboxes, but of course, individuals can. Therefore, on the Domain Specifier view, it must be the case that when we use domain specifiers to refer, we somehow manage to predicate something of the individuals who are members of those domains, whether a multitude of individuals, as in the case of sentence (4)', some indefinite number of individuals, as in the case of sentence (5)', or single individuals as in the cases of sentences (6)' and (7)'.

To explain how this might work in the case of sentence (4)', we need to examine the phenomenon of plural reference, of referring to many things at once. We do so in many different forms, but the form that interests us, at least with respect to sentence (4)', is the the use of bare plurals. Referring using bare plurals qua devices of reference is exemplified in by following sentence:

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[15] Of course, this is exactly where the debate about how to understand quantifiers rears its head. If they are to be understood as restricted, then we could get the same modal results as we do above. But I do not wish to take a position on this debate here. Sufficed to say that the solution offered here nicely sidesteps having to delve into that conflict at all.

(13) Dogs are barking.

Notice that we are saying of each dog that it is barking and we simply use the bare plural to group together those dogs in order to say that each of them is barking. This is in contrast with using plurals as generics, which we could do by using this sentence:

(14) Dogs bark.

In this case, we are not referring to each dog and saying of it that it is barking. Rather, we are making a general assertion about the category of dogs and their tendencies. It is not this kind of phenomenon in which we are at present taking an interest.

We can use proper names as bare plurals as well.[16] Consider this sentence:

(15) Franks are studiers.

In this case, we are referring plurally to the Frank's and saying of each of them that they are studiers. Likewise, now that we have evidence that our domain specifiers are indeed devices of reference, we should understand the pronouns in sentences like (4)' as making plural reference to those named 'Frank', in which case, even though we are picking out a group of individuals, because we are referring to them plurally, we can make assertions about the properties of the members of that plurality. Note that we must loosen up our set talk at this point in order to accommodate plural reference. We must say that instead of referring to sets, our domain specifiers actually refer to a plurality, but they still refer nonetheless.

Sentence (5)' poses some difficulties, since it is unclear what is contained within its

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[16] We might be tempted to take this as a further piece of evidence that names are not simple devices of reference once again. But, we need not understand the pluralization of a proper names as evidence for the predicative view, so long as we understand the logical form of a plural version of a proper name as a conjunction of individually referring names, and when we have a set of homophones, we simply use the plural for the sake of convenience.

domain. The domain specifier in sentence (5)' may refer only to a domain containing one individual named 'Frank', but it also may refer to a domain that contains several individuals named 'Frank'. If the latter is the case, then we give it a plural reading just as we did for sentence (4)', but of course, this is not the only possibility. For this reason, we'll now deal with sentences (6)' and (7)', since doing so will give us the resources for understanding how to read sentence (5)' if its domain contains only one individual, as do sentences (6)' and (7)'.

In the case of sentences (6)' and (7)', we can say that we have a case of picking out a domain that contains only one member. However, once again, we face the same problem as before. Domains cannot be chatterboxes, but individuals can be. Here, we need to invoke the distinction between distributive and collective predication. Of course, normally, this distinction applies only to pluralities, perhaps surprisingly however, we can also apply them to singular subjects. For example, a republic can be at war, but can also be divided. While a domain as a collective object of reference cannot be a chatterbox, given its nature, we do have the option of reading the predication as distributive, as applying to each member of the domain, even if that domain has only one member. We can then get the natural interpretations of sentences (6)' and (7)'. Sentence (5)', if its domain contains only one individual, will also get the very same reading.

We have resolved then how our domain specifiers can both be referential expressions used to pick out domains, and yet how we can also truly predicate certain properties of those domains by either treating them as plural devices of reference or as reading the relevant predicates distributively rather than collectively. We are now in a position to explore the truth conditions for sentences (4)'-(7)'.

5.4 Truth Conditions for Sentences (4)'-(7)'

Now that we have settled how it is possible for our domain specifiers to be about the properties of the individuals within those domains, we can now state the truth conditions for sentences (4)'-(7)' explicitly. On the Domain Specifier view, as stated previously, the truth condition or semantic value for those sentences involves mapping a domain to the value true or false, either plurally, or distributively. We can think of our plural or distributive readings as allowing for our pronouns to function as free variables ranging over the individuals of our specified domains, as being licensed by treating our domain specifiers as bare plurals or by reading the sentences containing them distributively. Note that, on this model, no quantification over those individuals in the domain of discourse is ever required.

To show this, let us specify the truth condition for sentence

(4)' Of those named 'Frank': they were chatterboxes.

To evaluate this sentence for truth, we assign to the now free variable in that sentence each individual named 'Frank'. The sentence is true just in case, for each of these assignments, the individual assigned to the variable is, in fact, a chatterbox. The truth expressed by this sentence is an exhaustive conjunction of a series of singular propositions. While this is, of course, the Tarskian truth condition provided for sentences containing universal quantifiers, clearly, there is another way of mapping a different syntactic construction to the same truth condition. Specifically, we can do so if the universe of discourse is explicitly specified by the sentence in question. While quantifiers are true only if the previous truth condition is met, it does not follow that if we have the previous truth condition, that we must have a quantified sentence from which it was derived.

Once again, given the complexity of sentence (5)', we first need to give the truth

conditions for sentences (6)' and (7)' before we have the resources for dealing with sentence (5)'. So, the truth-condition for sentence

(6)' Of whom I know named 'Frank': he is a real chatterbox

has the same form as that which was applied to sentence (4)', except this time there is only one individual in the domain, and therefore, we need assign only that one individual as a value to the free variable expressed this time by the pronoun 'he'. This sentence is true, then, only if that individual is indeed a chatterbox. The truth expressed is the singular proposition that Frank is a chatterbox. As before, we have a Tarskian truth condition materially equivalent to one that we might give for an existentially quantified sentence with a uniqueness condition. Nevertheless, this condition is not derived from a sentence containing an existential quantifier at all. The very same reasoning applies mutatis mutandis to sentence

(7)' Of that individual named 'Frank'

as well. The only difference is that in this case the assignment depends on a delimited act of ostension.

Let us now return to sentence (5)'. Let us assume, though this is by no means uncontroversial, that sentence (5)' is true even if just one individual specified by the domain is a chatterbox. We do not know, then, in this case, whether the reading of (5)' is plural or distributive. It depends on whether there is only one individual specified by the domain or a more than one. This issue, in and of itself however, should not make any substantive difference, since those readings both have the same function — that of freeing up our pronouns to act as free variables ranging over individuals within the relevant domains. What does cause an issue is that we do

not know how to evaluate sentence (5)' for truth until we have a fixed domain, which outside of a context, we do not have in this case. Nevertheless, while the domain specifier in (5)' is a device of reference, just like the domain specifiers in sentences (4)', (6)', and (7)', it is one that relies on context to fix its reference, unlike the others. However, once that occurs, we can evaluate it for truth. The truth condition for sentence (5)' resembles the Tarskian truth condition for existentially quantified sentences in that sentence (5)' is true only if at least one of some defined number of Frank's is, in fact, a chatterbox. What sentence (5)' expresses then, is a series of disjunctive statements about a contextually determined domain of discourse.

5.6 Differences between Explicit Domain Specifiers and Quantifiers

Tarski provided us a way to specify the truth conditions of sentences containing quantifiers given a presupposed domain of discourse. What he did not do, however, is prove that such truth conditions are uniquely associated with quantified sentences. Arguably, using quantifiers is an indirect means for getting at Tarski's truth conditions, because they tacitly rely on a presupposition about a fixed domain of discourse. Indeed, this fact has led some to offer a context-sensitive account of the quantifiers (VonFintel, 1994). However, when that domain of discourse is made explicit in a sentence, we can apply the Tarskian truth conditions for the quantifiers directly to that sentence with no need to get at them indirectly via a quantifier. This is the fundamental difference between sentences containing explicit domain specifiers and those that merely contain quantifiers. For this reason, there is no danger that I am tacitly relying on quantifying over those named 'Frank', and therefore, there is no reason to think that I have a predicative view of names in disguise on this count.

6. Objections

Of course the Domain Specifier view, by itself, leaves many questions unanswered. Only a limited number of the potential objections to the view can be addressed here — those that are fairly obvious. We'll now explore these objections to the view.

6.1 The Compositionality Objection

One objection to the Domain Specifier view is that it does not accurately reflect how we determine the extension of the relevant domain specifiers. For instance, a construction like 'Of those named 'Frank':' appears to have its extension determined by the meaning of its various parts, and how those parts are combined. But this is not how we determine the extension of a complex device of reference. In determining a complex referential expression's extension, we completely ignore its internal structure. To return to an earlier example, consider Kripke's example of the name 'The Holy Roman Empire'. As Kripke (1980) points out, it simply does not follow that because The Holy Roman Empire is so-called that it is holy, Roman, or an empire. An expression that counts as a referential expression a la Kripke does not determine its referent through complex compositional operations, and this is what is being claimed about our domain specifiers.

The objection appears even stronger when we consider the fact that the more complex the conditions become for membership in a domain of discourse, the more complex the domain specifier itself will become. Consider this sentence:

(16) All Franks who brought pencils to class passed the exam, and were happy about it.

On the Domain Specifier approach, sentence (15) becomes

(16)' Of those individuals named 'Frank' who brought pencils to class: they passed the exam, and they were really happy about it.

As sentence (15) illustrates, language permits very complicated domain restrictions, and the current hypothesis is that all of these sorts of restrictions produce complex referential expressions in the Kripkean/Millian sense invoked here, expressions whose extension is not determined compositionally. Consideration of sentences like (15)', however, illustrate that this is just not plausible.

One avenue open to the Domain Specifier theorist is to maintain that determining the referent of an expression is one thing, its semantic value or content, is another. Kripke addresses this issue with his concept of fixing the referent of a name, which can take a variety of forms, including the use of a complex expression with a compositionally determined meaning. To return to an earlier example, reconsider the name 'The Holy Roman Empire'. Suppose that originally the empire called by that name was so-called because of its actually being a holy Roman empire. The name got its reference fixed by using an expression with a compositionally determined meaning. However, thereafter, that meaning no longer served as the content of the complex expression 'The Holy Roman Empire'. Instead, its meaning became atomic, and designated the Holy Roman Empire whether it was holy, Roman, or an empire.

The very same phenomenon characterizes what is occurring when we use domain specifiers like those contained in sentences (4)'-(7)'. While initially, those domain specifiers may function compositionally to determine their extensions, thereafter, they function as complex referring expressions in the Kripkean sense. That is, even though we once fixed the referent by relying on a compositional analysis of the domain specifiers occurring in sentences (4)'-(7)', we need not be committed to that compositional analysis being an essential part of the subsequent content of those domain specifiers.

Once we have our domain's extension determined, the specifier functions as a device of reference for the domain itself. While our complex domain specifiers function as complex referential expressions whose reference is fixed via qualitative considerations, those considerations play merely a pragmatic, rather than a semantic role. The original objection is now dispensed with.

6.2 The Slippery Slope Objection

Our next objection asks for a motivation for treating only names in a predicative position as domain specifiers. If there is no such motivation, then there is nothing stopping us from applying the Domain Specifier view to all common nouns.[17] For example, consider this sentence:

(17) All whales are mammals.

As it stands, there is nothing preventing use from rendering sentence (16) as the following:

(17)' Of those individuals called 'whales': they are all mammals.

Surely sentence (17)' is implausible as an analysis of sentence (17), and therefore the view presented here is implausible as well.

But the Domain Specifier view is not committed to sentence (17)' as an analysis of sentence (17). There is, in fact, a reason to treat sentences (4)-(7) differently than sentence (17), whether we believe that names are fundamentally devices of reference or that they are in essence predicates. On either view, names are special. On the first view, names just fail to be common nouns, unlike true common nouns, and therefore, there is no reason to think that the Domain Specifier view applies to all common nouns, since names are not common nouns in the first place. But suppose we reject this. Suppose we accept that names are

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[17] Thanks to Gabriel Segal for bringing this to my attention.

predicates. Still, even on this view, names are a special sort of predicate — they are the

only sort that encodes a property had that is solely dependent upon our linguistic practices

(Fara 2011b). In cases like these, it is appropriate to extract such "properties" from their

predicative position, make their metalinguistic nature explicit, and to locate them in a

domain specifier position. For this reason, no matter which view of names one accepts, we

need not treat them in a manner similar to the manner in which we treat ordinary common

nouns.

Another variant on the previous objection is to appeal only to constructions

embedding names.[18] Consider, for instance, this sentence:

(18) Frank is happy.

The previous response just offered will not apply in this case precisely because the

expression 'Frank' is one that does in fact have its meaning purely in virtue of our linguistic

practices, due to its being a proper name. On the current view, then, there is no reason not

to reinterpret sentence (18) as this sentence

(18)' Of that individual called 'Frank': he is happy.

The response strategy, in this case, is to point out that when there are no quantifiers

present in certain sentences, sentences like (18), there is nothing to trigger reinterpreting it

as expressing what (18)' expresses, thereby avoiding the implausible result that sentences

like (18) ought to be reinterpreted into sentences like (18)'.

6.3 The Return of the Predicativist Objection

As previously asserted, we are to understand the offered paraphrases as analytically

related to their original versions. This leads to the natural objection that all we have done is

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[18] Thanks to Angel Pinillos for bringing this to my attention.

offered yet another predicativist account of proper names. The line of reasoning here is as follows: since, on the Domain Specifier view, the occurrence of 'Franks' in a sentence like

(4) All Franks are real chatterboxes

is understood as having the same meaning as the phrase 'Of those individuals named 'Frank'', we have simply offered a meta-linguistic understanding of the use of 'Frank' in quantified constructions that is still, at bottom, predicative, since being an individual named 'Frank' is itself an attribute, meta-linguistic perhaps, but an attribute nonetheless.[19]

The previous objection rests on two separate mistakes. Correspondingly, there are two separate responses to this objection.

The first response notes that the previous line of reasoning simply ignores the fact that the current semantic account has it that the instances of domain specification in sentences (4)'-(7)' are instances of non-compositionally determined devices of reference. Analyzing the domain specifiers in (4)'-(7)' as expressing attributes, then, is just to misunderstand the proposal. The offered paraphrases do not give a compositional analysis of the complex constructions containing proper names in the original sentences (4)-(7) at all.

The second response is slightly more complex. One of the assumptions of the previous objection is that the domain specifiers in sentences (4)'-(7)' are analyses of the meaning of the names occurring in sentences (4)-(7). But this is simply false. This was noted earlier, but it is worth pointing out once again. The domain specifiers are intended as an analysis of names coupled with a quantifier. There is no semantic one-to-one

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19 We'll here ignore the vast literature surrounding whether names can be treated as meta-linguistic predicates, and instead simply focus on the fact that such accounts are predicative accounts of the meaning of a proper name.

correspondence between the names in the original constructions and in the offered paraphrases. Complex phrases like 'Of those individuals named 'Frank':' are intended to be equivalent in meaning to the complex phrase 'All Franks'. Since we are rejecting the idea that names can combine with quantifiers in the same manner as predicates can, we must make sense of the entire complex 'All Franks', not simply part of that complex. The Domain Specifier analysis is not offering a theory of the semantic value of a proper name; it is not offering a theory of the meaning of 'Frank' in the complex phrase 'All Franks' at all.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, The Domain Specifier view is clearly a defensible view of many of the predicative uses of proper names. If it is correct, we can now begin to move on from one of the current controversies concerning the correct semantic analysis of proper names, and explore fresh alternatives.[20]

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