

## Implicit Reference

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Debates about the strength of *schiff* are as heated today as they were at Oxford in the halcyon days of deviant biconditionals, and the battle lines have shifted little. Was P. F. Strawson right to insist that *schiff* is no more than philosophical shorthand for the commutative *schif and only schif*? Or was H. P. Grice onto something when he suggested (tentatively) that *schiff* is equivalent to the non-commutative *schif and only if*, the illusion of a stronger semantics arising by way of conversational implicature? On the central phonological question, non-commutativists have stood firm that the name of the mythical author of the Oxford book *Meaning*, usually written “Schiffer”, is pronounced *Schif-and-only-ifer*, and now heap as much scorn on the commutativist’s *Schif-and-only-Schifer* as they once did on its progenitor, *Schiff-and-only-Schiffer*—which is now known to contain an infinite regress, effectively preventing commutativists from ever fully stating their position.<sup>1</sup> I shall not enter the fray here, though my sympathies lie with the much maligned hybrid view according to which non-commutativists are right about the phonology and commutativists right about the semantics.

### 1 INTRODUCTION

It is a great privilege to contribute to this volume celebrating the work of Stephen Schiffer, who has taken the time to drill more serious holes in my own published and unpublished work than anyone else has. I am grateful for his constructive criticism over the years, particularly in seminars we have taught together, and for his philosophical advice on many matters. Anyone can refute an opposing position embroidered with imagined or inessential theses; but Schiffer presents an opposing position stripped to its essentials, and in its best possible light, before getting stuck into it, and I have learned

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<sup>1</sup> Proof of the regress is usually attributed to D. K. Lewis, though S. A. Kripke is widely believed to have had an outline of the proof in kindergarten, if not earlier. It is sometimes claimed the proof is a corollary of one G. Kreisel and L. Wittgenstein gave of the regress in *Shef-and-only-Sheffer*. This is far-fetched. First, it was not until the notorious St Tropez Congress of 1968 that Kreisel proved that converting *schiff* to *schtok* requires a separate algorithm for each model. Second, the proof does not itself yield a decision procedure for finding a satisfiable model. (I am grateful to an anonymous referee for *Paris Match* (which rejected the present paper) for this observation.) In any event, as a colleague has pointed out, to cite the date of Kripke’s physical birth as evidence for the priority of an alleged “Kreisenstein” proof is to assume both a jejune form of materialism and a dubious theory of personal identity over time, and may actually involve a technical mistake in modal logic. Though Kripke’s work on *schiff* remains unpublished, evidence of (an outline of) an independent proof may be gleaned from a blurred mimeograph of a water-damaged photocopy of a transcript (now lost) prepared by a stenographer (now deceased) from a Philips C-120 cassette recording (now taped over by Bachman Turner Overdrive) of an impromptu lecture Kripke gave, without either notes or G. Harman, at a conference in Helsinki in January 1973. The discussion period was apparently dominated by one D. Kaplan, who argued that if, as commutativists claim, *Schiffer* is a genuine proper name, then the vexed question arises of the truth or falsity of “No-one but Schiffer could believe *dthat!*” at possible worlds containing both Schiffer (as *we* would put it) and people other than those existing in the actual world. I cannot pursue this difficult matter here.

a great deal from him about what is, and is not, essential to positions I have advanced, and about which ones I should give up altogether.

I shall be concerned here with Schiffer's account of explanatory reference relations within the intention-based framework for semantic explanation he did so much to advance in the 1970s and early 1980s.<sup>2</sup> Schiffer came to reject the reductive pretensions of intension-based semantics.<sup>3</sup> But contrary to what some commentators have thought, he did *not* abandon the idea that notions of sentence meaning, word meaning, reference, and referring expression are explanatory only to the extent that they form part of a nexus of notions firmly rooted in a notion of *speaker-meaning*, itself definable, for non-penumbral cases at least, in terms of agents acting in certain ways with overtly audience-directed intentions. This idea, to which I fully subscribe, unifies much of Schiffer's work over the decades, and it will shape what I have to say here.

Prescinding from the details of particular definitions, we might call any explanatory nexus rooted in an intentional notion of speaker-meaning a "Gricean nexus"—though Schiffer has done at least as much as Grice to illuminate the architecture of an adequate nexus, provided more compelling definitions of the key notions, and made more serious forays into the realm of reference.<sup>4</sup> On the matter of the general structure of the explanatory nexus and its intentional bedrock, I line up with Grice and Schiffer. Disagreements I have had with Schiffer to date have been primarily *local*, restricted to specific semantic claims about how explanatory reference relations get played out in a final semantics for this or that type of (purported) referring expression. In the present essay, I am going to raise questions that put a strain on the intention-based framework we share an interest in articulating, questions with syntactic, semantic, epistemic, and metaphysical dimensions, questions that emerge from reflecting on precisely what Schiffer means by 'implicit reference' and 'hidden-indexical'.

There is no denying the phenomenon of implicit reference that Schiffer (1981) defined, or the abject failure of any semantic theory that does not accommodate it. At the same time, Schiffer is surely right that the various entities posited as implicit referents—persons, locations, time-spans, epistemic standards, standards of taste, or mode-of-presentation types—are not on a par, intention-theoretically. So while championing the notion of implicit reference, Schiffer has also been a vocal opponent of uncritical appeals to the notion in analyses of belief reports, knowledge claims, and referential uses of descriptions, all of which fare pretty miserably on Schiffer's *meaning-intention* test. While I agree with Schiffer about the existence of implicit reference and about the need to exercise caution in appealing to it when confronted with a semantic problem, I fear the terrain needs to be remapped in the light of developments in syntactic theory that have taken place since Schiffer

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<sup>2</sup> See Schiffer (1972, 1977, 1978, 1981, 1982).

<sup>3</sup> See Schiffer (1987a), esp. Ch 9.

<sup>4</sup> Grice's own attempts to bring referential notions into the intentional fold can be discerned only dimly in his published work—mostly from scattered remarks in Grice (1969, 1978, 1981, 1989)—and from his widely disseminated "Lectures on Logic and Reality", from which his 1981 paper is an excerpt.

first wrote about the topic thirty years ago, and that an adequate remapping raises hard questions for intention-theoretic accounts of explanatory reference relations.<sup>5</sup>

The idea that expressions of natural language are essentially pairings of sounds and meanings has had a good run for over two millennia. But the idea that certain expressions lack semantic properties while others lack phonic properties—and do so for good reason—is becoming increasingly mainstream, in philosophy as well as linguistics.<sup>6</sup> One consequence of countenancing aphonetic expressions is that no theoretically significant property holds of all and only those cases commonly thought to involve implicit reference.<sup>7</sup> A second is that providing intention-theoretic definitions of explanatory reference relations becomes that much harder. And a third is that it becomes less obvious whether satisfactory definitions can be rendered consistent with the thesis that all versions of the hidden-indexical theories of belief reports and knowledge claims really fail Schiffer's meaning-intention test.<sup>8</sup>

My plan is as follows. First, I shall spell out what I take to be Schiffer's evolved position on explanatory reference relations and the roles they play in an intention-based theory of meaning. Second, by running through various types of examples, I shall try to draw out the full implications for both Schiffer's notion of implicit reference and the more general matter of the underspecification of propositional content—whether cashed out in terms of John Perry's notion of “unarticulated” constituents of propositions, Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson's notion of “linguistically underdetermined” propositional content”, W. V. Quine's notion of “elliptical utterances” or Wilfrid Sellars's notion of “elliptical uses” of sentences.<sup>9</sup> Third, I shall separate grades of *linguistic involvement* in acts of speaker-reference. The “highest” of these is explicit reference with a linguistic phonic; the “lower” grades cover various types of implicit reference. Fourth, I shall revisit and extend Schiffer's definitions of explanatory reference relations in the light of problems that arise in separating types of implicit reference, broaching the idea that a judicious appeal to *tacit* mental states may be required to provide one crucial definition, an appeal that respects first-person authority about what one means. Fifth, I turn to the matter of the relation between referring and saying, burying all versions of Grice's idea that a unitary Russellian analysis of definite descriptions can be defended by appealing to a distinction between what a speaker says and what he means. Sixth, I

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<sup>5</sup> That said, in a recent seminar Schiffer and I taught together, he came close to suggesting, when sketching the consequences of a recent epiphany he has had concerning vagueness, that he now regards a great deal of what he has written about reference and meaning as deeply problematic. I hope we shall hear about this in his replies to these papers.

<sup>6</sup> See (e.g.) Ludlow (1995, 1996), Neale (1993a, 2004, 2005), and esp. Stanley (2000, 2007).

<sup>7</sup> The labels ‘phonic’ and ‘aphonic’, for expressions that possess or lack phonological properties, respectively, have the virtue of brevity and, like ‘indexical’ may be used as either adjectives or nouns (‘an aphonetic indexical’ and ‘an indexical aphonetic’ are both well-formed expressions).

<sup>8</sup> Schiffer (1992, 1995, 1996, 2005).

<sup>9</sup> Schiffer (1977, 1978, 1982), Perry (1986, 1993), Crimmins and Perry (1989), Sperber and Wilson (1986, 1995), Quine (1950), Sellars (1954). For sympathetic discussion see Carston (1988, 2002), Neale (1990, 2004, 2007), and Récanati (1998, 2001, 2004).

distinguish theories of belief reports vying for the “hidden-indexical” appellation and examine Schiffer’s claim that such theories are refuted by his meaning-intention problem.<sup>10</sup> Finally, I shall examine five responses to the meaning-intention problem, argue that none of them can save hidden-indexical theories of attitude ascriptions or knowledge claims, and explain why Schiffer’s objections to hidden-indexical theories that seek to avoid the meaning-intention problem are consistent with the suggestion made earlier that a judicious appeal to tacit mental states may be required to provide one crucial definition that must form part of a genuinely explanatory Gricean nexus.

## 2 INTENTION-BASED THEORIES OF MEANING

### 2.1 The Master Question

In theoretical linguistics and the philosophy of language it is widely regarded as a platitude (1) that words and sentences are imbued with properties which speakers and writers exploit, and which hearers and readers recognize, (2) that attempts to say what these properties are and to explain how relationships between them are functions of the inner workings of languages constitute viable intellectual projects, and (3) that work in theoretical linguistics and a great deal of work in the philosophy of language and logic are contributions to these projects. But it is worth reminding ourselves that there is a question in the philosophy of language in the service of which all others are asked, a Master Question that might be put as follows:

How are we able to accomplish so much, so efficiently—so quickly, systematically and consistently—by making various noises or marks, for example, how are we able to express our thoughts, to convey to others information about the world, about our beliefs, desires, plans, hopes, fears, and feelings?

Things often go horribly wrong, of course, but the striking fact is just how often they *don't*, and this is a big part of what needs explaining. We communicate with one another in all sorts of ways, but the noises and marks of principal interest are *linguistic*, of course, for it is here that we find the lion’s share of the *efficiency* mentioned in the Master Question. Hence an assumption that appears to underpin theoretical interest in meaning and interpretation: linguistic objects—words, phrases, and sentences—must be imbued with properties that speakers, writers, hearers and readers *appreciate* or *know about*, if only tacitly. Attempts to lay bare these properties have been the locus of investigations by philosophers and linguistics; but as the work of Grice, Loar, Schiffer, Strawson, and others demonstrates, we cannot discount the possibility that examining *non-linguistic* communication will shed valuable light on linguistic communication and thereby on the Master Question.<sup>11</sup> Such matters cannot be stipulated in advance of serious inquiry.<sup>12</sup> And even if spoken

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<sup>10</sup> Schiffer (1991, 1995, 2005, 2006). For reasons I shall get to, I find the label “hidden-indexical” unfortunate and I do not myself use it to label any of the theories I have proposed. In particular, I do not use it to label the theories found in Neale (1990, 2004, 2005) that Schiffer seeks to undermine. Which is not to say that Schiffer does not succeed in undermining them.

<sup>11</sup> Grice (1957, 1969, 1989), Strawson (1964), Schiffer (1972, 1982), Loar (1981), Neale (1992).

language is to be viewed as “primary” or “prior” in some important sense (as it surely will be) the Master Question must be answered in a way that explains uses of language that do not involve speech. Furthermore, it must explain not just how we use language to make statements, but also how we use it to ask questions and to do a good many other things besides—threaten, warn, baptize, marry, and so on.

One task of the philosophy of language, is to provide an architecture within which the Master Question can be answered, an architecture within which we can identify and link the answers to all sorts of “lower-level” questions in order to produce various interlocking theories and sub-theories that taken together, will constitute an answer. But neither the architecture nor any of these lower-level questions, nor any of the theories or subtheories, needs to be *mentioned* in order to say what the Master Question *is*. I made no mention in my statement of the question of, for example, the idea that noises and marks may have *meanings*. (I didn't even use the words ‘mean’, ‘meaning’, or ‘meaningful’, or the words ‘refer’ or ‘reference’, or the words ‘word’, ‘sentence’, or ‘language’. But this does not mean that the concepts behind some of these expressions are not buried in the statement—perhaps it will turn out to be impossible to make much sense of talk of *information about the world*, for example, without appealing to some notion of *reference*.) But just stating the Master Question does suggest an immediate distinction between two reciprocal *activities*:

- (1) A speaker or writer, *S*, *meaning* something by (or in producing) certain noises or marks,
- (2) Someone other than *S*—or at least other than *S* at the time of production—*identifying* what *S* means (by way of *interpreting S's* noises or marks or (perhaps, better) interpreting *S's production* of those noises or marks).

In short, the very statement of the Master Question suggests—before we even float the idea of a system of noises and marks for which we require various theories—that we need to make a distinction between theories that concern acts of *meaning*, and theories that concern acts of *interpreting* acts of meaning.<sup>13</sup>

## 2.2 Constitutive v. Evidential Questions

It is a curious fact about contemporary philosophy of language, linguistics, legal theory, literary, and archaeological theory that excitement and confusion can still be generated by failures to separate metaphysics and epistemology. Of particular concern to me here is the conflation of *constitutive* and

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<sup>12</sup> There is an (allegedly) prior question about the function (or the purpose) of language, a question that has generated more heat than light in both philosophy and linguistics. But surely it is enough to appreciate that we both express ourselves in language and communicate with it, and that an adequate answer to the Master Question must explain both linguistic self-expression and linguistic communication. Moreover, it seems doubtful that we can provide an explanation of one independently of providing an explanation of the other. The relation between self-expression and communication will most likely emerge, it seems to me, as interlocking theories and sub-theories evolve in attempting to answer the Master Question, the relation consisting in nothing more than the way each is explained by reference to the other.

<sup>13</sup> For discussion, see “Saying and Referring”.

(what I shall call) *evidential* questions in discussions of meaning and interpretation in linguistics and the philosophy of language. At its simplest, the constitutive-evidential distinction is one whose nature can be appreciated by reflecting on the fact that not all of our beliefs are true, and on the consequent need to distinguish the notion of *what is in fact the case* and the notion of *what is believed (by someone or other) to be the case*. Sentences of the following form can be used to ask many constitutive questions:

*What makes it the case that p?*

So we might ask: What makes it the case that Paris is the capital of France? A constitutive question of this form can usually be rephrased in either of the following ways:

*What fact constitutes. . . ?*

*In virtue of what fact is it the case that . . . ?*

In virtue of what fact is Paris the capital of France? Answer: In virtue of the fact that a certain body of people vested with certain powers in France so-designated it.

Sentences of the following form can be used to ask many evidential questions:

*On the basis of what did A conclude/come to believe/come to know that p?*

So we might ask: On the basis of what did you come to believe that Paris is the capital of France? And here there might be all sorts of possible answers. You may have read somewhere that Paris is the capital of France, or been told by someone; you may have noticed that the circle indicating the location of Paris on your first map of Europe contained a star inside it and also noticed that the map used that convention to indicate capital cities.

Constitutive and evidential questions can be separated in connection with speech. Suppose I say to you, at particular point in a conversation about our mutual friends John and Paul,

He tells great jokes.

Here is a constitutive question: Suppose I mean *John* by 'him' (rather than, Paul or some other person). What makes it the case that I mean John by 'he'? In virtue of what fact do I mean John by 'he'? Here's one answer: In virtue of the fact that it is my *intention* to be *saying something about John*. We might accept this answer while recognizing that it raises a new constitutive question: What makes it the case that my intention concerns *John*? In virtue of what fact does my intention concern John? A question in the philosophy of language appears to have been reduced to, transformed into, or perhaps just replaced by one in the philosophy of mind.

Here is an evidential question. Suppose you take me to mean *John* by 'he'. On the basis of what do you take me to mean John by 'he'? In such an everyday situation, the following might be a reasonable answer: you assume that my utterance is intended as a contribution to the discussion you and I are having about our mutual friends John and Paul, and you have just asked me whether John should give the welcoming address at a conference we are organising. In a different setting, the following might be a more appropriate evidential answer: You examined the results of magnetic resonance imaging and polygraphs you subjected me to during and shortly after my utterance of 'He

tells great Jokes.' Such answers do not constitute a *theory*: they are statements about (some of) the *local* evidence you drew upon. If asked for an answer evincing a modicum of general theory that might be applied to everyday situations, you might start throwing around words like 'context', 'commonsense', 'background', 'salience', 'relevance', 'maxims', 'canons', and so forth. The concepts behind some of these words might well secure roles in a cognitive theory of utterance interpretation. But this would not alter the fact that talk about context, commonsense, background, salience, relevance, or conversational maxims or canons of construction is talk about *reasons*, *evidence*, and *tools*, talk about factors hypothesized to play significant roles—along with the tacit appreciation of such things as word meaning and grammatical structure—in leading hearers to come up with the interpretations they do when they encounter utterances. And even if such things do play significant roles in hearers coming up with the interpretations they do come up with, it does not follow that such things *determine* (or even play a role in *determining*) whom speakers mean by 'he' on given occasions. It follows only that such things play roles in *identifying* whom speakers mean.<sup>14</sup>

### 2.3 Meaning vs. Interpretation

Distinguishing constitutive and evidential questions makes it virtually impossible to run together the following questions:

- (A) What *determines* what a speaker means on a given occasion?
- (B) What do people—at least people other than the speaker—use to *identify* what the speaker means on that occasion?

(A) is a constitutive question, (B) an evidential one, and it would be better for all concerned if we simply adopted the policy of calling theories proposed as answers to question (A) theories of *meaning*, and those proposed as answers to question (B) theories of *interpretation*. Conflating the two, sometimes in subtle ways, has led to misunderstandings of intention-based theories of meaning, the core idea of which is this: what a speaker *S* means on a given occasion in uttering something *x* is *determined by, and only by, S's* communicative intentions in uttering *x*—and hence *not* by such things as the meaning of *x* itself, the meanings of the words in *x*, the syntactic structure of *x*, salience, relevance, inference, conversational maxims, common ground, or seemingly extensional features of the context of utterance such as the time, the place, the speaker, the addressee, and the physical movements, at the time of utterance, of certain of *S's* body parts.

However, these are all things a hearer *H* might use in *identifying* what *S* means, i.e. things that can figure in a theory of *interpretation*. Of course, they are also the sorts of things *S* appreciates when producing his utterances and expects *H* to draw upon in identifying what he means—especially, of course, the meaning of the sentence uttered—and to this extent the formation of genuine communicative intentions is severely constrained.<sup>15</sup> But, nonetheless, the question of what

<sup>14</sup> For discussion, see "The Mythology of Context".

<sup>15</sup> See Donnellan (1968), Grice (1971, 1989), Schiffer (1972, 1978, 1981, 1982, 2006), Neale (1992, 2004, 2005).

*determines* what a speaker means on a given occasion and the question of what is used in *identifying* what the speaker means on that occasion are conceptually distinct. Schiffer appreciates all of this:<sup>16</sup>

[1] what a speaker means supervenes entirely on her communicative intentions, regardless of what the sentence she utters means (. . . while speaker-meaning isn't a function of sentence-meaning, but only of communicative intentions, the role of sentence-meaning is to make known the speaker's communicative intentions: the hearer is intended to rely on her knowledge of what the sentence means in order to infer what the speaker meant in uttering the sentence). (2006: 57)

Expanding on these remarks, we can say the following:

(i) While notions of word meaning, syntactic structure, context, commonsense, rationality, common ground, inference, conversational maxims, relevance, and salience may figure prominently in an answer to our evidential question—*What do people other than the speaker use to identify what the speaker means on a given occasion?*—they do not figure directly in an answer to our constitutive question—*What determines what a speaker means on that occasion?*—except in so far as the speaker's appreciation of them will, or at least should have, constrained the formation of his communicative intentions.

(ii) While speakers' communicative intentions may figure prominently in an answer to our constitutive question, they do not figure in an answer to our evidential question. For one thing, as many legal theorists and even by some literary theorists have stressed, hearers and readers simply do not have access to speakers' and writers' communicative intentions. Second, the *aim* of interpretation is working out what the speaker or writer *meant*, which is a function of the communicative intentions he had in uttering or writing whatever it was he uttered or wrote, so those intentions can hardly function as evidence hearers and readers use in identifying what he meant.

The beauty of the theories of meaning and interpretation proposed by Grice and Schiffer is that meaning and interpretation *always* come as a pair but are *never* conflated. And this is why this work is mercifully free of (a) talk of contexts *determining* or *fixing* aspects of meaning, (b) talk of speaker's intentions as components or features of contexts on a theoretical par with such traditional extensional features as speakers, addressees, times, and places; (c) and talk of a "Homeric struggle" between intention-based theories meaning and compositional semantic theories.<sup>17</sup> Talk of any of these things is symptomatic of profound confusion.

## 2.4 The Central Theses

I can now list some of the central theses of intention-based semantics as Schiffer and I, and no doubt others, construe it, or at least would construe it if some of the theses were lightly qualified or elaborated in one way rather than another, and if certain reductive assumptions were exorcised. (The

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<sup>16</sup> To facilitate exposition and back-reference, in the text, but not in the footnotes, I have numbered all block quotations from Schiffer's work, placing the relevant numeral in square brackets at the beginning.

<sup>17</sup> The phrase was used by Strawson (1969). This misunderstanding of the issues by someone as eminent and as importantly involved in the development of intention-based theories of meaning as Strawson has produced a great deal of confusion.

reductive assumptions will do no harm here as they are meant to play no role in my subsequent argumentation.)

(1a) The representational content of *propositional attitudes* is more basic than the representational content of either speech acts or natural language sentences; the *having of content of marks and sounds* is reducible to the *having of content of psychological states*; “semantic” properties are themselves to be identified with complex psychological properties; so all questions about the contents of *linguistic* representations are reducible to questions about the contents of *mental* representations.<sup>18</sup>

(1b) Explaining how such questions are to be reduced involves first defining the notion of (i) what a speaker *S* meant in uttering a sentence *x* on a given occasion, and then a battery of other notions, including (ii) what *S* referred to in uttering *x* on that occasion, (iii) what *S* referred to with a given part *e* of *x* (e.g. a word), (iv) what *x* itself means, (v) what some given part of *x* means, (vi) what *S* said in uttering *x* on that occasion, (vii) what *S* implied by saying what he said on that occasion.

(1c) Despite initial appearances—fostered by remorseless appeals to native speakers’ intuitions—the definitions alluded to in (1b) are not attempts to provide synonyms for, or semantic analyses of, the verbs ‘mean’, ‘say’, ‘imply’ and ‘refer’ as they are used in ordinary English. The definitions are ultimately *stipulative* and earn their keep not by yielding results that conform precisely to native speaker’s intuitions—though these are where we start, of course—but in virtue of their interlocking roles in an explanatory theory of the “semantic” properties of marks and sounds (which are themselves to be identified with complex psychological properties). This is not to deny that the definitions in question were “constructed with an eye towards the pre-theoretical notions whose names they share.”<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> The reductions Schiffer is talking about are metaphysical not conceptual. (See note 14.) So Thesis (1a) should not be confused with the thesis that all true statements about the semantics of natural language are synonymous with, or even logically equivalent to, complex statements about propositional attitudes. Schiffer (1981) is very clear about this since at least 1981. (Again, see note 14).

<sup>19</sup> The quoted words are from a passage in Schiffer (1981) that I had originally planned to write about for this volume. Schiffer makes it clear in the passage in question that IBS aims (as he put it in a recent seminar) “to reduce. . . not to provide analytic definitions of various ordinary language semantical idioms in terms of certain complexes of propositional attitudes”:

Presentations of particular theories of intention-based semantics have sometimes given the impression that the program was an exercise in some dubious exercise of conceptual analysis. This has been most unfortunate, and totally unnecessary. The definitions proffered by the intention-theorist need have no truck with synonymy, they are not attempts to make explicit the use of semantic idioms in present day English. Think of them, if you will—and here I have especially in mind the definition of speaker-meaning—as *stipulative* definitions, of utility in the construction of a certain substantive theory about the semantical properties of marks and sounds, a theory which identifies those properties with properties specifiable just in terms of the non-semantical beliefs and intentions of those who are wont to produce those marks and sounds. Needless to say, this way of understanding the theorist’s definitions hardly precludes their having been constructed, unavoidably, with an eye towards the pretheoretical notions whose names they share. I emphasize this because I

(2a) An explanatory notion of *speaker-meaning*—what a speaker means on a given occasion—can be defined in terms of agents acting in certain ways with overtly audience-directed intentions (at least for central cases), without any appeal to any other notion of meaning;

(2b) An explanatory notion of *expression meaning*—what an expression means—can be non-circularly defined in terms of certain types of correlations between marks/sounds and acts of speaker-meaning, correlations that can be defined without appeal to any notion of meaning other than speaker-meaning. So the meaning of a sentence *x* can be viewed as something that *constrains* (without fully determining) what a speaker can mean in uttering *x*.

(2c) There can be acts of *speaker-meaning* that do not involve the use of entities possessing *expression meaning*. More precisely, a speaker may mean something in uttering *x* without *x* or any of *x*'s parts meaning anything.

(3a) A system of marks or sounds is a *language* if, and only if, it is a conventional system (a system of complex self-perpetuating regularities) for performing acts of speaker-meaning within

am about to define various notions of reference, and while these definitions, too, have been constructed with pretheoretical concepts in mind, my enterprise is not one of conceptual analysis, and the only issue on which criticism can legitimately be focussed is the adequacy of the theories formulated in terms of the phenomena circumscribed by those definitions, and in terms of which they are eliminable. (1981: 68)

My original plan for this volume was to present a critique of this passage, which would have involved rehearsing the arguments Schiffer and I had almost weekly about theoretical vocabulary in our last seminar. I ditched that plan because the topic seemed, somewhat paradoxically, too narrow for this volume but too broad to be addressed fruitfully within its confines. A few remarks about our stances will suffice here. We are in agreement that although we have no choice but to use ordinary language locutions, or at least only lightly theoretical terms, in the earliest stages of theoretical work—how else would we represent or describe to ourselves the phenomena of interest, whether the behaviour of physical objects, human economic behaviour, or human linguistic behaviour—we cannot be entirely shackled to ordinary usage as our investigations proceed. In the case of investigations into language, one only has to look at how words like 'sentence', 'ambiguity', and 'pronoun' are used in the nitty-gritty theorising of generative grammar to appreciate how ordinary usage eventually loses its stranglehold. So far so good. But when it comes to matters of *meaning*, I think I am more worried than Schiffer is. There are two reasons for this. The first, which I shall say no more about, stems from my sympathies with one way of thinking about Quinean indeterminacy in the realm of meaning. (See Neale, 1987.) The second stems from the nature of the primary data of theorizing about meaning, which I take to be native speakers' intuitions about the *truth or falsity* of the things we mean and the things we say, followed by intuitions about *what* we mean, say, imply, and refer to, and intuitions that are easily teased out about such things as *scope* and *binding* using non-theoretical vocabulary. In short, given the nature of our subject matter and the nature of the primary data, I hold that not only must we begin with ordinary usage, but that we depart from it *grudgingly*, that we must be extremely cautious and judicious in our theoretical refinements of the key expressions 'mean', 'say', 'imply', and 'refer'. Our ordinary intuitions about what speakers mean and refer to, and to a slightly lesser extent what they are say and imply, are sufficiently robust in sufficiently many cases that if we depart too far from ordinary usage we could end up depriving ourselves of precisely the data we are trying to explain and so rob ourselves of genuine subject matter. Metaphilosophical questions of considerable importance lurk here, and I worry that nothing recognizable as what goes on in much technical philosophy of language will actually survive serious metaphilosophical scrutiny. But that is a topic for another occasion.

some population, effectively a set of interlocking conventions governing the use of those marks and sounds in that population.

(3b) To *know* the meaning of a mark or sound belonging to such a system *L* is to know its *role* in the system. In particular, if *x* is a complete utterance-type belonging to *L* (typically a sentence, in a sense that needs to be defined) to know the meaning of *x* is to know the specific type of meaning-intention a speaker *S* must have if *S* is to utter *x*, sincerely and literally, in conformity with the conventions constituting *L*. Thus the meaning of a sentence *x* is, effectively, something that constrains (i.e. partially determines) what *S* can mean in uttering *x*, a blueprint, template, or schema. (Perhaps this can be represented theoretically as a function from possible occasions of utterance to propositions. But perhaps not.)

(3c) If *x* is a complete utterance-type belonging to a language *L*, in typical cases what a speaker *S* means in uttering *x* on a given occasion can be usefully factored into what *S* *says* in uttering *x* on that occasion and what *S* (“merely”) *implies* by saying what he says in uttering *x* on that occasion (though one of these may be empty or missing in certain cases).

(4a) Explanatory notions of *speaker-reference*—what a speaker refers to on a given occasion—can be defined in terms of agents acting in certain ways with overtly audience-directed intentions (at least for central cases), without any appeal to any other notion of reference or any notion of meaning other than speaker-meaning. (The explanatory value of defining speaker-reference is clear from the fact that one of the central ways—perhaps *the* central way—in which we *say* things is by performing complex speech acts consisting of two smaller acts: *referring* to something, and *saying something about (or of)* that thing (*predicating something of it*.)

(4b) Explanatory notions of *expression reference*—for example, the notion of what an expression itself refers to on a particular occasion of its use—can be non-circularly defined without appeal to any notion of meaning other than *speaker-meaning* and without appeal to any notion of reference other than *speaker-reference*.<sup>20</sup> Similarly for explanatory notions of (e.g.) *referring expression*, *name*, *indexical*, and *rigidity*. Though all such definitions are ultimately stipulative—earning their keep in virtue of their interlocking roles in the overall theory—they will, of necessity, be constructed with an eye on notions whose names they share in philosophical discussions of language, meaning, and reference (or at least on common ways in which (e.g.) ‘reference’, ‘referring expression’, ‘name’, ‘indexical’, and ‘rigidity’ have been used by philosophers in such discussions).<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> There might turn out to be some expressions that refer to the same thing on every occasion of their use (“names”) and others that do not (“pronouns”). Unlike Schiffer, I am somewhat sceptical that any notion of *expression-reference* will be needed in a final theory except, perhaps, for proper names *if* they need to be individuated in terms of their bearers, which is not obviously the case in natural language. This is not to deny that something like expression-reference is needed to make sense of the idea that (at least some) symbols of Mentalese have content.

<sup>21</sup> See note 14.

(4c) There can be acts of speaker-reference that do not involve the use of items that themselves refer. More precisely, a speaker *S* may refer to some object *A* in uttering *x* without there being any part of *x* with which *S* refers to *A* (and without *x* or any of *x*'s parts referring to anything).<sup>22</sup>

(4d) The truth conditions of what a speaker *S* says (/the proposition *S* expresses /the statement *S* makes) in uttering *x* on a given occasion involve any object *A* that *S* refers to in uttering *x* (i.e. their obtaining or not obtaining depends upon *how things are* with *A*), even if there is no part of *x* with which *S* refers to *A*. (The truth conditions are *A*-involving, even though *A* is not the *contribution* made to those truth conditions by (*S*'s utterance of) any constituent of *x*. In a vocabulary suited to a Russell-inspired framework of object- and property-containing, structured propositions: (5') The proposition a speaker *S* expresses in uttering *x* on a given occasion *contains* any object *A* that *S* refers to in uttering *x* on that occasion even if there is no part of *x* with which *S* refers to *A*. (The proposition is *A*-dependent—i.e., it is individuated partly in terms of *A* and wouldn't exist if *A* didn't exist—even though *A* is not the *contribution* made to that proposition by (*S*'s utterance of) any constituent of *x*.)

Theses (4c) and (4d) will be my principal concerns here—though most of the other theses will all be either appealed to or argued for along the way—concerning, as they do, respectively, the possibility of implicit reference and the impact of implicit reference on truth conditions and propositional content.

### 3 UNDERSPECIFICATION

#### 3.1 Conservative Underspecification

The totality of semantic features of a sentence *x* that a competent, native speaker-hearer, *H*, appreciates just by virtue of being a competent, native speaker-hearer of the language of which *x* is a sentence do not determine what a competent, sincere, native speaker-hearer, *S*, is doing with *x* on a given occasion (e.g. making a literal assertion, making an ironical claim, mimicking someone, rehearsing, exercising his vocal cords). Nor, typically, do these features fully determine the propositional content, if any, that *S* is using *x* to air on that occasion. As it is usually put, propositional content is *underspecified* (*underdetermined*) by linguistic meaning. The use of indexical (deictic) referring expressions is widely held to provide uncontroversial examples of underspecification. Knowing the meaning of 'I', for example, doesn't tell *H* who uttered or inscribed it on a given occasion. (Nor does it tell *H* who the speaker or writer is referring to in cases (if they exist) in which the speaker or writer succeeds in referring to someone distinct from himself.) Knowing the meaning of 'you' doesn't tell *H* who the speaker or writer is addressing. (Nor does it tell *H* who the speaker or writer is referring to in cases (if they exist) in which the speaker or writer

<sup>22</sup> Where natural languages are concerned, a decision will have to be made about whether 'part' should be understood as applying only to parts that are phonically realised. This will be important if, for example, the best theory of the syntax of natural language tells us there are aphonetic words in certain sentences. Much of the present article addresses precisely this issue.

succeeds in referring to someone distinct from his or her addressee.) Knowing the meaning of 'here' doesn't tell *H* where the speaker or writer *is*. (Nor does it tell *H* the location the speaker or writer is referring to in cases (if they exist) in which the speaker or writer succeeds in referring to somewhere other than his or her own location.) But *H* needs to form correct hypotheses about such things in order to identify the proposition *S* is expressing when uttering, say, (1):

- (1) I will wait here for you.

Incorrect hypotheses will lead to the wrong proposition; no hypotheses at all will lead only to a proposition *type*, effectively a propositional function *x will wait at y for z* with certain constraints placed on the values of *x*, *y*, and *z* by the linguistic meanings of 'I', 'here', and 'you', respectively.

In one informal but exegetically useful sense of the word 'sentence'—together with informal but exegetically useful senses of 'word', 'pronoun', and 'proper name'—we also find underspecification attributable to the presence in sentences of proper names ('Paris' and 'John', for example), lexical ambiguities (for example, those associated with 'bank' and 'pen'), pronominal ambiguities (those involving 'he', 'him', and 'his', for example), or structural ambiguities (as in 'visiting professors can be boring', for example).<sup>23</sup> Knowing that 'Stephen' is a proper name doesn't tell *H* whether the speaker or writer is using it to refer to (and hence express a proposition about) Stephen Schiffer, Stephen King, Stephen Neale, or somebody else named 'Stephen'. Knowing all of the meanings of 'pen' doesn't tell *H* which meaning a speaker or writer intended on a given occasion. Knowing the meanings of the verbs 'sow' and 'sew' doesn't tell *H* which one a *speaker* is using on a given occasion when he utters (2), and knowing the meanings of the nouns 'bow' (as in 'He used his bow and arrow') and 'bow' (as in 'His bow was low and gracious) doesn't tell *H* which one a *writer* is using on a given occasion when uttering (3):

- (2) I am sowing/sewing in the garden  
 (3) The finalists in the archery competition exchanged bows.<sup>24</sup>

And while knowing the meaning of 'himself' and the syntactic constraints on English anaphora tells *H* that 'himself' is anaphorically dependent on 'Paul' when *S* uses (4),

- (4) John said Paul shaved himself

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<sup>23</sup> In a more fine-grained sense of the word 'sentence'—quite likely the sense best suited to empirical work on syntactic structure—there are two distinct sentences that we write 'Visiting professors can be boring' (due to structural ambiguity). If words are individuated in terms of syntactic category as well as form, then there are two words 'pen', one a noun the other a verb; and if meanings are added to their individuation conditions, then there are (at least) four words 'pen', (at least) two nouns, and (at least) two verbs. And if sentences are individuated in terms of the words (thus construed) they contain, then there are (at least) two sentences 'I bought a pen'. Finally, if individual bearers are added to the individuation conditions of proper names, then (assuming names are words) there are hundreds of thousands of names 'John' and so hundreds of thousands of English sentences 'John snores'.

<sup>24</sup> It makes a difference, then, whether we construe form in the previous note as a *phonological* or an *orthographic* notion.

such knowledge does not tell *H* whether 'himself' is anaphorically dependent upon 'John' or upon 'Paul' when *S* uses (5),

(5) John told Paul about himself

because English, unlike most other Germanic languages, does not insist that only the subject of a sentence can serve as the antecedent of a reflexive pronoun.<sup>25</sup>

Knowing, in addition, the meaning of 'his' does not even tell *H* if 'his' is anaphorically dependent at all when *S* uses (6)

(6) John told Paul that George would find his guitar in Ringo's room.

let alone, relative to information that it *is* being used anaphorically on a given occasion, which name it is anaphorically dependent upon. Nor, it should be noted, does any of this information tell *H* whether *S* intends the possessive markers in 'his' and 'Ringo's' to indicate ownership, use, or some quite different relation.

By way of shorthand, let us say that in each of these cases *sentence meaning underspecifies propositional content*, or, more succinctly, that *meaning underspecifies content*.<sup>26</sup> The cases mentioned so far all involve what I shall call *conservative underspecification*: they are uncontroversial.

### 3.2 Radical Underspecification

Let us say we have *radical* underspecification where, the totality of semantic features of a sentence *x* that *H* appreciates just by virtue of being a competent, native speaker-hearer of the language of which *x* is a sentence, underspecify the proposition that *S* is using *x* to express on a given occasion *even relative to information about who or what S is referring to with any referring expressions in x, and information that resolves any lexical, structural and anaphoric ambiguities in x.*

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<sup>25</sup> Continuing the train of thought in notes 16 and 17, if anaphoric links are added to the individuation conditions of sentences, then (5) is the superficial form of two sentences we can represent as

(5') John<sup>1</sup> told Paul about himself<sub>1</sub>

(5'') John told Paul<sup>2</sup> about himself<sub>2</sub>.

where the numerical subscript on 'himself' indicates something like Gareth Evans's (1977) notion of *referential dependence* on the proper name bearing the same numeral as superscript. Using this notation together with an asterisk to indicate that ill-formedness, we can represent the fact that (4) is the superficial form of only one sentence as follows:

(4') \* John<sup>1</sup> said Paul shaved himself<sub>1</sub>

(4'') John said Paul<sup>2</sup> shaved himself<sub>2</sub>

Where potential anaphoric links are being compared, it is helpful to capture the syntactical possibilities and impossibilities using a single representation:

(4''') John<sup>1</sup> said Paul<sup>2</sup> shaved himself<sub>\*1/2</sub>

<sup>26</sup> Although I do not have the time to go into this here, it is pretty hard to resist the idea that meaning *always* underspecifies content. The existence of tense markers is one reason, but there are others. For discussion, see Robyn Carston (2002).

According to many theorists who believe in the existence of radical underspecification, we have it if *S* uses (7), for example,

(7) Everyone is ready.

to express the proposition that everyone *in the assault team* is ready to parachute from the plane. Obviously, any purported example of radical underspecification is going to be controversial because it will always be possible for a theorist who denies its existence to respond (a) that the underlying syntactic structure of the sentence *x* figuring in the example contains a host of elements that are aphonic (i.e. phonologically unrealised), (b) that some of these aphonics function semantically rather like pronouns or indexical words, and so (c) that examples involving the use of *x* merely exemplify further cases of conservative underspecification.<sup>27</sup> Some purported examples of radical underspecification may well involve more syntax than meets the eye, and attention to syntactic detail may well incline us to regard some of them, on reflection, as examples of conservative underspecification. But there is no reason *in principle* why radical underspecification should not exist: the matter is ultimately an *empirical* one in syntactic theory, not one to be decided by a priori speculation.

Purported examples have been discussed at some length—though with very different emphases—by Schiffer, Perry, Sperber and Wilson, and numerous philosophers and linguists these people have influenced.<sup>28</sup> Sperber and Wilson's emphasis has been the articulation of a general pragmatic theory within which it is possible to explain how *H* identifies the propositions *S* expresses and implies. Perry's, by contrast, has been on providing a characterization of radical underspecification using a Russellian framework of truth-evaluable, object- and property-containing structured propositions—the proposition *p* that *S* uses a sentence *x* to express on a given occasion may contain an object *A* that is not (part of) the content “contributed” to *p* by *S*'s use of any constituent of *x* itself, an “unarticulated constituent” of *p* relative to *x*.<sup>29</sup> Schiffer's contributions in this realm have been both foundational and construction-specific. On the foundational front, he has defined two notions of *speaker-reference* meant to form part of a Gricean nexus and make room for the possibility of *implicit reference*, i.e. cases in which *S* refers to something *A* in uttering something

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<sup>27</sup> Though not couched in terms of underspecification as such, this was effectively the position of the so-called generative semanticists of the late 1960s and early 1970s; and it is the explicit position of Stanley (2007).

<sup>28</sup> See Schiffer (1977, 1978, 1981, 1992, 1995, 2005), by Perry (1979, 1986, 1993), and by Sperber and Wilson (1981, 1986, 1995, 2002, 2005), Wilson and Sperber (1981, 1998, 2002, 2004), Wilson (2005). Influenced parties include Carston (1988, 2002), Neale (1990, 2004, 2005, 2007), Récanati (2001, 2002, 2004) Isolated examples have been discussed for much longer, the most notorious being those involving incomplete descriptions such as ‘the house’, and ‘the murderer’, addressed by Quine (1940), Sellars (1954), and Donnellan (1968).

<sup>29</sup> A little book-keeping is required to turn this sufficient condition into a definition. If structured propositions are eschewed in favour of truth conditions, the thought can be transposed thus: the truth conditions *S* uses *x* to express on a given occasion—or the truth conditions of what *S* says (/states/asserts) in uttering *x* on that occasion—may involve an object that is not (part of) the content “contributed” to those truth-conditions by *S*'s use of any constituent of *x*.

$x$  when there is no part of  $x$  *with which*  $S$  refers to  $A$ . And with respect to specific constructions, he has argued that although implicit reference is a very real phenomenon, attempts to explain facts about (e.g.) attitude reports and knowledge claims by appealing to implicit reference are doomed precisely because they are incompatible with established foundational points.

To the best of my knowledge, Schiffer has provided the *only* serious attempt to date to define radical underdetermination in the realm of reference—essentially, implicit reference—and locate it within a nexus of explanatory meaning relations. This foundational contribution appears not to have been fully appreciated in the literature, I suspect, largely because so much work on reference proceeds on the basis of unquestioned assumptions about the nature of reference and the role of a theory of reference in a theory of meaning. That said, in the light of developments in syntactic and semantic theory, I think there is much more work to be done, if only because implicit reference comes in several varieties, making the provision of explanatory, non-circular definitions difficult.

#### 4 SPEAKER-REFERENCE

Underpinning Schiffer's theory of reference is the following thought:

[2] The connection between semantics and psychology is such that, without [a theory of the thought in the mind of a person using a referring expression] there can be no hope of an adequate theory of reference. Here I am not alluding to the idea—thought by some to be dubious—that semantics reduces to propositional attitude psychology; I mean to be saying something with which everyone can agree. (1978: 175)

The theory finds its first full expression in his 1981 article "Indexicals and the Theory of Reference." He defines two explanatory notions of speaker-reference that will fit into a Gricean nexus and lead to the definition of a third explanatory notion, *semantic reference*. (Schiffer does not close the door to other notions that might find places in the nexus.) He introduces his two notions of speaker-reference with a simple example. Someone asks  $S$  where Janet is.  $S$  replies with (8):

(8) She is at the movies.

Not only is  $S$  referring to Janet *in uttering* (8), he is referring to Janet *with* (or *by*) part of (8), viz. 'she'.<sup>30</sup> That is,  $S$  refers to Janet *with* an expression that is a proper part of the expression *in the uttering of which*  $S$  refers to Janet.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Schiffer uses 'refer by' rather than 'refer with'. The latter sounds better to my ear, particularly in constructions that will appear later, so I will talk consistently of referring *with* an expression, harmlessly replacing 'by' with 'with' when quoting Schiffer.

<sup>31</sup> Let us stipulate the synonymy of (i) and (ii):

- (i)  $S$  uses 'she' to refer to Janet
- (ii)  $S$  refers to Janet *with* 'she'.

The stipulation is meant to comport with 'uses' functioning as a so-called subject control verb: that is, the "implicit subject" of 'to refer' in (i) is ' $S$ ' not 'she'. Assuming the sort of syntactic theory I will bring up later in a different context, the underlying syntactic structure of (i) is (iii),

- (iii)  $S^1$  uses 'she' [ $\alpha_1$  to refer to Janet]

Simplifying somewhat, Schiffer's (1981) preliminary definitions of the two notions of speaker-reference—*referring in* and *referring with*—are these:

- (RI) In (the course of) uttering  $x$ ,  $S$  **refers** to  $A$  if, and only if, in uttering  $x$ ,  $S$  means an  $A$ -dependent proposition.
- (RW) In uttering  $x$ ,  $S$  **refers** to  $A$  **with**  $e$  if, and only if, (1)  $e$  is properly contained in  $x$ , and (2)  $(\exists H)(\exists R)$  s.t. in uttering  $x$ ,  $S$  intends  $H$  to recognize that  $S$  was referring to  $A$  in uttering  $x$ , at least partly on the basis of their mutual knowledge that  $R(e, A)$ .

These definitions effectively yield a definition of *implicit reference*, for they leave open the possibility of  $S$  referring to  $A$  in uttering  $x$  in cases where there is no part of  $x$  with which he did so. Schiffer's first example of is this one: when asked whether Harry Truman is alive,  $S$  just says, 'No', intending to communicating that Harry Truman is not alive. In uttering 'No',  $S$  referred to Harry Truman, though there is no part of 'No' with which  $S$  referred to him. In short,  $S$  made *implicit reference* to Harry Truman. (As will become clear, this example is a great deal more interesting than one might initially suppose. To jump ahead slightly, ask yourself whether or not  $S$  said that Harry Truman is not alive.)

There is a great deal that needs to be said about (RI) and (RW) before putting them to work effectively, so I am going to start by providing a rather detailed commentary on them. Some of the points have been made already by Schiffer; others are elaborations or extensions of points he makes; still others concern matters not discussed directly by Schiffer, though certain of them seem to be implicit or part of a general background assumed by intention-based semantics.

(i) Schiffer, like Grice, uses 'utter' and 'utterance' in an artificially wide sense that covers non-linguistic behaviour and exploits the convenient act-object (or process-product) ambiguity found in ordinary uses of 'utterance' (and uses of 'statement', 'assertion', etc.). So, in locutions of the form 'in uttering  $x$ ,  $S$  meant that  $p$ ', there is no assumption that  $x$  is, or involves the production of, a linguistic item. One of Schiffer's examples concerns a non-linguistic utterance: a butler, by virtue of a prearranged signal, is referring to the consul when, in drawing the curtains, he communicates to his accomplice that the consul is about to leave the consulate. But there is no part of his utterance with which the butler refers to the consul. Although the example involves the use of a prearranged non-linguistic signal rather than a sentence of natural language, Schiffer stresses that the basic notion of reference he is using it to illustrate does not itself appeal to any notion of convention or pre-established meaning.  $S$  may refer to something in uttering  $x$  even when  $x$  has no meaning whatsoever, but functions as a wholly non-conventional means of communication.

(ii) (RI) and (RW) are simplifications because, unlike Schiffer's final definitions, they cover only cases of what Schiffer calls *primary* reference. Suppose there are two old clocks in the house, one in the study, the other in the kitchen.  $H$  tells  $S$  he will spend the morning doing household chores, and  $S$  says,

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where  $\alpha$  is the aponic subject of the embedded clause and is bound by 'S' (binder and bound being marked with a superscript and a subscript, respectively).

- (9) The clock in the study needs winding up.

According to Schiffer, in uttering this sentence in the described scenario, *S* refers to a certain thing (*qua* its being a clock in a certain study), and *S* means that that thing needs winding up. But *S* also refers to another thing (*qua* its being a study), though he does *not mean* anything of it: he refers to the study solely to enable *H* to identify the clock he means, the thing he *does* mean something of, viz. the clock in the study. As Schiffer puts it, *S* makes *primary* reference to the clock in the study but a *non-primary* reference to the study.

The machinery of Russellian, object-containing propositions is helpful here: If, in uttering *x*, *S* makes primary reference to *A*, then *A* is a constituent of the proposition *S* means. But if *S* makes only secondary reference to *A*, then *A* need not be—and in a good many cases will not be—a constituent of the proposition *S* means; *A*'s impact on the proceedings may be limited to the role *S* intends *H*'s recognition that *A* is being referred to by *S* is to play in leading *H* to identify *S*'s *primary* reference. In some cases, the thing *S* makes non-primary reference to *will* turn out to be a constituent of the proposition expressed, if only because *S* may make primary and non-primary reference to the same thing: if *S* and *H* mutually know that Fred is the tallest person in his family, *S* could use

- (10) the tallest person in Fred's family is a fool

to say that Fred is a fool, and in so doing would be making non-primary reference to Fred with 'Fred', non-primary reference to Fred's family with 'Fred's family', and primary reference to Fred with 'the tallest person in Fred's family'. For simplicity, I shall restrict my attention here to primary reference, which is why I use **(RI)** rather than the more complex definition Schiffer ends up with to take into account non-primary reference.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Schiffer's distinction between primary and non-primary *reference* is intimately, but not perfectly, related to a syntactic distinction he draws between primary and non-primary *occurrences* of (purported) singular terms. An occurrence of a singular term *e* in a sentence *x* is primary if, and only if, *e* is not a proper constituent of the occurrence of some other singular term in *x*. So, in example (9) the occurrence of the noun phrase 'the clock in the study' is primary, whereas the occurrence of 'the study' is secondary. An adequate recursive definition would entail that the occurrence of 'the study' in, say, 'the pendulum inside the clock in the study is cracked' is *tertiary*.

The machinery of object-containing propositions is helpful again: If *e* has a *primary* occurrence in a sentence *x*, then (typically) the thing *S* refers to with *e*, in uttering *x*, will be a constituent of the proposition *S* expresses; but if *e* has a non-primary occurrence, then (typically) the thing *S* refers to with *e*, in uttering *x*, will *not* be a constituent of the proposition *S* expresses, its impact being limited to the role *S* intends *H*'s recognition that *A* is being referred to by *S* with *e* is to play in leading *H* to identify what *S* is referring to with the smallest singular term *f(e)* of which *e* is a proper constituent. *f(e)* might be a proper constituent of some large singular term *g(f(e))*, of course: in (10) above, the occurrence of the description 'the tallest person in Fred's family' is primary, the occurrence of the description 'Fred's family' secondary, and the occurrence of the name 'Fred' tertiary.

The relation between the syntactic notion of a primary (secondary, tertiary, . . .) occurrence of a singular term and the semantic notion of a primary (secondary, tertiary, . . .) reference is similar to the one between the syntactic notion of an indicative sentence and the semantic notion of an assertion, or the one between the syntactic notion of an interrogative sentence and the semantic notion of a question. In a sense that intention-based semantics aims to make precise, indicative sentences have some property that makes their use "maximally efficacious", as Schiffer (1981: 66) puts it, as a means for making assertions. (The existence of

(iii) In order for **(RI)** and **(RW)** to gain traction, certain concepts they deploy need to be defined. First, a definition of 'S means an A-dependent proposition' is required. That amounts to a definition of 'S means that p', for cases in which the proposition that p is A-dependent. The requisite definition is given in terms of speakers acting in certain ways with overtly audience-directed intentions.<sup>33</sup> The core of Schiffer's account is the following:

- (M)** In uttering *x*, *S* **means** that *p* only if,  $(\exists H)(\exists R)$  s.t. *S* utters *x* intending it to be mutual knowledge between *S* and *H* that  $R(x, p)$  and, on the basis of this, that *S* uttered *x* with the intention of activating in *H* the belief that *p*.

(For the imperatival case, where *S* means that *H* is to make it the case that *p*, the final part of the definiens will read something akin to 'S uttered *x* with the intention of getting *H* to make it the case that *p*.' I shall largely ignore such cases here.) No assumption is made in **(M)** about the nature of either the utterance *x* or the relation *R*. As Schiffer puts it, "*R* may be any relation which *S* thinks will do the job . . . [though] pretty clearly, some relations are better than others." (1981: 65). One good one is the relation *R\** that holds between *x* and the proposition that *p* when *x*, or rather its production, is a *conventional method*, within some group of people to which *S* belongs, for meaning that *p*—more precisely, for meaning propositions of some specific and definable type *T* exemplified by the proposition that *p*, particularly if the proposition that *p* is especially relevant or salient (in some way that can be made precise) among those of type *T*. One task of intention-based semantics is to spell out what constitutes being a conventional method of this sort without appealing to any undefined notion of *x*'s *meaning*—*x*'s meaning is what we are trying to define.

(iv) A definition is also needed of *mutual knowledge*, a notion that figures explicitly in both **(RW)** and **(M)**. Schiffer offers us roughly the following as a point of departure:

- (K)** *S* and *H* **mutually know** that *p* if, and only if, (1) *S* and *H* both know that *p*, (2) *S* and *H* both know that (1), (3) *S* and *H* both know that (2), . . . .

For present purposes, I shall just assume that some notion of mutual knowledge *per se* is unproblematic and that **(K)** can be improved upon to handle problem cases.

(v) An important feature of **(RI)**, as mentioned already, is that it allows for the possibility of *S* referring to some object *A* in uttering something *x* without there being *any* part of *x* with which *S*

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expressions having this property is virtually assured, Schiffer maintains, by the need to make assertions and broadly Gricean assumptions about the nature of rational behaviour and cooperative endeavours.) But in the right circumstances, indicative sentences can certainly be used to make requests. ('You're standing on my foot.') Similarly, interrogative sentences have some property that makes their use maximally efficacious as a means for asking questions. But in the right circumstances they can certainly be used to make requests. ('Do you realize you're standing on my foot?') And, similarly, secondary occurrences of singular terms have some property that makes their use maximally efficacious as a means for making secondary references, but in the right circumstances, they can be used to make primary references. (*H*: 'How was the food at the Ivy the last time you were there?' *S*: 'I thought it was excellent, but the man who frowned when Princess Caroline and Uma Thurman suggested I go home with them for a threesome was ambivalent about the soup.')

<sup>33</sup> Grice (1957, 1969) Strawson (1964), Schiffer (1972).

refers to *A*. In such cases we will have *implicit reference*, which exemplifies one side of a logical asymmetry:

[3] the . . . notion [of reference-in] is the logically prior one, in that one cannot refer to *A* by *e* unless there is some *x* which contains *e* such that one refers to *A* in uttering *x*; but, we have already noticed, one may refer to *A* in uttering *x* even though *x* contains nothing *e* with which one refers to *A*. We should therefore expect a definition of *reference-with* in terms of *reference-in*. (Schiffer, 1981: 75)

This is, in effect, the launch pad for the rest of this paper. Examining a range of examples reveals important differences between types of implicit reference and brings out some vitally important questions about the interpretation of **(RW)** and about the notion of *saying* that will figure in a final theory.

(vi) It is common in the philosophy of language to assume that a theoretically significant notion of *noun phrase* can be characterised *syntactically*, and that there is some theoretically significant *semantic* property, the possession of which marks out certain noun phrases as *referring expressions*.<sup>34</sup> It is also common to assume that the class of referring expressions may be divided into theoretically significant subclasses. A cocktail of syntactic and interpretive considerations are used in loosely specifying some of these subclasses, but certain labels have taken on theoretical pretensions, and it does the intention-based semanticist no harm to play along as long as no direct appeal is made to the notions labouring under these labels within the theory itself. The usual suspects are names ('Bobby', 'Robert F. Kennedy'), demonstrative pronouns ('this', 'that'), first- and second-person pronouns ('I', 'you'), third-person pronouns ('he', 'she', 'him', 'her') when used deictically (perhaps with a demonstration) or anaphorically (as in 'Bobby and his brother'), and some expressions whose referential nature appears to be tied to the meanings of their parts and the mode of assembly, for example demonstrative descriptions ('that tall man'), definite descriptions ('the tallest man in Rome', 'Bobby's brother'), and, perhaps, indefinite descriptions ('a man I thought we had agreed to keep out of the loop').<sup>35</sup> But intention-based semantics wants ultimately to provide non-circular definitions of *referring expression*, *name*, *pronoun*, *demonstrative*, *definite description* etc., definitions that are non-circular, free of appeals to any notion of meaning other than *speaker-meaning* and to any notion of reference other than *speaker-reference*, the defined notions

<sup>34</sup> This leaves it open whether there are referring expressions that are not noun phrases—the distributional properties of 'here', 'there', 'now' and 'then' do not coincide exactly with those of noun phrases, but it is common to think of them as referring expressions. Despite the superficial distributional data, I think they *are* actually noun phrases, but I do not want to defend that position here. Certainly there are noun phrases that are not referring expressions, most notably *quantified* noun phrases such as 'no-one', 'something', and 'every dog'.

<sup>35</sup> Following Russell, it is common (though not universal) to see possessive descriptions as definite descriptions, stylistic variants of the common form 'the  $\phi$ '. Resisting this idea generates an awkward problem: where the head of the possessive is a pronoun (inflected in the way the particular language requires) we find a simple match between English and, say, French: 'his brother'-'*son frère*'. But where the head of the possessive is some other noun phrase, French must revert to the definite article form: 'Bobby's brother'-'*le frère a Bobby*', etc. The theorist does not want to end up committed to the view—at least not on the basis of *this* data—that we can say things in English that cannot be said in French. If possessive descriptions are definite descriptions, that issue, at least, does not arise.

earning their keep in virtue of their interlocking roles in an explanatory theory of the semantic properties of marks and sounds. Assuming that the ways in which 'name', 'pronoun', 'demonstrative', 'definite description' and so on have been used by philosophers and linguists in their discussions of reference are sufficiently convergent, cogent, and useful, they can be seen as approximations of the uses sanctioned by definitions of the explanatory notions intention-based semantics aims to define. (Similarly, definitions of *rigid*, *indexical*, *referential*, *attributive*, *scope* and *opaque* if these turn out to be of explanatory value.) Though the definitions of all these notions are ultimately *stipulative*, they will, of necessity, be constructed with an eye towards notions whose names they share in philosophical discussions of reference.

The relevant definitions will appeal to the notion of *referring with* defined in **(RW)** (or some refinement thereof). **(RW)** assumes nothing about the nature of the object *e* or the nature of the relation *R* that it does not itself state explicitly. In particular, it assumes nothing about *e*'s semantic or syntactic category, so it is certainly not built into **(RW)** that *e* is, say, a referring expression (a semantic notion) or a noun phrase (a syntactic notion). (Assuming common philosophical usage is not thoroughly misguided, the definitions of *referring expression* and *noun phrase*, whatever they turn out to be, should not make the notions coextensive because of the existence of *quantified* noun phrases such as 'no-one', 'someone', and 'every dog'.) In principle, *e* could be a verb, a noun, or an adjective. Indeed, as Schiffer points out, **(RW)** does not even assume that *e* belongs to a syntactic or semantic category at all:

[4] it does not require that *e* be a singular term, or any kind of conventional referring device; *e* need have no meaning at all, but may make known one's referential intentions in some nonconventional way. Pretty clearly, however, some relations will be better than others. (1981: 75)

Although **(RW)** itself assumes nothing about the nature of the relation *R*, some relations will be much better than others for making known one's referential intentions. And with an eye towards eventually saying something useful about acts of reference made using (what philosophers typically call) names, demonstratives, pronouns, and definite descriptions, for example, we can conjecture that a handful of different relations *R* will suffice for the cases of most interest, relations correlated in fairly systematic ways with a handful of significant (and definable) classes of expressions—though, strictly speaking, the truth of this conjecture is not required for the truth or intelligibility of **(RW)**. If, for example, it is mutual knowledge between *S* and *H* that  $R(\text{'Garbo'}, \text{Garbo})$  this will make it easy for *S* and *H* to refer to Garbo with 'Garbo' when they are talking with one another. This suggests to Schiffer a definition of the *name-of* relation along roughly the following lines: *e* is a name of *A* in a population *G* if, and only if, there is a convention, or practice in *G* of referring to *A* with *e*. More precisely:

- (N)** *e* is a **name** of *A* in *G* if, and only if, it is mutual knowledge in *G* that (1) there is a precedent in *G* for referring to *A* with *e* (or at least an agreement in *G* that one may refer to *A* with *e*), and (2)  $(\forall S)$  if *S* is a member of *G* who refers to *A* with *e*, *S* will intend it to be mutual knowledge between *S* and his audience *H* that *S* is referring to *A* with *e* on the basis of *S* and *H* mutually knowing that that precedent (or agreement) obtains.

Another good relation would be the one that holds between  $e$  and  $A$  when producing  $e$  is a *conventional method* for referring to a thing qua its being  $\phi$  (for designated  $\phi$ ), particularly if  $A$  is especially relevant or salient (in some way that can be made precise) among things that are  $\phi$ . One task of intention-based semantics is to spell out what constitutes being a conventional method of this sort without appealing to any undefined notion of what  $e$  refers to on a given occasion, which is something we want to define. (See (vii) below.)

If definitions can be given of relations corresponding to the types of expressions that we would like to end up on our list of types of referring expressions, a satisfactory definition of *referring expression* can be provided by simply making the definiens a disjunction:  $e$  is a referring expression if, and only if, ' $e$  is a **name**, a **demonstrative**, or a **pronoun**, or a **definite description**.' (Of course, complications arising from the fact that expressions (formally speaking) falling under some of these labels can be used non-referentially would have to be ironed out.)

It might be thought possible to define *referring expression* more directly, taking something like the following as a rough starting point:  $e$  is a referring expression if, and only if,  $e$  belongs to the class of expressions with which we systematically refer to things. Even assuming a clear account of what the qualifier 'systematically' is contributing here, this definition will exclude expressions that are not systematically used to refer to things for all sorts of irrelevant reasons—names that are never or rarely used, complex phrases that have never been uttered before ('that truffle-loving, pink koala that Mae West almost ate'). This might suggest the following modification:  $e$  is a referring expression if, and only if,  $e$  belongs to one of the syntactic categories to which expressions with which we systematically refer to things belong. (The broad category *noun phrase* is no good, remember, because of the existence of quantified noun phrases.) But that would mean defining the relevant categories. But these categories seem to defy purely formal definitions—the intuitive characterizations we use in informal theorizing are typically syntactico-semantic cocktails, so we seem to be pushed straight back to the original idea of a disjunctive definition drawing upon something like (N). I shall have more to say about this later.

(vii) Ultimately notions of *expression-reference* are to be defined in terms of speaker-reference. For some expressions—pronouns, for example—an *occasion-relative* notion is the only one that will be required, something along the lines of, 'As uttered by  $S$  in the course of uttering  $x$ , expression  $e$  **occasion-refers** to (or **has as its occasion-reference**)  $A$  if, and only if, . . . .' For others, notably proper names (on one way of individuating them), a non-relativized notion will be required and can be lifted straight out of (N). But, presumably, before any of this, a broader notion of at least *occasion-reference* should be defined, one that does not assume the notion of a linguistic expression, hence one that, in principle at least, allows for the possibility of things other than linguistic objects having referents. And then, on the basis of this, a narrower definition of *expression occasion-reference* can be sculpted. If, following Schiffer's lead in drawing up (RW), we start with a definition broad enough to allow for things belonging to no conventional system whatsoever having referents, the first move is easy:

- (OR)** As uttered by *S* in the course of uttering *x*, *e* **occasion-refers** to *A* if, and only if, in uttering *x*, *S* refers to *A* with *e*.

Then the hard work would begin.

(viii) Obviously, **(RI)** places a straightforward constraint on speaker-reference: it involves speaker-meaning. In fact, that much was already clear from the theses of intention-based semantics listed in §2, for they place the same general constraint on acts of referring, saying, and implying. Since the constraint plays out slightly differently in the three types of acts, it is worth making everything explicit by way of three precise, individual constraints we can refer back to, the Meaning Condition on Referring (**MCR**), the Meaning Condition on Saying (**MCS**), and the Meaning Condition on Implying (**MCI**):

- (MCR)** If, in uttering *x* on a given occasion, *S* **refers to** *A*, then *S* **means** something *A*-dependent (*S* **means** an *A*-dependent proposition).
- (MCS)** If, in uttering *x* on a given occasion, *S* **says** that *p*, then in uttering *x* on that occasion, *S* **means** that *p*.
- (MCI)** If, in saying that *p* on a given occasion, *S* **implies** that *q*, then *S* **means** that *q*.

It is worth mentioning right away that objections to **(MCS)** often fail to take into account a distinction along the lines of the one Grice makes between *saying* and *making as if to say*. In certain cases where *S* *implies* something, *S* does not actually *say* anything, in Grice's sense, but merely *makes as if to say* something. For example, in his example of a professor, *S*, whose letter of recommendation for *A* reads simply, '*A* is always very punctual and has excellent handwriting, yours etc', *S* will have only *made as if to say* (or *manifestly feigned saying*) that *A* is always very punctual and has excellent handwriting. What *S* *meant* in uttering '*A* is always very punctual and has excellent handwriting' is that *A* is no good, but this is the content of what he implies not of what he said (which was nothing). If there is a problem here, it is with providing a plausible non-circular definition of *making as if to say*, on the back of a definition of *saying*: *H* is supposed to identify what *S* implies by taking into account what *S* says; but if *S* says nothing, how is this supposed to work? Evidently, a counterfactual-driven analysis will be required, but I will not dwell on this here.

## 5 IMPLICIT REFERENCE

For the moment, I propose to use the label 'implicit reference' to cover cases in which *S* refers to something *in* uttering something, but does not refer to that thing *with* anything. But things will soon get messy. It is hard to see how one could provide a simpler case of implicit reference in which natural language is used than Schiffer's example of *S* saying 'No' when asked whether Harry Truman is alive, intending this to be a perfectly adequate way (as, indeed, it is) of communicating to his questioner that Harry Truman is not alive. *S* refers to Harry Truman in uttering 'No', Schiffer says, though there is no part of 'No' *with* which *S* referred to Truman. This example is actually much more complex than one might initially suppose, as reflecting on two questions reveals: (i)

Should we hold that *S* says that Harry Truman is not alive? (ii) If the answer to question (i) is affirmative, is it also affirmative when *S* simply shakes his head rather than speaking? I shall return to this example in §7. Right now, I want to get a range of examples out in the open.

### 5.1 Elliptical Replies to Questions

The next example, though not one of Schiffer's, is closely related to both the previous one and another of Schiffer's I will soon discuss. It is a simplified version of an example discussed by Kripke (1977). Two people, *H* and *S*, are gazing down the street at someone busy with some implement. *H* says, 'What is Jones doing?' *S* replies with (11):

(11) raking the leaves.

Let's suppose the man *H* and *S* are gazing at is, indeed, Jones. (In Kripke's version, the man *H* and *S* are looking at is actually someone other than Jones, but we do not need that complication.) *H* and *S* both refer to Jones. Now *H* refers to Jones *with* the name 'Jones.' But *S* appears to use no referring expression. (Strictly speaking, of course, we cannot yet appeal to the notion *referring expression* as it is a notion we have yet to define and will not succeed in defining except in terms of speaker-reference.)

People with no formal training in linguistics are apt to say that (11) seems like a "lazy", "shortened", "clipped", or "elliptical" version of 'Jones is raking the leaves.' And, with some prompting, they will often go on to say that *S* referred to Jones with the "implicit subject" of 'raking'. In fact, it is an open question in syntactic theory whether sentence (11)'s underlying syntactic structure might not be something rather like (11'),

(11')  $\alpha$  raking the leaves

in which  $\alpha$  is an *aphonic*, i.e. an expression lacking *phonic* properties but still having specifiable *syntactic* and *semantic* properties, for example, the property of being a noun phrase and a referring expression (a notion we still need to define).<sup>36</sup>

Syntacticians have provided interesting empirical arguments for the existence of aphonics in syntax, and in cases like this one they seem rather compelling.<sup>37</sup> There is certainly nothing incoherent about the idea of certain expressions that are *aphonic* but *semantic*, or, for that matter, with the idea of expressions that are *phonic* but *asemantic* (e.g. 'it' in 'it's raining'). But the idea of expressions that are at once *aphonic* and *asemantic* is difficult to justify, and granting certain plausible assumptions about what syntax *is*, it is tempting to maintain that nothing is an expression of natural language unless it has either *phonic* or *semantic* properties (most expressions having both).

<sup>36</sup> Throughout, I shall use ' $\alpha$ ' to represent all aphonics, obliterating differences in (e.g.) the binding or case-marking properties of particular types of aphonics posited in syntactic theory (PRO, pro, NP-trace, *Wh*-trace, or whatever). As far as (11') is concerned, it is enough to treat  $\alpha$  as occupying the syntactic position reserved for the subject of 'raking'.

<sup>37</sup> See (e.g.) Chomsky (1981, 1986).

One way of implementing such ideas—certainly not the only one—is to follow Chomsky in factoring the syntactic structure of a sentence into its PF (“Phonic Form”) and its LF (“Logical Form”), where a PF contains only phonic items and an LF contains only semantic items.<sup>38</sup> On this account, LF is a level of syntactic description that encodes the semantic properties of sentences, and PF is a level of syntactic description that encodes their phonic properties. For simplicity, we can construe (11) and (11’) as representations of the PF and LF of a single sentence  $\langle(11), (11')\rangle$ . LFs, on this account, are genuine representations of English syntactic structure—rather than just representations in a formal language designed for rendering propositions or at least truth conditions transparently. Indeed, an LF itself does not even *have* truth conditions—let alone express a proposition: it is simply one of two syntactic objects that constitute a sentence, and sentences themselves underdetermine the propositions they are used to express on given occasions.<sup>39</sup> At best, LFs express proposition *blueprints, templates, types, schemata* or whatever (which some theorists have been tempted to construe as propositional functions). Anyway, assuming such a syntactic theory that factors sentences into PFs and LFs, it might be tempting to say that, in uttering (11), *S* refers to *A* with the aphonic  $\alpha$ . Whether succumbing to such temptation results in a severe clash with the use of ‘referring with’ stipulated in Schiffer’s **(RW)** is something I shall take up in §6 when addressing the matter of the breadth or expansiveness of any referential notions that will figure in a Gricean nexus. For now, it is enough to note that *if* we were to interpret Schiffer as intending the notion of referring-with he defines in **(RW)** as covering uses of aphonic as well as phonic expressions *e*, then it seems we would be construing him as attributing to an ordinary speaker, *S*, who utters a sentence containing an aphonic the belief that *S* and his addressee have mutual knowledge about an expression whose very existence is debated by linguists! Which might suggest this is not at all what Schiffer had in mind ago thirty years ago. Schiffer was not, of course, worrying about aphonics or syntactic theories that factorize sentences into PFs and LFs back when drafted **(RW)**, but I suspect he would agree that it would be a mistake to ignore them today.<sup>40</sup> For the moment, then, I propose to

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<sup>38</sup> See Chomsky (1981, 1986, 1995). For quick sketches of the basic idea, see Ludlow (1995, 1996), Neale (1993a, 2005), and Stanley (2007).

<sup>39</sup> The PF and the LF of a sentence will not always be as similar as they are in this example. A PF and an LF may well be related, in part, through a displacement operation on an expression, which may leave in its place an aphonic. This has been a common way of looking at sentences containing quantifiers:

PF: Bill interviewed every candidate  
 LF: [every candidate]<sub>α</sub> Bill interviewed  $\alpha$ .

The details are unimportant for present purposes.

<sup>40</sup> This said, there are certainly places in Schiffer’s early work where he might *seem* to talk as if he is positing, or happy to countenance the positing of, aphonics. In connection with sentences used to make attitude ascriptions, he says, “such a *sentence* [my italics, SN] contains an implicit indexical *component* [my italics, SN] requiring reference to a mode of presentation, or a type of mode of presentation” (1977: 65) “. . . an implicit indexical component requiring reference to a contextually determined mode of presentation or type of mode of presentation.” (1978: 183 & 203). I discuss the “implicit indexical” theory of attitude ascriptions in §§9-10.

countenance talk of *referring with* aphonics—at least with *some* types of aphonics—holding off further discussion of (RW) until §7.

At some point, we shall want to define to the notion of *expression-reference* and the notion of a *referring expression*. These definitions will license locutions of the following forms:

- (i) When uttered by *S* on such-and-such an occasion, *e* referred to *A*;
- (ii) *e* is a referring expression.

(With the possible exception of proper names, the only notion of *expression-reference* we shall need will be *occasion reference*.) And, assuming talk of referring with an aphonic turns out to be coherent, we shall want to use instances of the forms (i) and (ii) in which *e* is an aphonic.

As far as the interpretation of the aphonic posited in (11') is concerned, the following options are among those that would need to be explored: (i) it functions exactly as another occurrence of 'Jones' would function; (ii) it functions exactly as a deictic use of 'he' would function; (iii) it functions exactly as 'he' would function if anaphorically dependent upon the occurrence of 'Jones' in *H*'s utterance. But it might function in some rather different way.

## 5.2 Imperatives

The next example is one of Schiffer's. If *S* uses sentence (12) to make a request,

- (12) pass the caviar, please

then, *in uttering* (12), *S* referred to his addressee, *A*, though there is no part of that sentence *with* which *S* referred to *A* (1981: 69). Actually, this particular example is somewhat controversial as there is tempting to say that *S* referred to *A* with the "implicit subject" of the imperative 'pass', and so to say that the LF of (12) is (12'),

- (12')  $\alpha$  pass the caviar, please

and hence to say that *S* refers to *A* *with*  $\alpha$ .<sup>41</sup>

## 5.3 Time-spans

In order to identify the proposition *S* expresses on a given occasion in uttering one of the following sentences,

- (13) I've already had an afternoon nap
- (14) I've already had a flu shot

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<sup>41</sup> It is worth noting that *S* could use (what appears to be) the same form of words to talk about something he wants done by someone *other* than his addressee, for example in response to the question, "What do you want Bill to do next?", or to make a prediction, for example, in response to the question, "What do you think Bill will do next?" So perhaps it would be a mistake to say that in (12')  $\alpha$  must always be interpreted as an audience-directed, i.e. second person, pronoun. On the other hand, perhaps (what appears to be) the same form of words in the answers to these questions about Bill are actually elliptical forms of "I want Bill to pass the caviar" and "I predict Bill will pass the caviar". There are some interesting issues here, but this is not the place to address them

(15) I've already had measles

*H* must identify the timeframe *S* intends—the day of utterance, the year in which the utterance takes place, or the speaker's lifetime, for example. There are several ways of thinking about what is happening here, illustrating forms of implicit reference that are quite distinct from one another: (i) The tense-markers on the verbs function, in part, as indexical morphemes *with* which *S* refers to a time-span. (ii) The tense-markers in (13)-(15) merely indicate the past, and each of the sentences contains, in addition, an aphonic singular term *with* which *S* refers to a time-span. (iii) A verb always introduces an aphonic variable (in a fixed position or at least in a clearly delimited, small number of positions) ranging over individual events and a one-place aphonic *predicate* that *S* uses to express a property—e.g. the property of taking place today—that attaches to one occurrence of the variable. (iv) *S* makes implicit reference to a time-span *in* uttering the sentence though not *with* any part of it.

Whichever of these theories is correct, *H* will have to *infer* the relevant time-span. On many occasions, other parts of the sentence *S* utters together with encyclopaedic information *H* possesses will provide valuable clues—afternoon naps are typically taken (at most) once a day, flu shots are typically had (at most) once a year, and measles are typically contracted (at most) once in a lifetime. But it takes little imagination to come up with scenarios in which clues from more local information about extralinguistic context may trump clues provided by encyclopaedic knowledge—a team of doctors experimenting on themselves with daily flu shots to examine side effects, etc.<sup>42</sup>

With examples (11) and (12) above, a simple and intuitive point about syntactic structure—verbs usually occur with subjects—was massively suggestive of the existence of an aphonic subject. If there is a case to be made for aphonics in examples (13)-(15), it will rest more heavily on less obvious theoretical considerations. Claiming that the phrase-marker for a sentence *x* contains an aphonic  $\alpha$  is not something to be undertaken lightly, of course. Indeed, such a claim will be empty unless the following three things are specified: (a) the *syntactic category*  $\alpha$  belongs to; (b) the *syntactic position*  $\alpha$  occupies in the phrase marker for *x*; and (c) the *syntactic justification* for the presence and position of  $\alpha$  in that phrase-marker. These conditions are all satisfied in connection with the postulation of aphonics in (11) and (12) (and in examples to be discussed later):

- (a) the postulated aphonic is a noun phrase;
- (b) it occurs as the subject of a specified verb ('pass' (imperative), 'raking' (gerundive) and 'to leave' (infinitival) in 'John wants  $\alpha$  to give up golf', for example);
- (c) the presence of an aphonic in those phrase markers is justified syntactically by the presence of a verb lacking a phonic subject and the fact that verbs usually occur with subjects.

If an aphonic expression  $\alpha$  that speakers use to refer to time-spans is postulated in (13)-(15), some non-trivial decisions will have to be made. (i) Is  $\alpha$  a noun phrase (on the model of 'this afternoon')?

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<sup>42</sup> The intuitive distinction between encyclopaedic information and local extralinguistic context may not be sharp one of course.

A prepositional phrase (on the model of something like 'during my life')? Or some altogether different type of phrase, perhaps one that doesn't have phonic instances? Where in the LFs of the relevant sentences does it occur? What are its sister nodes? What node immediately dominates it? What is the syntactic evidence for any answers provided to these questions? There are also non-trivial semantic questions to answer. How does  $\alpha$  function semantically? Not as an aphonic version of the phonic indexical 'today' for otherwise *S* could never use (14) to say he has had a flu shot *this year*. And not as an aphonic version of the phonic demonstrative description 'this afternoon' for otherwise *S* could never use (14) to say he has had a flu shot *this year* or *this morning* in *his lifetime*.

The point may be pressed in terms of Kaplanian character. If it exists, the aphonic *in*, say, (14) does not have the character of any known phonic. It does not have the character of 'today' or 'yesterday' or any other indexical phonic and signals no perspective on a timeframe; indeed it is wholly non-perspectival, so calling it an "indexical" is somewhat misleading if we take seriously, as I think we should, the fact that traditional talk of indexicality—see the work of (e.g.) Reichenbach, Russell, Kaplan, Perry, and Evans—is fuelled by perspective. (As discussed later Schiffer's use of 'indexical' in 'hidden-indexical' is misleading in a similar way.) The aphonic, if it exists, is like no known phonic expression in respect of Kaplanian character. If we want a broader notion of "context-sensitivity" I recommend we use the label "context-sensitive". On this usage (which I think some people already adhere to) the indexical expressions will be a subset of the context-sensitive expressions.

#### 5.4 Location Conditions

As Perry (1986) and others have noted, *S* may use (16) to *say* something about current conditions *in*, say, Paris, despite there being no part of the sentence *with* which *S* refers to Paris:

(16) It's raining (/midnight/winter)

(*S* needn't be *in* Paris, or even *close* to Paris to do this.) Of course, *S* could add an indexical ('here') or a prepositional phrase containing a name, an indexical, or a description with which *S* refers to Paris ('in Paris', 'in this place', 'in the city in which Dan Sperber lives') in order to be more explicit, but this is certainly not required by facts about syntax, semantics or (much of the time) communication.

As with utterances of (13)-(15) involving reference to time-spans, there are several ways to go here, illustrating forms of implicit reference that are quite distinct from one another: (i) Each of the sentences contains an aphonic singular term *with* which *S* refers to a location. (ii) A verb always introduces an aphonic variable (in a fixed position or at least in a clearly delimited, small number of positions) ranging over individual events and a one-place aphonic *predicate* that *S* uses to express a property—e.g. the property of being in Paris—that attaches to one occurrence of the variable. (iii) *S* makes implicit reference to a location *in* uttering the sentence though not *with* any part of it.<sup>43</sup> Whichever of these theories is correct, *H* will have to *infer* the relevant location.

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<sup>43</sup> See Perry (1986).

Let us postulate a special way of referring to something using a language that does not involve referring *with* an expression, something I shall call referring *via* an expression. As far as (16) is concerned, the idea would be that *S* refers to Paris *via* the word 'raining' (/‘midnight’/‘winter’) because the word’s *semantics* demands the provision of a relatum that its syntax neither demands nor prohibits, a relatum that nonetheless needs to be provided in order to obtain something fully propositional when the word is used. (For more examples, see §5.5) Referring *via* an expression differs from referring *with* an expression in a way that has important theoretical repercussions: Only cases in which *S* refers *with* an expression should fall under the purview of definitions (when they come) of *referring expression* and *expression-reference*. While we might be happy with a theory according to which, relative to a particular occasion of utterance, a phonic  $\alpha$  occupying a noun phrase position in a particular sentence uttered has as its reference (say, Paris), we will not be happy if the theory also says that, relative to a particular occasion of utterance, the verb ‘rain’ has as its reference, Paris! So we must make sure that our final definition of *referring with* does not inadvertently mop up cases of that should fall under a definition of referring *via*.

To the extent that this proves difficult, one might be drawn to the view that a use of (16) involves referring with an aponic of some sort. Again some non-trivial decisions would have to be made. (i) Is  $\alpha$  a noun phrase, on the model of ‘Paris’? Or a prepositional phrase, on the model of ‘in Paris’? Or a phrase of the category that ‘here’ belongs to (if it is not a prepositional phrase)? Or some altogether different phrase, perhaps one that doesn’t have phonic instances? Where does  $\alpha$  occur in (16)? What are its sister nodes? What node immediately dominates it? Is  $\alpha$  also present in the following sentences, or is it overwritten, as it were, by ‘here’ or by ‘in Paris’?

- (16') It's raining (/midnight/winter) here
- (16'') It's raining (/midnight/winter) in Paris
- (16''') It's raining (/midnight/winter) here in Paris.

If  $\alpha$  *is* overwritten, we need know the mechanics of overwriting. If it is not, we need to know *where*  $\alpha$  occurs in these sentences, what its sister nodes are, and what node immediately dominates it. These are important questions about the syntactic structures of (16')-(16'''). There are also semantic questions to answer. How does  $\alpha$  function semantically? Not as an aponic version of the proper name-involving PP (prepositional phrase) ‘in Paris’, for otherwise *S* could never use (16) to say that it's raining (/midnight/winter) in London; not as an aponic version of the indexical ‘here’, for otherwise *S* could never use (16) when he is in London to say that it's raining (/midnight/winter) in Paris, and not as an aponic version of the indexical ‘there’, for otherwise *S* could never use (16) when he is in Paris to say that it's raining (/midnight/winter) in Paris; and not as an aponic version of the description-involving PP ‘in the capital of France’, for otherwise *S* could never use (16) to say it's raining (/midnight/winter) in London, or to say that it's raining (/midnight/winter) in the capital of England.

Again, the point may be pressed in terms of Kaplanian character. If it exists, the aponic in (16) does not have the Kaplanian character of any known phonic expression, indexical or otherwise. It does not have the character of either ‘here’ or ‘there’ because a speaker inside or outside Paris can

use (16) to say it's raining (/midnight/winter) in Paris. So the purported aphonic signals no perspective on a location; indeed it is wholly non-perspectival, so calling it an "indexical" may be somewhat misleading. (See the discussion of example (14) above). Nor does the purported aphonic have the character of any proper name-involving PP such as 'in Paris'—if it did, then it would be impossible for *S* to use (16) to say that it's raining (/midnight/winter) in London. Nor does it have the character of any description-involving PP such as 'in the capital of France', for then (again) it would be impossible to use (16) to say it's raining (/midnight/winter) in London, or to say that it's raining (/midnight/winter) in the capital of England. So the aphonic, if it exists, is like no known phonic expression in respect of character. Since, by hypothesis, it has no phonology, without some evidence of its existence motivated by grammatical considerations, i.e. considerations of syntactic distribution, the postulation of such an expression might seem little more than an attempt to cling to the dogma that every constituent of a proposition expressed is the value of some element in syntax.

One must be careful not to claim that one has a *syntactic* argument for the existence of a particular aphonic expression in an English sentence *x* when all one has actually done is shown that amounts to no more than the point that it is possible to concoct a semi-formal, semi-English formula that contains an expression whose value we could take to be some object the speaker refers to implicitly, perhaps only *via* some expression of *x*.

### 5.5 "Semantically Incomplete" Noun Phrases

The next type of case is the one with the longest lineage in the literature. The example I shall use was made famous by Keith Donnellan (1966, 1968) and involves a so-called attributive use of a definite description. Two detectives *S* and *H* are looking down at *A*'s mutilated corpse. They have no suspect and no clues as to who committed this act, but the state of *A*'s body prompts *S* to utter (17):

(17) The murderer is insane.

Here *S* implicitly refers to *A*, and the proposition she expresses is the *A*-dependent proposition that the murderer of *A* is insane. There are two plausible theories of how *A* makes it into the proposition expressed. On one account, *S* is referring to *A* *with* an aphonic  $\alpha$ :

(17') The murderer (of)  $\alpha$  is insane.

Alternatively, *S* does not refer to *A* *with* any part of (17), she refers to *A* *via* the noun 'murderer', the semantics of which demands the provision of a relatum that its syntax does not signal, a relatum that needs to be provided in order to obtain something fully propositional when the noun is used. Further examples, and some complications, are provided by (18):

(18) The mayor (/governor/president) can ban demonstrations.

Suppose *S* uses this to say that the mayor of New York City can ban demonstrations in New York City. Has *S* referred to New York City once or twice? If twice, was the second reference *via* the noun 'demonstrations'? There is nothing incoherent about the idea of using (18) (and being understood as using it) to say that the mayor of New York City can ban demonstrations *in* New

York *State*, or in *the whole of USA* for that matter—imagine a time of extraordinary political upheaval—so referring to a place via 'mayor' does not automatically fix the place over which 'demonstrations' is operative. What should we say, then, about *S*'s reference to New York State if she uses (18) to say that the mayor of New York City can ban demonstrations in New York *State*. Is *S* referring to New York State *via* 'demonstrations' in much the same way as she is referring to New York City via 'mayor'? This is a tricky question. No-one can be a mayor without being a mayor of something or other. And although nothing can be a demonstration unless it is located somewhere, there might be little initial temptation to think of 'demonstration' as on a semantic par with relatum-demanding nouns like 'murderer', 'kidnapper', 'assassin', 'mayor', 'governor', 'president', etc. (Though nothing can be a demonstration unless something is being demonstrated (usually *against* or *for*), so maybe there is a quite separate relatum to examine. See note 41.) If we must say that one cannot be a murderer, kidnapper, or assassin without there being someone one has murdered, kidnapped, or assassinated, shouldn't we also say that one cannot be a thief, an embezzler, a builder, a plumber, a pilot, a sailor, a spy, or a demonstrator unless there is something one has stolen, embezzled, built, plumbed, piloted, sailed, spied on, or demonstrated? But can we really hold people in such positions to higher metaphysico-semantic standards than accountants, architects, electricians, soldiers, priests, doctors, nurses, gamblers, or gangsters?<sup>44</sup>

## 5.6 "Pragmatically Incomplete" Noun Phrases

The meanings of many other nouns are not obviously like 'murderer' and 'mayor', for example 'table', 'man', and 'dog'. Nonetheless, it is often the case that identifying the propositions speakers express using sentences that contain these nouns still requires identifying some additional object or property. In the right circumstances, *S* may use sentence (19), for example,

(19) Every widget I purchase cracks within a week

to express the proposition that every widget *S* purchases *from Acme Widgets* cracks within a week *of S's purchasing it from Acme Widgets*—imagine *S* explaining to the CEO of *Acme Widgets*, who is one of his two widget suppliers, why he is now going to buy all of his widgets from the other supplier. Unlike the semantic incompleteness associated with uses of 'murderer', 'mayor', and so

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<sup>44</sup> It is sometimes said that the felicity of sentences such as (i) and (ii) demonstrates that 'mayor', 'murderer', etc. can be used to express monadic relations:

- (i) Fred and Jill are both mayors (/murderers/assassins)
- (ii) More than 1,000 mayors (/murderers/assassins) attended the conference.

There is nothing wrong with the *data*, but accepting them does mean denying the claim that there is some place that, e.g., Fred is mayor *of*. The required relatum is simply being abstracted from, the monadic property ascribed to Fred being just: being such that there exists a place he is mayor of. (The intelligibility of allowing nomadic tribes to have mayors constitutes no counterexample: being a mayor is being a mayor of *something* or other, even if is not necessarily a place, in the simplest sense.) Perhaps many more of our nouns than we usually think are, at bottom, words expressing non-monadic or abstracted monadic properties; 'demonstration' might be a case in point, given that being a demonstration requires there be something that is being demonstrated (against or in favour of).

on, the incompleteness associated with uses of 'widget', 'table', 'man', and 'dog' is *pragmatic*: implicit reference is not something that is needed in order to obtain something fully propositional; it is something needed to obtain the *right* proposition, the one the speaker *meant*, indeed *expressed*. It is not something demanded by the semantics of any particular expression, it is something that, depending upon the circumstances, may or may not be required to get the right proposition, which is what I mean by labelling the incompleteness 'pragmatic' rather than 'semantic', though I don't want to place too much stock on labels.

## 6 GRADING LINGUISTIC INVOLVEMENT

The data presented so far suggests an adequate Gricean nexus will contain, in addition to Schiffer's **(RI)**, definitions of speaker-reference corresponding to each of what I shall call *grades of linguistic involvement in acts of reference*, of which I shall propose four, the highest, Grade One, being phonic, explicit reference. There can be debate about which of three lower grades this or that case of implicit reference exemplifies; but, as will become clear, this does not detract from the need to separate them, particularly if we are ever to provide definitions of *expression-reference* and *referring expression*. (Doubtless, further work on linguistic involvement will reveal the need for interesting sub-divisions.)

### 6.1 Grade One: Full (Phonic-Syntactic-Semantic) Involvement: Referring with a Phonic

Full phonic involvement in speaker-reference is exemplified by uses of various parts of the following sentences, already mentioned:<sup>45</sup>

- (1) I will wait here for you
- (4) John<sup>1</sup> said Paul<sup>2</sup> shaved himself<sup>\*1/2</sup>
- (5) John<sup>1</sup> told Paul<sup>2</sup> about himself<sub>1/2</sub>
- (6) John<sup>1</sup> told Paul<sup>2</sup> that George<sup>3</sup> would find his<sub>1/2/3/...</sub> guitar in Ringo's room.
- (8) She's at the movies,

Not only does the speaker, *S*, refer to something *A* in uttering *x*, there is also a phonic, a constituent of *x*, *with* which *S* refers to *A*. To these cases we may add some involving referential uses of demonstrative and definite descriptions:

- (20) That man [pointing at Jones] is insane
- (21) The man in the corner drinking champagne [pointing at Jones] is insane.

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<sup>45</sup> A caveat about the anaphoric pronouns: while it might be argued that *S* refers with such a pronoun in virtue of its "referential dependence" on another expression that *S* is referring with (see Evans, 1977, 1980), this is not the only game in town. It might be argued, for example, that the pronoun's role when anaphoric is captured in terms of a contribution to abstraction, thereby unifying their role with singular and quantified antecedents in a way that referential dependence accounts do not quite manage to do. For discussion, see Heim and Kratzer (1998) and Neale (2005).

(Surely, even an (old-fashioned) Russellian-Gricean about descriptions who denies that *S* said anything about *Jones* in uttering (21) and that the description itself refers to Jones will accept that *S* refers to Jones.) And, arguably, we can add cases in which *S* uses an indefinite description or some other type of existentially quantified noun phrase referentially:

(22) Look! A man (/someone) is breaking into that car.

In all of these cases, *S* refers to something with a phonic and, as such, they exemplify the uncontroversial first grade of linguistic involvement in acts of reference, full (i.e. phonic, syntactic, and semantic) involvement.

## 6.2 Grade Two: Syntactic-Semantic Involvement: Referring with an Aphonic

The matter of the relation between my broad but informal notion of *referring with* an expression and the notion Schiffer took himself to be defining in (RW) must now be addressed. Although the defined notion is rooted in ordinary talk, the definition, as ever, is stipulative: it earns its keep not by yielding results that conform precisely to native speaker's intuitions—though these are where we start—but by its explanatory role within a Gricean nexus. Now bearing in mind developments in syntactic theory during the thirty years that have elapsed since Schiffer drafted (RW), it would be unwise today, I think, to ignore the possibility of genuine aphonics. So, for concreteness, let us suppose that syntacticians have made good cases for (11) and (12) having the LFs we can represent schematically as (11') and (12'),

(11')  $\alpha$  raking the leaves

(12')  $\alpha$  pass the caviar, please

in which the subjects of 'raking' and 'pass' are aphonics. Relative to such assumptions, it seems reasonable to want to say, in connection with the scenarios mentioned earlier, that *S* referred to *A* with an aphonic, in much the same way he would have referred to *A* with a *phonic* if he had uttered (11'') or (12'') instead:

(11'') He is raking the leaves

(12'') Could you pass the caviar, please.

So, given (a) the increased appreciation of the relevance of certain developments in syntactic theory to the philosophy of language, (b) the reasonableness, relative to the same developments, of talking about speakers referring *with* aphonics, (c) the consequent naturalness of wanting the aphonics in  $\langle(11), (11')\rangle$  and  $\langle(12), (12')\rangle$  to fall within the purview of definitions of *expression-reference* and *referring expression* no less than the phonics in (11'') and (12''), and (relatedly) (d) the very real possibility that a broad notion of *referring with* (*a phonic or an aphonic*) is logically prior to the narrower notion of *referring with a phonic* in the nexus of explanatory notions, it would be wise to revisit (RW).

The problem with just throwing aphonics into the pot and pressing ahead with (RW) as it stands was touched on earlier. Schiffer may well be right that *S*'s reliance on mutual knowledge between *S* and *H* that  $R(e, A)$  is part of what is involved in *S*'s referring with a *phonic*; but this does not appear

to be a part of what is involved in *S*'s referring with a postulated *aphonic*, as most speakers don't even know about them. So while the definiens, understood broadly to include cases in which *e* is an aphonic, may well be satisfied by convoluted cases in which (a) *S* and *H* are linguists who already mutually believe the truth of (**RW**), and (b) *S* uses a sentence of a type *S* and *H* have discussed together and mutually believe to contain an aphonic referring expression, it will not be satisfied in cases where *S* is an ordinary speaker ignorant of syntactic theory, for it requires attributing to *S* the belief that he and his hearer *H* have mutual knowledge about an expression whose very existence is debated by linguists! (If *S* did not have such a belief, how could he intend *H* to recognize anything on the basis of their mutual knowledge that  $R(e, A)$ ?)

To this it might be replied that the very fact that ordinary speakers are sometimes inclined to talk about "implicit subjects" of 'raking' and 'pass' in (11) and (12) show the examples are not really so controversial and that it is not that implausible to attribute beliefs about those subjects to competent speakers. But whatever the merits, if any, of this thought, in its more general form it might be thwarted by the existence of cases in which knowledge that is, or at least appears to be, *theoretical* would be needed by ordinary speakers if they were to have analogous "inclinations." As theorists, we don't need to get *very* theoretical to see this. The following examples are also thought to contain aphonics as the subjects of embedded clauses:

- (23) John<sup>1</sup> intended (/wanted) [ $\alpha_1$  to give up golf]
- (24) John<sup>1</sup> promised Mary [ $\alpha_1$  to give up golf]
- (25) John<sup>1</sup> used 'she' [ $\alpha_1$  to refer to Mary]
- (26) John<sup>1</sup> remembers (/fantasizes about) [ $\alpha_1$  hurling Mary's clubs into a pond]
- (27) John asked (/told/persuaded/allowed) Mary<sup>2</sup> [ $\alpha_2$  to give up golf].<sup>46</sup>

Yet ordinary speakers seem less inclined to talk in ways that are suggestive of referring with implicit subjects when confronted with such examples. Similarly, for more controversial examples such as (13)-(15), which some theorists might view as containing aphonics of some form or another used to refer to time-spans:

- (13) I've already had an afternoon nap
- (14) I've already had a flu shot
- (15) I've already had measles

Interestingly, Schiffer (1992, 2005) has raised a related problem for hidden-indexical theories of attitude reports, knowledge claims, and definite descriptions which he calls the *meaning-intention problem*. I shall hold off serious discussion of this until §9 but it will prove helpful to get Schiffer's

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<sup>46</sup> Arguably,  $\alpha$ 's role in such examples is captured in terms of a contribution to abstraction, bringing them into line with the following variants, in which  $\alpha$  is bound by a quantifier phrase:

- (23') [Every member]<sup>1</sup> intended (/wanted) [ $\alpha_1$  to give up golf]
- (24') [No-one]<sup>1</sup> promised Mary [ $\alpha_1$  to give up golf]
- (25') Someone<sup>1</sup> used 'she' [ $\alpha_1$  to refer to Mary]
- (26') [One golfer]<sup>1</sup> remembers (/fantasizes about) [ $\alpha_1$  hurling Mary's clubs into a pond]
- (27') No-one asked (/told/persuaded/allowed) Mary<sup>2</sup> [ $\alpha_2$  to give up golf].

basic point on the table right away. The hidden-indexical theory of belief reports, according to Schiffer, attributes to ordinary speakers beliefs and intentions about *mode of presentation types* because the theory states that speakers make *implicit reference* to such entities when they use belief sentences of the form '*S* believes that *p*'; but, says Schiffer, ordinary speakers have "no conscious awareness" of such entities, so they simply do not mean what the hidden-indexical theory says they mean.<sup>47</sup> So if there is version of the hidden-indexical theory of belief reports according to which belief sentences contain aphonics with which speakers refer to mode of presentation types, it will involve a double-dose of ignorance, one syntactic, the other semantic.

As far as our immediate problem with **(RW)** and aphonics is concerned, there are just two ways to proceed. Either (i) we modify the definiens to cover referring with an aphonic, or (ii) we construe **(RW)** as a definition of *referring with a phonic* and draft a separate definition for referring with an aphonic.

(i) *Modifying the definiens*. Galvanized by Schiffer's use of the expression "conscious awareness" in stating the meaning-intention problem, by Chomskyan talk of tacit knowledge of language, and by more general talk of tacit beliefs, desires, and intentions, including Brian Loar's (1976) suggestion that both *S*'s communicative intentions and *H*'s recognition of them might be partly unconscious, one might be tempted to deal with the problem just raised for **(RW)** by modifying the definiens in such a way that the mental states it mentions are *tacit* (in some sense that would need to be elucidated), thereby explicitly defeating any suggestion of conscious awareness of aphonics. A rote way of doing this would be to put 'tacitly' in front of 'intends' and 'recognize', put 'tacit' in front of 'mutual knowledge', and invoke the idea that *S*'s *tacit* knowledge of the syntax and semantics of English includes knowledge of aphonics and of the positions they occupy in phrase markers (just as it includes the analogous knowledge about phonic pronouns), together with the knowledge that aphonics occurring as the arguments of verbs (just like phonic pronouns occurring in such positions) are expressions *with* which we refer to things.

But there is an immediate problem with this idea: it is incompatible with a cornerstone of intention-based semantics: *S* has privileged access to what he consciously means, intends, and believes when referring-with an expression. The whole programme collapses unless *S*'s intention that *H* recognize that *S* was referring to *A* in uttering *x* is *non-tacit* and concerns *H*'s *non-tacit* recognition that *S* was referring to *A* in uttering *x*. So the following is much better than the rote reformulation:

**(RW')** In uttering *x*, *S* **refers** to *A* **with** *e* if, and only if, (1) *x* contains *e*, and (2)  $(\exists H)(\exists R)$  *s.t.* in uttering *x*, *S* intends (non-tacitly) *H* to recognize (non-tacitly) that *S* was referring to *A* in uttering *x*, and (3) *S* intends (tacitly) *H* to recognize (non-tacitly) that *S* was referring to *A* in uttering *x* at least partly on the basis of their (tacit) mutual knowledge that  $R(e, A)$ .

**(RW')**, or something constructed along similar lines, is compatible with *S* having privileged access to what he consciously means, intends, and believes when referring-with an expression, even if the

<sup>47</sup> Schiffer (1992: 512-14). The relevant passage appears below as [20].

expression is an aphonic whose existence he is not consciously aware of. (This fact will be important later.) But it does raise serious and difficult questions about the relation between tacit and non-tacit mental states: How does tacit knowledge play a role in non-tacit recognition? Can *S* really tacitly *intend* it to? If *S* already non-tacitly intends *H* to  $\phi$ , is it still possible for him *tacitly* to intend *H* to  $\phi$ ? If not, is it nonetheless still possible for *S* tacitly to intend *H* to  $\phi$  *on the basis of such-and-such*? Is it plausible to suppose there exists a level of thought at which (a) *S* tacitly knows the syntax and semantics of English, (b) *S* tacitly intends things about his uses of both phonic and aphonic expressions of English, (c) *S* tacitly intends *H* to recognise (non-tacitly) something partly on the basis of (tacit) mutual knowledge about a relation holding between a phonic or aphonic expression of English and some individual *A* that *S* intends (non-tacitly) *H* to recognize (non-tacitly) that *S* was referring to in uttering *x*? I don't know the answers to these questions. And as we shall see in §6.3, a more general problem with (RW') emerges when we turn to different sorts of cases. I shall not pursue other ways of modifying (RW) here because nothing else I have tried seems to get us very far.

(ii) *Construing (RW) as a definition of referring with a phonic and draft a separate definition for referring with an aphonic.* One reason for attempting to modify the definiens in (RW) to cover referring with an aphonic lay in the worry that a comprehensive notion of *referring with (a phonic or an aphonic)* is logically prior to the narrower notion of *referring with a phonic* in the nexus of explanatory notions. Suppose we construe (RW) as covering cases of referring with a phonic and draft something else for referring with an aphonic. The problem is that we will probably just end up just appropriating (RW') for this and so face most of the questions mentioned in the previous paragraph, or slight variations. So perhaps the worry prompting a comprehensive definition of referring with (a phonic or aphonic) was well-founded.

### 6.3 Grade Three: Phonic-Semantic Involvement: Referring via an Expression ("Sideways" Reference)

Referring to some object *A* *via* an expression is different from referring *with* an expression, whether phonic or aphonic. When *S* refers *via* some expression *e*, there is still linguistic involvement, indeed *phonic* involvement in all the cases I shall consider here. Consider utterances by *S* of the following sentences (the descriptions used attributively):

- (16) It's raining (/midnight/winter)
- (17) The murderer (/assassin/kidnapper) is insane
- (18) The mayor (/governor/president) can ban demonstrations

In these cases, *S* refers to something by way of supplying a relatum demanded by the *semantics*, but not the syntax, of some particular expression uttered.<sup>48</sup> More precisely, *S* refers to something *via* a

<sup>48</sup> Some nouns seem to demand *two* relata, at least on some of their uses:

- (i) The next ambassador (/representative/envoy) has his work cut out.

phonic whose *semantics* mandates a relatum though its *syntax* neither mandates nor precludes the appearance of an expression with which the speaker refers to that relatum. What we have in these cases, then, is linguistic involvement lacking the syntactic dimension found in cases of referring *with* an expression.

The question now arises how to define *S refers to A via e* in a non-circular way that distinguishes it from *S refers to A with e*. (**RW'**), remember, is meant to be steering us in the direction of a definition of *expression-reference*, but (**RW'**) assumes nothing about either the expression *e* or the relation *R* that (**RW'**) does not itself explicitly state. In particular, it assumes nothing about *e*'s semantic or syntactic category. The absence of semantic and syntactic conditions on *e* means it is not built into (**RW'**) that *e* is a referring expression or that it is a noun phrase. In principle, *e* could be a verb or an adjective or a noun. Coupled with the absence of conditions on *R*, this creates the general problem alluded to at the end of §6.2: if the definiens in (**RW'**) mops up all acts of referring *with* an expression, it is also going to mop up all acts of referring *via* an expression. Put another way, if we accept (**RW'**) as a definition of referring *with*, and then set to work on a definition, call it (**RV**), of referring *via*, we are going to end up with the *very same definiens*, given the absence of constraints on either *e* or *R*. And this would be disastrous for attempts to define both *expression-reference* and *referring expression* in terms of *referring with* an expression, for we would end up with the verbs 'rain' and 'snow', and the nouns 'murderer', 'mayor' classified as referring expressions that refer to places or people on occasions of their utterance!

It is not obvious to me how get out of this. As a way of exploring some options, let us agree to put to one side any cases (if they exist) in which *e* is no part of a language (or any other type of conventional system) but the conditions necessary and sufficient for referring with *e*, as given by the definiens in (**RW'**) are satisfied. There is nothing in this methodological move that smacks of circularity. Indeed, the claim that circularity is the result betrays a fundamental misunderstanding of the entire project of intention-based semantics. Both (**RW'**) and Schiffer's original definition (**RW**) allow for the *logical possibility* of non-linguistic examples of *referring with* because they are intended to be non-circular definitions that do not invoke undefined *linguistic notions*—and *not* because their authors are convinced by their own robust intuitions that there are some important non-linguistic examples of *referring with* that need to be captured by an adequate definition—the definitions are ultimately stipulative remember. It no more follows that there *are* such cases than it follows from a non-circular definition of *sentence meaning* that invokes no undefined linguistic notions, that there are non-linguistic sentences, even if, in fact, the definition logically allows for that possibility. The *whole point* of such definitions is to whittle things down to what we want, no more, no less. So, for example, to assume there are no non-linguistic examples of *referring with* is just to assume the truth of a claim which may seem likely true but which may in fact be false, and that is not at all the same thing as making a circular move. So let us just assume, then, that as it turns

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Typically, someone is (e.g.) an ambassador *from* one thing *to* another, though it is not obvious that this is not a pragmatic fact given that some people are regarded as ambassadors from (or for) an entity without there being any obvious entity *to* which they are ambassadors.

out there are no such examples and declare ourselves willing to drop the assumption if it becomes troublesome.

Circularity certainly *is* the result, by contrast, if we now appeal to the notion of a *referring expression* to separate *referring with* and *referring via*, for example if we were to add '*e* is a referring expression' to the definiens in (RW') and '*e* is *not* a referring expression' to the one in the hypothesized (RV). While this move may solve the problem that prompted it, the circularity is clear: we can't invoke the notion *referring expression* in a definition of *referring with* because the notion *referring with* is invoked in the definition of *referring expression*.

If there is an urge to appeal to *syntactic* properties at this point (properties definable using the primitives of syntactic theory) it must be resisted, at least until such properties have been given intention-based definitions that do not already assume a viable definition of *referring with*. If that turned out to be possible—I don't see how it could be—a defined notion of *noun phrase* could then be invoked in an attempt to separate *referring with* and *referring via*, for example by adding '*e* is a noun phrase' to the definiens in (RW') and '*e* is *not* a noun phrase' to the one in (RV). But, the class of noun phrases is too broad to get the right results: we would now be on course for classifying all noun phrases as referring expressions and candidates for expression-reference, and we don't want this because of the existence of quantified noun phrases. But, to put the boot on the other foot, this is also an indication of a complexity in store for those who maintain that all *syntactic* categories must ultimately be amenable to intention-based definitions.

#### 6.4 Grade Four: Mere Pragmatic Involvement: "Bespoke" Reference

Sometimes, nothing in either the syntax or the semantics of an expression dictates the provision of a relatum, yet the need for one is clearly *perceived*: *H* recognizes that identifying what *S* is saying, the proposition *S* is expressing, requires identifying this relatum. For reasons that should be obvious I like to call this *bespoke* reference. (I suppose the other three grades involve *off the rack* reference.) A case involving (19) has been discussed already; cases involving (28) and (29) are easy to construct:

- (19) Every widget I purchase cracks within a week
- (28) Most working people earn more than \$100 a month
- (29) Nero stamped out public drunkenness.

*S* might use (19) to say that every widget he purchases *from Acme Widgets* cracks within a week, (28) to say that most working people *in Bulgaria* earn more than \$100 a month, and (29) to say that Nero stamped out public drunkenness *in Rome*. In none of these cases is there a phonic or (let us suppose) an aphonic *with* which *S* refers to Acme Widgets, Bulgaria, or Rome. Nor does there appear to be sideways reference *via* an expression whose *semantics* mandates a relatum though its *syntax* neither mandates nor precludes the appearance of an expression with which the speaker refers to that relatum. (Even if good cases could be made (which I doubt) for upgrading one or more of these examples to the second or third grade, there is nothing conceptually incoherent about the idea of bespoke reference.) A bespoke relatum is not something needed in order to obtain something

fully propositional, it is something needed to obtain the *right* proposition, the one the speaker *meant*, indeed *expressed*. Defining bespoke reference involves all sorts of new problems, but rather than dwell on them here, I want now to turn to the role of referring in certain acts of saying, for here there are unexpected results of digging a little.

## 7 SAYING AND REFERRING

I have been at pains to stress Schiffer's point that while ordinary language is the initial entry point for theorizing about meaning and reference, the vocabulary we employ is ultimately theoretical and may be subject to stipulations that involve breaking with ordinary talk as the theory begins to take shape. I want to look at two curious examples of referring in this section, one due to Schiffer, the other to Grice, which together bring out nicely the fact that some non-trivial decisions need to be made.

### 7.1 Intuitions About Meaning, Saying, and Implying

In both ordinary and tutored, semi-theoretical talk, there are sometimes interesting differences in the strength of intuitions about, on the one hand, what *S means* and, on the other, what *S says* and *implies*. With the benefit of hindsight, it seems obvious that numerous cases in which intuitions about what *S means* are clearer and more robust than those about what *S says* and *implies* were driving debates in the 1940s, 50s, and 60s about the meanings of (e.g.) 'and', 'or', 'if', 'the', 'a', 'some', 'know', 'look', 'try', and 'voluntary', and that such cases provided much of the substance to Grice's attempt to draw a clear line between what *S says* and what *S implies*, to the counterproposals made by Sperber and Wilson (1986) and Carston (1988, 2002), to debates about the referential-attributive distinction, and to debates about certain cases of (purported) implicit reference.

This is one of those places where it pays to recall the distinction between *constitutive* and *evidential* questions. Thinking about matters only *constitutively* is sure to encourage the view that asymmetries in this direction are to be expected: as (MCS) and (MCI) make clear, saying that *p* and implying that *p* both involve *meaning* that *p*, so saying and implying are more complex notions; intention-based semantics first *exploits* the clarity and robustness of intuitions about what *S means* and then goes on to *explain* that clarity and robustness by way of certain of *S's* intentions, towards which *S* is presumed to bear some privileged relation, a relation that involves the potential for conscious awareness.

By contrast, thinking about matters only *evidentially* is sure to encourage the view that asymmetries in the *other* direction are the ones to be expected: typically, it is only by first identifying what *S says* (or makes as if to say) that *H* is in a position to identify what *S implies*, and only when *H* has identified what *S says* and what *S implies* that *H* has identified fully what *S means*. Although *H's* knowledge of the syntax and semantics of the language *S* is using underdetermines, indeed radically underdetermines, what *S* is saying in uttering *x* on a given occasion, it places massive constraints on what *S could be* saying. (The meaning of a sentence *x* is something that *constrains* (without fully determining) what a speaker can mean in uttering *x*.) Hence the *relative*

clarity and robustness, in many cases, of intuitions about what *S* says compared with intuitions about what *S* implies—the identification of which can sometimes involve some conscious work—hence about what one means *in toto*.

But it is a mistake to see any conflict here, a mistake of exactly the same ilk as Strawson's (1968) talk of a "Homeric struggle" between intention-based and formal, truth-based semantics. The truth of the matter is that, in ordinary life, what we usually care about is what *S* means, though of course there are times when what *S* says is paramount precisely because he says it, and times when what *S* implies is paramount precisely because he does *not* say it, in the appreciation of much comedy, for example. But as theorists, once we are armed with our definition of speaker-meaning—arrived at in good measure by the milking of clear and robust intuitions—we want definitions of saying and implying because saying and implying are the things *S* does to convey his meaning, even if he, *qua* ordinary speaker, is not consciously aware of where precisely the line is to be drawn between what he says and what he implies.

## 7.2 Referring and Saying in Schiffer's 'No,' Example.

Although there is no requirement in (RW') that *e* be a linguistic entity in order for *S* to refer to *A* with *e*, nothing precludes us from sketching relations between *referring with* and, for example, *saying*, that we think should obtain at the end of the day. Although *saying* is, as yet, an undefined notion, we have taken the following *Meaning Condition on Saying* as bedrock:

- (MCS) If, in uttering *x* on a given occasion, *S* says that *p*, then in uttering *x* on that occasion, *S* means that *p*.

Furthermore, the relation between *referring* and *saying* has been tight throughout. With the exception of Schiffer's example of *S*'s utterance of 'No' in response to the question 'Is Harry Truman alive?'—none of the cases of implicit reference we have considered give us any reason to question the following *Saying Condition on Referring*, which is just a desideratum (containing a currently undefined notion) rather than part of the official theory, i.e. something we expect an adequate theory to imply at the end of the day:

- (SCR) If (1) in uttering *x*, *S* refers to *A* with *e*, and (2) *e* is a referring expression occurring as a constituent of *x*, then *S* says (or makes as if to say), something about *A* (i.e. expresses (or makes as if to express) an *A*-dependent proposition).<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Perhaps the antecedent is too weak as it stands. Among the things wrapped up in '*S* refers to *A* with *e*' is *S*'s intending *H* to recognize that *S* was referring to *A* in uttering *x*, at least partly on the basis of their mutual knowledge that  $R(e, A)$ ; but perhaps what we want for those cases of saying that the antecedent of (SCR) is supposed to describe, is *S*'s intending *H* to recognize that *S* was referring to *A* in uttering *x*, at least partly on the basis of (1) their mutual knowledge that  $R(e, A)$ , and (2) *their mutual knowledge that e is a referring expression occurring as a proper part of x*. Perhaps something ensuring that *e* and *x* belong to the same language is required too, or at least something ensuring that if they are *not*, then under certain definable conditions *e* may still be a proper part of *x*. For present purposes, I shall just assume (SCR) comes sufficiently close to providing a sufficient condition for saying that it is good enough to be going on with.

The existence of the sort of implicit reference found in examples (16)-(29) is the principal reason the desideratum is not a *biconditional*. Just as, in uttering *x*, *S* can refer to some object *A* without there being *any* part of *x* *with* which *S* refers to *A*, so *S* can, in uttering *x*, *say* something about *A* (express an *A*-dependent proposition) without there being *any* part of *x* *with* which *S* refers to *A*.

What are we to make, then, of Schiffer's example involving 'No'? There is no reason to disagree with Schiffer's claims that *S* referred to Harry Truman and meant that Harry Truman is not alive. But should we go a step further and maintain that *S* *said or expressed the proposition* that Harry Truman is not alive? If not, then what theoretical status should we assign to the proposition that Harry Truman is not alive, as far as *S*'s speech act is concerned? It sounds decidedly odd to say that *S* merely *implied* but did not actually *say* that Truman is not alive. On the other hand, if *S* had merely shaken his head instead of saying, 'No', and in so-doing had *meant* that Harry Truman is not alive (and had referred to Harry Truman), there would be no temptation to say that *S* *said* that Harry Truman is not alive, and not much more temptation to say that *S* *implied* that Harry Truman is not alive. But *S* did *not* shake his head, he used a word of English, and there is something unnerving about saying *S* uttered an expression of English and in so doing (a) referred to Harry Truman, (b) meant that Harry Truman is not alive, but (c) neither said nor implied as much.

If the nexus is to hold together, a decision is needed here. If we push on with the original idea that the undisputed proposition meant here is either said or implied, we are compelled, sooner or later, to call it one way or the other. But perhaps the theory can be modified in some non-destructive way to avoid this, I don't know.

Variations of Schiffer's example in which, instead of 'No', *S* replies, 'Of course not', 'No way, José', 'Don't be ridiculous', or 'You've got to be kidding'—or answers the question 'Harry Truman is alive—true or false?' with 'False,'—may throw some light on the matter. Intuitively, *S*'s utterances of 'No', 'Of course not', and 'False' are elliptical (in the sense of Quine (1940), Sellars (1954), Neale (1990, 2004)) for utterances of 'No, Harry Truman is not alive', 'Of course Harry Truman is not alive', and 'It is false that Harry Truman is alive'; but it might prove more illuminating to invoke the notion of ellipsis found in much syntactic theory and turn our attention away from the true but rather anodyne claim that *S*'s *utterances* were elliptical to the more interesting, controversial, and potentially explanatory idea that *S* uttered elliptical forms of the *sentences* I just used to characterize the utterances *S* would have made if he had not spoken elliptically.<sup>50</sup> Probably we need a lot more machinery in place before these questions can be addressed fruitfully. Anyone maintaining, with Schiffer, that *S*'s use of the word 'no' in the example is *not* the use of a complete sentence, will have to reject Stanley's (2007) insistence that a linguistic speech act (e.g. an assertion) is performed if, and only if, a complete sentence is used. On Stanley's account, every purported example of a non-sentential assertion is either (a) an example in which a whole sentence is, in fact, being used, or (b) an example in which no linguistic speech act is performed. Presumably, Stanley will say that in saying, 'No,' in response to the question, *S*

<sup>50</sup> For a fuller account of the difference between utterance ellipsis and sentence ellipsis, see Neale (2004). The distinction also appears in the work of Bach (1987) and Ostertag (1998, 1999), who explicitly warn against confusing the notions.

performed a speech act, and so must have uttered a whole sentence along the lines of 'Harry Truman is not alive', much of which is aphonetic here.<sup>51</sup>

### 7.3 Referring, Saying, and Descriptions

Definite descriptions qualify as referring expressions under the preliminary characterisation given above—even the staunchest of Russellians must concede that definite descriptions are expressions with which speakers often refer to things. Equally, it must be conceded that descriptions are sometimes used *non-referentially*. For the sake of argument, let us assume that a Russellian, quantificational semantics is unproblematic for such "attributive" uses.

Unhappy about treating definite descriptions as ambiguous, a number of philosophers have explored the idea that referential uses can be explained "pragmatically", that a unitary Russellian semantics will suffice once the distinction between what a speaker *says* and what he *means* is made clear.<sup>52</sup> I am inclined to think such attempts (my own included) have been unsuccessful, and that the quite general points about referring brought up in the present paper suggest they are doomed from the outset.<sup>53</sup> Surprisingly, in his attempt to defend a semantically uniform, Russellian account of definite descriptions, Grice (1969) ends up with a diagnosis of referential uses of descriptions in which (SCR) appears to be violated. Here are the examples Grice works with:

(i) A group of men is discussing the situation arising from the death of a business acquaintance, of whose private life they know nothing, except that (as they think) he lived extravagantly, with a household staff that included a butler. One of them says "Well, Jones's butler will be seeking a new position."

(ii) Earlier, another group has just attended a party at Jones's house, at which their hats and coats were looked after by a dignified individual in dark clothes with a wing-collar, a portly man with protruding ears, whom they heard Jones addressing as "Old Boy," and who at one point was discussing with an old lady the cultivation of vegetable marrows. One of the group says "Jones's butler got the hats and coats mixed up." (1969: 141).

Grice observes that case (ii) has two interesting features that are not shared by case (i). First, only in case (ii) has some particular individual been "'described as', 'referred to as', or 'called', Jones' butler by the speaker" (1969: 141). Second, in case (ii), someone who knew that Jones had no butler and who knew that the man with the protruding ears, etc. was actually Jones's gardener "would also be in a position to claim that the speaker had *misdescribed* that individual as Jones' butler" (1969: 142).

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<sup>51</sup> Stanley runs through various examples, classifying each as an (a) or a (b) case. This extreme position may seem highly counterintuitive at the outset, but Stanley's arguments are interesting and seem to me persuasive in some cases, though not in all. Stanley worries that "Philosophers have found my contention that there is no non-sentential assertion particularly difficult to accept, and as a result have not carefully read the arguments I propounded." (2007: 258).

<sup>52</sup> See (e.g.) Grice (1969), Kripke (1977), Neale (1990).

<sup>53</sup> If there is any hope of holding onto a unitary Russellian semantics, a rather different tack must be taken. See Neale (2004). For criticism, see Schiffer (2005, 2006), Buchanan and Ostertag (2005), and Devitt (2007).

Let us take the first feature of case (ii) that Grice mentions to be characteristic of a referential use of a definite description. (There are better characterizations, but that doesn't matter here.) But misdescription—the second feature Grice mentions—is not characteristic of referential usage (as dozens of authors have made clear over the past forty years), it is merely a feature of certain examples that nicely illustrate the difference between attributive and referential uses, which is why Grice and also Donnellan (1966) use such examples. So let us ignore the possibility of misdescription in Grice's case (ii), and assume that the portly, dignified individual in dark clothes with a wing-collar and protruding ears, call him *A*, is, in fact, Jones's butler.

To understand what is going on in case (ii), Grice invokes the distinction between what the speaker, *S*, *says* and what *S means*. If *A* is the person *S* was referring to *in* uttering (30),

(30) Jones's butler got the hats and coats mixed up

then the content of what *S means* is an *A*-dependent proposition. But no such proposition constitutes the content of what *S says*, for this is perfectly well captured by the *A*-independent proposition flowing from Russell's Theory of Descriptions, viz. the proposition that Jones has exactly one butler and whoever is a butler of Jones got the hats and coats mixed up.<sup>54</sup>

Upon further examination, Grice's analysis of case (ii) is extremely odd and, I hazard, actually incompatible with the meaning-intention programme within which he is trying (or at least should be trying) to locate it:

(a) Grice says that *A* has been "referred to as" Jones' butler; so presumably he holds that the speaker, *S*, referred to *A* in uttering (30), and that *S* did so *with* the description 'Jones' butler'.<sup>55</sup>

(b) Grice cannot deny any of the following: (1) 'Jones' butler' is part of 'Jones's butler got the hats and coats mixed up', (2) both expressions belong to *S*'s language, and (3) in uttering 'Jones's butler got the hats and coats mixed up', *S* refers to *A* with 'Jones's butler'. So the antecedent of **(SCR)** is satisfied, But Grice is defending the view that *S* did *not* say that *A* got the hats and coats mixed up! So Grice's analysis violates **(SCR)** and this is reason enough to reject it. (The different "Gricean" accounts proposed by Kripke (1977) and by me in *Descriptions* also violate **(SCR)**, so they too should be rejected. See below.)

(c) There is another problem. Grice does not mention what *S implies*—or, in his own vocabulary, what *S implicates*—when providing his account of case (ii). So Grice holds that (i) *S* referred to *A* with 'Jones' butler', (ii) *S means* that *A* got the hats and coats mixed up, though (iii) *S* neither *said* nor *implied* that *A* got the hats and coats mixed up. The problem with this is that—putting aside

<sup>54</sup> Though, curiously, elsewhere Grice (1978) explicitly says he does not want to commit himself one way or the other on the matter of whether someone who uttered the sentence 'the Prime Minister is  $\phi$ ' during Harold Wilson's premiership has said that Harold Wilson is  $\phi$ . When I first read this, I assumed Grice was trying to remain non-committal on how fine-grained what is said is; i.e. I thought he could have registered the same lack of commitment using two proper names. But later, reading Grice's "Vacuous Names" (1969), where he sought to defend Russell's Theory of Descriptions with the help of his saying-meaning distinction, I came to question that interpretation.

<sup>55</sup> I suspect we would get precious little philosophical mileage out of providing analyses of 'S referred to *A* as *B*', 'S referred to *A* as a  $\phi$ ' etc.

things  $S$  may mean in uttering a natural language sentence  $x$  that do not turn on exploiting the semantic conventions of  $x$ , e.g., in cases where  $S$  screams out his words, bangs his fists on the table while talking, or violates a maxim of politeness or etiquette—it seems to be part of Grice's general picture that what  $S$  means in uttering a sentence of natural language comprises what  $S$  says and implies (conventionally and conversationally implicates). So given that Grice is defending the view that  $S$  does not say that  $A$  got the hats and coats mixed up, one might have expected Grice to say that  $S$  ("merely") conversationally implicated this particular  $A$ -dependent proposition.<sup>56</sup> But Grice doesn't say this. (Nor does Kripke (1977), in presenting his "Gricean" account.) This is why, in *Descriptions*, when I put forward my own generalized conversational implicature account of the  $A$ -dependent proposition  $S$  means, complete with the requisite "Gricean derivation" of the implicature in accordance with Grice's "calculability" requirement, I carefully avoided attributing the account to Grice himself (or to Kripke).<sup>57</sup> Indeed, it seemed to me at the time that Grice's failure to draw upon his theory of conversational implicature at this juncture evinced a failure of nerve, that his silence was a bit of a dodge that left his account incomplete, and the account I gave in the book was the sort I thought Grice should have given.

But the implicature-based account put forward in *Descriptions* also violates **(SCR)**. For like the accounts of Grice and Kripke, the implicature-based account entails that in cases in which, in uttering  $x$ ,  $S$  uses a description  $d$  occurring as part of  $x$  referentially,  $S$  refers to some individual  $A$  with  $d$  but does not express an  $A$ -dependent proposition. This combination straightforwardly violates **(SCR)**. In *Descriptions*, I must have been assuming that I could say everything that needed to be said about referential usage without committing myself to  $S$ 's referring to  $A$  with  $d$ . But what I actually succeeded in doing was saying everything that needed to be said without mentioning the fact that  $S$  refers to  $A$  with  $d$ . I suppose that was a verbal accomplishment of sorts, but the commitment to  $S$ 's referring to  $A$  with  $d$  was still there, for on the implicature-based account, (a)  $S$  conversationally implicates the relevant  $A$ -dependent proposition; (b) if  $S$  conversationally implicates the relevant  $A$ -dependent proposition, then by **(MCI)**  $S$  means it; so (c) in uttering  $x$ ,  $S$  refers to  $A$ ; furthermore, (d) 'Jones' Butler' is a proper part of (30), the sentence  $S$  uses: and obviously (e) **( $\exists R$ )** s.t. in uttering (30),  $S$  intends  $H$  to recognize that  $S$  was referring to  $A$  in uttering  $x$ , at least partly on the basis of their mutual knowledge that  $R$ ('Jones' Butler',  $A$ ); so (f) by **(RW')**,  $S$  refers to  $A$  with  $d$ .

#### 7.4 The Argument from Griceanism

In summary, any attempt to defend a unitary Russellian semantics for descriptions in the face of referential usage (the existence of which no-one denies) that purports to be "Gricean" by virtue of invoking Grice's saying-meaning distinction is self-defeating. I shall call this the Argument from

<sup>56</sup> A minor caveat: in principle some physical characteristic of the speaker's production of the sentence might be so pronounced that it is clear at least part of what he means goes beyond anything he is saying or implying (if, indeed, he is saying or implying anything at all, which may not be necessary).

<sup>57</sup> See Neale (1990) ch 3. Similarly, Schiffer (1995) is careful not to ascribe an implicature-based account of referential usage to Grice when mentioning "Grice-Kripke" approaches to referential usage.

Griceanism for the ambiguity view of descriptions. The Argument from Griceanism can be seen as one of *four* "Gricean" arguments against a unitary Russellian-Gricean analysis of descriptions. Two of the remaining three are actually stated by Schiffer and engage with his discussions of implicit reference in interesting ways.

### 7.5 The Argument from Priority

What I shall call the Argument from Priority has been stated clearly by Schiffer (2005). Ironically, most of the pieces are contained in a passage from Grice (1981) that I myself have cited elsewhere:<sup>58</sup>

Consider utterances of such a sentence as *The book on the table is not open*. As there are, obviously, many books on tables in the world, if we are to treat such a sentence as being of the form *The F is not G* and as being, on that account, ripe for Russellian expansion, we might do well to treat it as exemplifying the more specific form *The F which is  $\phi$  is not G*, where ' $\phi$ ' represents an epithet to be identified in a particular context of utterance (' $\phi$ ' being a sort of quasi-demonstrative). Standardly, to identify the reference of ' $\phi$ ' for a particular utterance of *The book on the table is (not) open*, a hearer would proceed via the identification of a particular book as being a good *candidate* for being the book meant, and would identify the reference of ' $\phi$ ' by finding in the candidate a feature, for example, that of being in this room, which could be used to yield a composite epithet ('book on the table in this room'), which would in turn fill the bill of being an epithet which the speaker had in mind as being uniquely satisfied by the book selected as candidate. If the hearer fails to find a suitable reference for ' $\phi$ ' in relation to the selected candidate, then he would, normally, seek another candidate. So determining the reference of ' $\phi$ ' would standardly involve determining what feature the speaker might have in mind as being uniquely instantiated by an actual object, and this in turn would standardly involve satisfying oneself that some particular feature actually is uniquely satisfied by a particular actual object (e.g. a particular book) (Grice, 1981: 276-77).

Schiffer goes a step further:

[6] when a definite description is used referentially, a hearer cannot even identify *candidate* descriptive propositions except on the basis of knowing that to which the speaker was referring in uttering the definite description, and this is incompatible with the claim that the Russellian theory *explains* the referential uses. (2005: 88)

So, where Grice takes *H*'s identification of the implicit content that *S* intends *H* to recognize as completing the content of 'the *F*' to proceed via *H*'s identification of a particular *F* as being a good *candidate* for being the *F* that *S* meant, and then *H*'s satisfying himself that the candidate possesses some property that *S* could reasonably be thought to believe is possessed by no other *F*, Schiffer holds that *H*'s identification of a *candidate property* that *S* could reasonably be thought to believe is possessed by no *F* other than the one he meant must proceed via *H*'s identification of the *F* the speaker meant. Whoever is right about the details, the moral Schiffer draws is surely right: coming to identify a property that no *F* other than the one *S* is referring to plays no explanatory role whatsoever, it is an epicycle whose sole objective is to ensure that incomplete descriptions used referentially do not constitute counterexamples to a unitary Russellian theory of descriptions.

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<sup>58</sup> See Neale (2004: 186).

## 7.6 The Argument from Parity

The Argument from Parity against the unitary Russellian account is also due to Schiffer (1995, 2005, 2006). A type of example he has deployed several times makes the case nicely.<sup>59</sup> In truncated form, here is Schiffer's most recent version (I use *S*, *H* and *A* again instead of "real" names):

[7] Suppose *S* and *H* are dining in a restaurant and *S* draw's *H*'s attention to a couple at a nearby table and says, 'The guy's drunk'. Here *S*'s primary communicative intention isn't to tell *H* some general proposition to the effect that the such-and-such guy (e.g. the guy over there) is drunk, a proposition that can be true in worlds in which the indicated man doesn't even exist; rather, *S* uttered 'the guy' so that *S* would be recognized by *H* to be referring to the man in question—*A*, to give him a name—and *S*'s primary communicative intention was to tell *H* something about him, namely, that *he* is drunk; and this proposition can be true in an arbitrary possible world only if *A*, the man to whom *S* referred in uttering 'the guy', exists and is drunk in that world. So it's arguable that *S*'s uttered token of 'the guy' is functioning as a singular term, and that the proposition expressed by *S*'s utterance—what *S* said in producing his utterance—is an *A*-dependent non-descriptive proposition which is true in an arbitrary possible world *w* if, and only if, *A* is drunk in *w*. (2006: 54)

Of course, Russellians have come up with ingenious ways of obtaining an *A*-dependent proposition that *S* meant, usually as a proposition meant but not expressed. But as Schiffer points out, those Russellians who espouse an intention-based theory of meaning face a serious problem. The relevant meaning-intentions *S* has in the example are identical to those he would have had if, instead of uttering 'The guy's drunk', *S* had uttered 'He's drunk', referring deictically to *A*. So, assuming *S* would have expressed a simple *A*-dependent proposition if he had used 'He's drunk,' *S* must have expressed precisely that proposition when he uttered 'The guy's drunk'. So 'the guy' is functioning as a referring expression.

## 7.7 The Argument from Regularity

A fourth "Gricean" argument is worth stating briefly. As Anne Bezuidenhout (1997) and Michael Devitt (1997, 2004, 2007) have stressed, referential uses of descriptions are common, standard, regular, systematic, and cross-linguistic to such an extent that the Gricean, who sees expression meaning as a notion defined in terms of regularity of speaker-meaning, really has no business denying that referential uses of descriptions are correlated with their having the semantics of referring expressions on this use. Such a denial simply runs counter to the spirit of Griceanism. Call this the Argument from Regularity for a referential reading of descriptions.<sup>60</sup>

In light of the arguments from Griceanism, Priority, Parity, and Regularity, it seems to me that neither Grice nor Griceans can appeal to the saying-meaning distinction in defending a unitary Russellian account of descriptions. When *S* uses a description referentially to refer to *A*, the content of what *S* says is always an *A*-dependent proposition. But because of the possibility of implicit reference, abandoning this particular line of defence does not necessarily mean abandoning the idea

<sup>59</sup> See Schiffer (1995, 2005, 2006).

<sup>60</sup> Elsewhere I have called this the Argument from Convention. See Neale (2004). In the light of Kent Bach's (1995) illuminating discussion of the pitfalls involved in calling things 'conventional', 'standard', and 'regular', I have changed it.

that referential usage can be accommodated within a unitary Russellian theory. I shall say not elaborate here, except to note that the proposition that the person who is both identical to *A* and a butler of Jones got the hats and coats mixed up is *A*-dependent.<sup>61</sup>

## 8 WITHER RIGIDITY?

### 8.1 Rigidity and Explicit Reference

One of the things that the existence of implicit reference forces us to appreciate is that the notion at the core of Kripke's notion of rigidity is not a property of referring expressions but a property of *acts of referring*.

Accepting (SCR) and making what a speaker says directly dependent upon *S*'s communicative intentions—rather than on properties of the referring expressions *S* is using—does not (i) preclude sensible talk about either the (purported) *rigidity* or the (purportedly) *directly referential* nature of proper names and demonstratives, (ii) produce hopelessly counterintuitive results in various cases involving perceptual, epistemic, or linguistic error, or just plain ignorance, on the speaker's part, or (iii) preclude drawing upon the fertile idea that reference *in Mentalese* is determined causally.<sup>62</sup>

It is rigidity I want to focus on here.<sup>63</sup> In his original, informal characterization of rigidity, Kripke (1972) says that an expression *e* rigidly designates (or refers rigidly) to some object *x* if, and only if, *e* refers to *x* in every possible world in which *x* exists and to nothing distinct from *x* in any world in which *x* does not exist.<sup>64</sup> This characterization effectively precludes talking about rigidity independently of expressions, rigidity being a property of expressions, or independently of some notion of *expression-reference*. But, in fact, this is just an artefact of the informal nature of Kripke's original formulation. And in 1980 preface to the book version of *Naming and Necessity*, Kripke says what rigidity is without mentioning reference, focussing directly on the *truth conditions* of the

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<sup>61</sup> See Neale (2004). For criticism, see Schiffer (2005, 2006), Buchanan and Ostertag (2005), and Devitt (2007).

<sup>62</sup> My reasons for saying all of this are set out in 'Saying and Referring'. Troublemakers here typically have mistaken conceptions of what is involved in acts of saying and referring that stem from overlooking (i) the fact that the contents of speakers' mental states—including their referential intentions—are partly a function of externalist considerations, and (ii) the fact that genuine intentions are subject to a severe epistemic constraint—roughly that one cannot intend what one believes to be impossible. A speaker's tacit grasp of both the meanings of the words he uses and their syntactic arrangement usually place constraints on what he can intend to convey with them—which is not to deny the existence of metaphor, irony, or conversational implicature—and the fact that the epistemic situations of speakers and audiences are reciprocal, a speaker's assessment of his audience's ability to work out what he means place yet others.

<sup>63</sup> For more detail, see Neale (2008).

<sup>64</sup> Some philosophers, Kaplan (1989) for example, have urged a cleaner, simpler characterisation—sometimes because they think that Kripke himself suggests it in certain passages, but more importantly because they think it is preferable: an expression *e* refers rigidly to some object *x* if, and only if, *e* refers to *x* in every possible world. To say *e* is rigid is to say nothing about languages spoken in other possible worlds (even if the idea that some of them contain *e* makes any theoretical sense); it is to make a claim about *e* as used in *our* actual language.

statement speakers make using whole sentences containing expressions that are candidate rigid referring expressions. A harmless transposition of the passage in question to incorporate talk of *what the speaker says* yields the following, where Kripke uses '(1)' to refer back to the sentence 'Aristotle was fond of dogs':

A proper understanding of the speaker's statement, i.e. a proper grasp of *what the speaker said* by uttering (1) on this occasion, involves an understanding both of the (extensionally correct) conditions under which it (what the speaker said) is in fact true, *and* of the conditions under which a counterfactual course of history, resembling the actual course of history in some respects but not in others, would be correctly (partially) characterised by what the speaker said. There is a certain man  $x$ —the ancient Greek philosopher we call 'Aristotle'—such that, as a matter of fact, what the speaker said on this occasion by uttering (1) is true if, and only if,  $x$  was fond of dogs. The rigidity thesis I hold is simply—subtle points aside [*Footnote*: In particular, I ignore the question of what to say about counterfactual situations in which Aristotle would not have existed]—that the same paradigm applies to the truth conditions of what the speaker said as it characterises *counterfactual* situations. That is, what the speaker says correctly (but only partially) characterises a counterfactual situation if, and only if, the same aforementioned man would have been fond of dogs, had that situation obtained.

So, in connection with an utterance of 'Aristotle was fond of dogs' and, *mutatis mutandis*, any variant containing a different proper name in subject position, and any variant containing a different predicate—we have here the rigidity thesis stated in a way that is fully compatible with (SCR). To talk about rigidity in connection with an expression  $e$  is to talk about *truth conditions* involving the object  $S$  is referring to with  $e$  on particular occasions. So the generalisation captured by saying that a particular expression  $e$  is rigid can be easily restated: an expression  $e$  rigidly refers to  $A$  on a given occasion of its use if, and only if, the truth of what a speaker  $S$  says by uttering a sentence containing  $e$  depends upon how things are with  $A$ , i.e. what  $S$  says always has  $A$ -involving truth conditions. And, of course, all of this is easily restated in a framework of structured propositions: an expression  $e$  rigidly refers to  $A$  on a given occasion of its use if, and only if, the truth of the proposition  $S$  expresses by uttering a sentence containing  $e$  is  $A$ -dependent.

## 8.2 Rigidity and Implicit Reference

Notice that nothing was said overtly about *reference* in the characterization of rigidity just given. Everything was handled in terms of (the truth conditions of) what  $S$  said. Of course what  $S$  said is determined by (the intentions determining) what  $S$  referred to and what  $S$  predicated of that thing, but this just reinforces the point that making what  $S$  says directly dependent upon  $S$ 's communicative intentions—rather than on properties of the referring expressions  $S$  is using—does not prevent us from talking sensibly about the purported rigidity of (e.g.) proper names and demonstratives. And this prompts a question that would have seemed bizarre if we had not been looking at cases of implicit reference. Given that  $S$  can refer to  $A$  even if there is no expression *with which*  $S$  refers to  $A$ , can we find the same underlying "rigidity" facts in cases involving *implicit* reference as we do in cases involving explicit reference? That is, can we find rigidity without referring expressions?

We can. It is not hard to demonstrate that the concept of rigidity is rooted not in the notion of a *referring expression*, but in the notions of *referring* and *saying* construed as reflecting properties of

thought. More precisely, it is rooted in the notion of an *object-dependent thought* and projected onto referring expressions through the notions of *saying* and *referring*. Notice that Kripke's statement of the rigidity thesis in connection with 'Aristotle was fond of dogs' does not draw upon any notion of *reference*, and so on no notion of *referring expression*.<sup>65</sup> And this raises the question whether we can state the rigidity thesis in connection with *a sentence that does not even contain a referring expression*. We can. And we already have plenty of good example sentences to work with. Take (18) again:

(18) The mayor (/governor/president) can ban demonstrations.

Suppose *S* uses (18) to say that the mayor of Paris can ban demonstrations in Paris. We can readily state the rigidity thesis in connection with (18) by a simple and harmless transposition of the previously mentioned passage from the preface to *Naming and Necessity*:

A proper understanding of the speaker's statement, i.e. a proper grasp of *what the speaker said* by uttering (18) on this occasion, involves an understanding both of the (extensionally correct) conditions under which what the speaker said is in fact true, *and* of the conditions under which a counterfactual course of history, resembling the actual course of history in some respects but not in others, would be correctly (partially) characterised by what the speaker said. There is a certain place *x*—*viz.* the French city we call 'Paris'—such that, as a matter of fact, what the speaker said is true if, and only if, the mayor of *x* can ban demonstrations in *x*. The rigidity thesis I hold is simply—subtle points aside [*Footnote*: In particular, I ignore the question of what to say about counterfactual situations in which Paris would not have existed]—that the same paradigm applies to the truth conditions of what the speaker said as it characterises *counterfactual* situations. That is, what the speaker says correctly (but only partially) characterises a counterfactual situation if, and only if, the mayor of the same aforementioned place would have been able to ban demonstrations in that place, had that situation obtained.

Rigidity—twice!—and without the use of a designator! What we have here, then, is a statement of the rigidity thesis that (a) mentions neither reference nor referring expressions, and (b) uses as its sole example a sentence that does not contain a referring expression. (I am here assuming, of course, the Russellian view that 'the mayor' on its attributive use is not a referring expression.) Thus liberated from referring expressions *per se* in our talk of rigidity, we can locate the underlying property where it belongs: with the speaker's act of referring, which reflects the nature of object-dependent thought. The speaker not only referred to Paris in uttering (18), but that he did so *rigidly*, (twice) despite not using a referring expression to do so.

### 8.3 Referring Non-rigidly?

This provokes the interesting question whether speakers ever refer non-rigidly? Is it part of what referring is that when we do it, we do it rigidly? If rigidity is rooted in acts of referring, it is not obvious that a theory of referring will invoke the notion of referring non-rigidly, and so, assuming intention-based semantics, not self-evident that it will invoke the notion of a non-rigid referring

<sup>65</sup> The proper name, 'Aristotle' is mentioned once for expository convenience in the interjected noun phrase "the philosopher we call 'Aristotle'", but nothing hinges on this—Kripke could just as well have used "the philosopher Aristotle".

expression. (When we use definite descriptions referentially, we refer rigidly.) The concept of a non-rigid referring expression is a perfectly coherent one, of course. But it is an empirical question whether natural language avails itself of non-rigid referring expressions, though there may be deep reasons for not having them that are connected to the ways in which we track the objects we refer to when considering the properties they have at different times and in counterfactual situations. It might simply be the case that natural language referring expressions are rigid because we refer rigidly (with or without referring expressions); and this fact about acts of referring might turn out to be reflex of a property of the nature of thought, which itself assumes a basic ontology of individuals in a contingent and dynamic world.<sup>66</sup> None of this is threatened by the obvious fact that we can stipulate into existence non-rigid expressions we want to classify as referring expressions for certain theoretical purposes, particularly when working with formal languages.

## 9 IMPLICIT REFERENCE AND ATTITUDE REPORTS

### 9.1 Definitions, Conventions and Stipulations

Despite being a pioneer of implicit reference, Schiffer (1992, 1995, 1996, 2005) has presented powerful arguments against several implicit reference theories of linguistic phenomena, most notably theories of belief reports, knowledge claims, and definite descriptions. It is the first of these—which Schiffer himself articulated in the 1970s—that will concern me here. According to Schiffer,

[8] If English has a compositional truth theory . . . the best account of the logical form of belief ascriptions, on the assumption that they have a logical form, . . . is . . . the *hidden-indexical theory* . . . whose essential idea must have occurred to anyone who has thought seriously about the semantics of belief sentences (1992: 500)<sup>67</sup>

According to this theory, when speakers makes belief ascriptions, they make implicit reference to “mode of presentation types.” This is meant to provide a way of dealing with Frege’s puzzles because it is possible for someone to believe a proposition under one mode of presentation while

<sup>66</sup> This matter is discussed in Neale (1993b, 2008) and in more detail in ‘Saying and Referring’.

<sup>67</sup> See Schiffer (1977, 1978, 1981, 1987b, 1992, 1995). In his earliest discussion, he calls it the “implicit indexical treatment” (1977: 66). A compositional, truth-theory for a natural language  $L$  is taken by Schiffer to be a finitely storable theory that delivers, for each sentence  $x$  of  $L$ , a theorem of the form

$x$  is true in  $L$  if, and only if,  $p$

where  $p$  specifies the truth conditions of  $x$ . Schiffer actually says finitely “axiomatizable”; so does Ludlow (1994) in his response to Schiffer (1992). I suspect they both meant to say finitely “storable” as I doubt either means to disallow perfectly good theories that contain axiom *schemata* yielding infinities of axioms. As Field (1972) observes, a natural way of handling variables within a truth-conditional semantics that draws on a Tarskian account of quantification is with an infinity of “reference with respect to sequence” axioms flowing from a single, finitely storable axiom schema for variables

$$(\forall s)(x_k, s) = s_k$$

where ‘ $s$ ’ ranges over sequences,  $1 \leq k \leq n$ ,  $x_k$  is the  $k$ -th variable, and  $s_k$  is the  $k$ -th element of  $s$ .

disbelieving it under a second and suspending judgment altogether under a third. But this kind of theory faces insurmountable objections, Schiffer (1992, 1995) goes on to argue.

For many years, I was perplexed about what hidden-indexical theories of attitude reports, knowledge claims, and definite descriptions were meant to *be*. Part of the problem was (and still is) just terminological, to be sure; but another part was substantive as it concerned whether or not certain specific lexical, syntactic, and semantic theses were part of the theories. At the very least, there seemed to be different types of theories vying for the "hidden-indexical" appellation. The work done in the previous sections provides the means to characterize them clearly and set out their virtues and vices. A few advance distinctions, stipulations, and conventions will make both the theories and Schiffer's meaning-intention objections easier to analyse.

(i) *Sentences v. Speech Acts*. It is no news that we need to distinguish sentences from the acts we perform with them. But the expressions 'attitude report' and 'attitude ascription' are used ambiguously in much of the literature to talk about *sentences* and about *acts* performed with them. In the present context, clarity is vital, as will become clear, so I propose the following convention: the nouns 'report' and 'ascription', shall apply only to *acts*. Thus, attitude *reports/ascriptions* are acts (typically) performed using attitude *sentences*. Correspondingly, the subjects of the verbs 'report' and 'ascribe' shall be expressions we use to refer to speakers and writers. So whereas 'John ascribed a belief to Mary' and 'John reported one of Mary's beliefs' are permissible sentences in our discussions, 'the sentence ". . ." ascribes a belief to Mary' and 'the sentence ". . ." reports one of Mary's beliefs' are not.

(ii) *Predicates vs. Relations*. The word 'predicate' gets used in two closely related ways that do not produce co-extensional results unless a special stipulation is made. Sometimes, an expression *e* is said to be an *n*-place predicate because *e* expresses an *n*-place *relation*. Call this the *semantic* notion of a predicate. Other times, an expression *e* is said to be an *n*-place predicate because *e* combines with *n* singular terms to form a sentence (open or closed). Call this the *syntactic* notion of a predicate. Unless it is stipulated that for any expression *e* in language *L*, *e* expresses an *n*-place relation if, and only if, *e* combines with *n* singular terms to form a sentence of *L*, the semantic and syntactic notions do not have to coincide in extension: an expression that is an *n*-place predicate syntactically could be an *n*+1-place (or an *n*+2-place) predicate semantically. A simple way to avoid all confusion here is to reserve the word 'predicate' for the syntactic notion and draw on the metaphysical notion of a *relation*, when talking about semantics. Instead of saying that a given expression *e* is an *n*-place predicate syntactically but an *n*+1-place predicate semantically, we just say that *e* is an *n*-place predicate that expresses an *n*+1 place relation.

(iii) *Arguments v. Relata*. Parallel to the stipulation about the use of 'predicate', we should have one for 'argument'. Predicates have *arguments*, relations have *relata*. It is now virtually impossible to confuse syntax and semantics. A syntactic thesis: In the *sentence* 'Adam employs Bill', the *expressions* 'Adam' and 'Bill' are the *arguments* of the *predicate* 'employs'. The corresponding semantic thesis: In the *proposition* expressed by someone uttering 'Adam employs Bill', the actual people *Adam* and *Bill* are the *relata* of the employing *relation*.

(iv) *Metaphysical v. Linguistic Claims*. Underpinning the hidden-indexical theory of attitude reports is the idea that “necessarily, to have a belief about a thing is to have a belief about it under a mode of presentation.”<sup>68</sup> This is a *metaphysical* claim about the nature of belief. As such, it is conceptually distinct from any *linguistic* claims we make about the English verb ‘believe’, for example the *syntactic* claim that it is a three-place predicate (i.e. combines with three singular terms to form a sentence) or the *semantic* claim that it expresses a three-place relation.

We can turn now to Schiffer’s characterization of the hidden-indexical theory. Where I am confident Schiffer would be happy with the result, in accordance with the conventions and stipulations just provided I shall insert, delete, or reword occasional phrases in passages I quote from him, always putting the revised wording in boldface; and similarly I shall expand certain occurrences of ‘the sentence’ to ‘**an utterance of the sentence**’. I shall also continue with the policy I adopted earlier of replacing ‘by’ with ‘with’ in Schiffer’s ‘*S* refers by *e*’ where *e* is an expression. Certain other expressions I shall underline to indicate that some discussion will follow.

## 9.2 Predicates and Relations

According to Schiffer, on the hidden-indexical theory,

[9] ‘believes’ [is] a three-place relational predicate holding among believers, Kaplan propositions, and types of modes of presentations of those propositions. (1992: 504)<sup>69</sup>

We were careful to separate syntactic and semantic notions of a predicate above, and stipulated that we shall always use ‘predicate’ in the syntactic sense, so we can now ask whether [9’] or the stronger [9’'] better captures Schiffer’s intentions:

[9’] ‘believes’ **expresses a three-place relation** holding among believers, Kaplan propositions, and modes of presentations of those propositions.

[9’'] ‘believes’ [is] a **three-place relational predicate that expresses a relation** holding among believers, Kaplan propositions, and modes of presentations of those propositions.

[9’] expresses only a thesis about the *semantics* of the verb ‘believes’: it expresses a three-place relation. [9’'] entails [9’] but goes further, for it is a claim about the *syntax* as well as the semantics of ‘believes’: not only does it express a three-place relation, it is a three-place predicate. If Schiffer takes [9’'] to be part of the hidden-indexical theory of belief reports, then it is a theory of *second* grade linguistic involvement: (31) contains an aphonic occurring as the third argument of ‘believes’:

(31) Ralph believes Fido is a dog.

But if he takes [9’], but not [9’'], to be part of the theory, then it is a theory of *third* grade linguistic involvement. Elsewhere, Schiffer explicitly says that [9’] is part of the theory.<sup>70</sup> But since [9’] is

<sup>68</sup> Schiffer (1977: 65, 1978: 179).

<sup>69</sup> For simplicity, I follow Schiffer in suppressing a fourth, temporal relatum, the *time* at which the believer believes the proposition under the mode

<sup>70</sup> See (e.g.) Schiffer (1992: 500) and Schiffer (1995: 108).

entailed by [9"], we cannot be sure *from these passages alone* that he is not making a syntactic as well as a semantic claim.

### 9.3 'that'-clauses

On the matter of the semantics of 'that'-clauses themselves, Schiffer provides the following brief description:

[10] [the] 'that'-clause, 'that Fido is a dog', is a referential singular term whose referent is the singular proposition <Fido, doghood>. (1992: 504)

Lurking behind this semantic description, I presume, is the intention-based thesis that *in* uttering a sentence such as (31) *the speaker* refers to <Fido, doghood> *with* 'that Fido is a dog', and the syntactic thesis that 'that'-clauses are noun phrases.

### 9.4 Implicit Reference

Implicit reference comes into the picture as follows:

[11] sentences which **are used to** ascribe *de re* attitudes . . . contain . . . an implicit indexical component requiring reference to a contextually determined mode of presentation or type of mode of presentation. (1978: 183)

[12] an utterance of the sentence [31] requires reference to a type of mode of presentation . . . This contextually determined reference to a type of mode of presentation is with a "hidden-indexical" in that there is no actual indexical in (31) **with which the speaker refers to it**. (1992: 504)

[13] The reference to a type of mode of presentation is implicit in that, although **an utterance of** the sentence requires the speaker to be referring to a type of mode of presentation whenever the sentence is uttered, there is no word in (31) **with which he** refers to that type. (1992: 503)

There is much to comment on here. I shall postpone discussion of Schiffer's use of 'indexical' and 'contextually determined' until §9.6 and comment now on the other underlined words. In passage [11] we are told that *sentence* (31) contains an implicit indexical *component* that requires *reference*. Since (i) Schiffer holds that an expression *e* has a referent on a given occasion of its utterance only if the speaker refers to something *with e*, and (ii) sentences are syntactic objects, it is tempted to conclude that Schiffer is talking about grade two linguistic involvement: sentence (31) contains an aphonic with which the speaker refers to a type of mode of presentation. Part of passage [12], published 14 years later, seems to confirm this interpretation: reference to a type of mode of presentation is said to be made "with" the hidden-indexical component. But passage [12] also says that sentence (31) contains "no actual indexical" and that it is the "utterance of the sentence"—rather than the "implicit indexical component" mentioned in passage [11]—that requires reference to a mode of presentation type. Passage [13] is more guarded. After making it clear that it the *speaker* refers to the mode of presentation type when (31) is uttered, it says that there is no "word" in (31) with which the speaker refers to it. In short, it is not clear from these passages whether the hidden-indexical theory Schiffer is talking about involves reference with an aphonic or reference via

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a phonic ('believes'). Bespoke reference, by contrast, seems to be ruled out by the talk in passages [11] and [12] of utterances of (31) *requiring* reference to a mode of presentation type.

### 9.5 Logical Form

On the hidden-indexical theory, the following "logical form" is meant to be associated in some way with (31):

$$(31') \quad \exists m [\phi^*m \wedge B(\text{Ralph}, \langle \text{Fido, doghood} \rangle, m)]$$

Here is part of what Schiffer says by way of fleshing out the idea:

[14] The crux of the hidden-indexical theory is its account of the logical form of particular occurrences of belief sentences (1995: 108-9).<sup>71</sup>

[15] The hidden-indexical theory says that the logical form of an utterance of (31) may be represented as (31') where  $\phi^*$  is an implicitly referred to and contextually determined type of mode of presentation (1992: 503)

[16] This theory . . . represents the logical form of an utterance of (31) as (31'), where  $\phi^*$  is an implicitly referred to and contextually determined type of mode of presentation" (1992: 509-10)

These passages prompt questions about what Schiffer means by 'logical form'. It would appear Schiffer is taking *utterances* of sentences, rather than sentences themselves, to have logical forms, and that strongly suggests his logical forms are not LFs. (He appears to be using 'occurrence of' and 'utterance of' interchangeably here, so I will henceforth ditch 'occurrence', which already has another technical use in the philosophy of language.) What might lie behind this usage? Truth-evaluability, probably. Sentences themselves are neither true nor false (because of underspecification), so how do we get truth-evaluability into the picture? One way would be to construe logical forms as *sui generis* truth-evaluable entities, rather like propositions. Another would be to construe a logical form as a property possessed by something else that is truth-evaluable, a proposition, for example. A third would be to construe a logical form as a property possessed by some entity associated with a sentence as used on a particular occasion to express something evaluable for truth or falsity, a property of a particular *utterance* or *tokening* of a sentence on a given occasion, for example. One of the last two must be what Schiffer has in mind when he talks about logical form. The logical form of a particular utterance *u* of a sentence *x* is a perspicuous rendering of the truth conditions of the proposition the speaker is expressing in uttering *x*, a rendering that is related in some transparent way to certain properties of *x* itself. Of course, unpacking this will require unpacking "perspicuous", "transparent" and "certain".

But given this conception of logical form, I am perplexed about the role of the quantifier-variable apparatus in (31'). It seems quite unnecessary. Surely Schiffer could have said that the

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<sup>71</sup> Since I do not know how to boldface a blank space, I should mention that Schiffer says "belief-ascribing sentences" and that I have deleted "-ascribing" in accordance with the stipulations and conventions given above.

logical form of (31) is just (31''), where  $\mu$  is a mode of presentation type but now a simple relatum of the three-place believing relation that is determined contextually?

(31'')  $B(\text{Ralph}, \langle \text{Fido, doghood} \rangle, \mu)$ .

This notion of logical form Schiffer seems to have in mind leaves open the possibility that there is *another*, related notion he is happy to countenance, for example LFs construed as phrase markers at a level of syntactic description that encodes the meaning properties of sentences. But since this syntactic notion appears not to be the one Schiffer is talking about in [14], [15], and [16], although the hidden-indexical theory he is describing construes the verb 'believes' as expressing a three-place relation, it is actually *neutral*, so far, as to whether the verb 'believes' is a two- or a three-place predicate, hence neutral as to whether (31) contains an aphonic with which the speaker refers to  $\phi^*$ , i.e. neutral between second and third grade linguistic involvement. This is one reason I find it hard to evaluate cleanly Schiffer's "logical form argument" against the hidden-indexical theory and the ensuing debate between Schiffer (1996) and Ludlow (1995, 1996).<sup>72</sup>

## 9.6 Indexicality

It is usually linguistic objects—words, morphemes and, derivatively, phrases and sentences—to which we apply the word 'indexical' (though there is considerable talk in the philosophy of mind, much of it muddle-headed, about indexical thoughts and indexical items in Mentalese). So Schiffer's label "hidden-indexical" might give the impression that he has in mind referring with an aphonic. On this interpretation of the hidden-indexical theory of belief reports, although there is nothing in the surface syntax, or PF, of (31) corresponding to ' $m$ ', this expression—or at least a genuine English aphonic that does whatever semantic work ' $m$ ' is meant to be doing in (31')—occurs in its underlying syntactic structure, or LF. (The modifier "hidden" might also encourage this interpretation.) Furthermore, the word "indexical" suggests that whenever  $S$  refers to a mode of presentation with ' $m$ ' he does so from a conventional, specifiable *perspective* (direction or distance), this being the traditional hallmark of indexical expressions, just as he does when he refers with a phonic indexical such as 'I', 'you', 'here' or 'now', a perspective that can, perhaps, be encapsulated in a rule or recipe, one that operates in a pretty uniform way on contexts of utterance (cf. Kaplan's character rules).

It would be a very good idea, I think, if we reserved the word 'indexical' for perspectival phonics and (if they exist) perspectival aphonics. But Schiffer must be using it here in a looser sense that does not require perspectival reference, and I won't quibble:

[17] This theory is aptly called the hidden-indexical theory because the reference to the mode-of-presentation type is not carried by any expression in the belief **sentence**. In this sense, it is like the reference to a place at which it is raining which occurs in an utterance of 'It's raining'. And the theory is aptly called the hidden-indexical theory, because the mode-of-presentation type to which reference

<sup>72</sup> Ludlow makes a hard job harder with his own use of "logical form", which is not obviously coordinate with Schiffer's use or with the use of "LF" found in much of the literature. Of course, there are various competing notions of LF in the literature, and many who appeal to LF have muddied the waters here. For my own muddying, see Neale (1990, 1993a). For attempted redemption, see Neale (2004).

is made in the utterance of a belief sentence can vary from one utterance of the sentence to another.' (1995: 109)

[18] Furthermore, the mode of presentation, or type of mode of presentation, is never conventionally determined by the meaning of the sentence uttered . . . what mode of presentation or type of mode of presentation the speaker means will be inferred, by the hearer, on the basis of (a) the sentence uttered, and (b) the mutual knowledge the speaker and hearer have about what modes of presentation would be relevant to their present concerns, and about what ones the speaker is likely to know the believer to have. (1977: 65-66)

So, by "indexical", Schiffer simply means *context-sensitive* or (better) *utterance-relative*. But [16] and [17] still leave unanswered our question about the grade of linguistic involvement. Is Schiffer using 'any expression' in [16] to cover all and only *phonic* expressions? Or to cover all phonics and aphonics? Whatever Schiffer's original intentions, I suggest we remain neutral, and keep both the second and the third grade theories on the table, leaving it to syntacticians to tell us whether or not there is an aphonic referring expression in (31). If so, then the speaker refers to a mode of presentation type *with* an aphonic, and the problem raised for (**RW'**) earlier arises. If not, then the speaker refers to mode of presentation type *via* an expression, viz. 'believe', and the need for a definition of *referring via* takes on some urgency.

There is more trouble ahead, for Schiffer himself has presented a more direct *meaning-intention* problem that threatens hidden-indexical theories—or, as I shall henceforth call them, *implicit reference* theories—of belief reports and knowledge claims.

## 10 THE MEANING-INTENTION PROBLEM

### 10.1 A Disanalogy

The meaning-intention problem exploits a purported disanalogy. What is *common* to the implicit reference accounts of condition reports and attitude reports is this: it is in the nature of (e.g.) raining that it takes place somewhere; and it is in the nature of (e.g.) believing that it takes place under a mode of presentation. So much for the metaphysics. But in the epistemic realm, according to Schiffer, something important separates the accounts. If *S* says something using 'It's raining' and is asked to specify *where* he is saying that it is raining, *S* can provide a clear and sensible answer. But if *S* says something using (31) and is asked to specify *which mode of presentation type* Ralph believes that Fido is a dog *under*, typically *S* will have no idea what to say. I want to work through this purported contrast slowly, drawing upon the notions defined earlier, to establish (a) precisely what Schiffer is and is not claiming, and (b) whether there is any good response the implicit reference theorist can make.

Schiffer begins as follows (I have replaced his interlocutors by *S* and *A*, making *S* female):

[19] *A* calls *S* in Chicago and asks about the weather. *S* replies, 'It's raining.' Here *S* refers to Chicago, and this by virtue of the fact that in uttering 'It's raining', she means that it is raining in Chicago. In other words, *S* counts as having referred to Chicago because the proposition she meant is about Chicago. Notice that there is no difficulty whatever in ascribing to *S* the propositional speech act in question: *S* clearly intended *A* to believe that it was raining in Chicago, and she is quite prepared to tell you that this is what he meant, what she implicitly said, and what she intended *A* to

be informed of. Because these things are so clear, *S*'s utterance is a paradigm of implicit reference. (1992: 512)

In order to demarcate clear battle lines and ensure that Schiffer's discussion of implicit reference accounts of incomplete definite descriptions does not create the wrong impression, I should stress that Schiffer's point in [19] could have been made just as well with an example involving an attributive use of an incomplete description:

[19'] *A* and *S* live in Chicago. They are discussing local politics and *A* asks *S* what issues will be important to her in next year's mayoral elections. (No candidates have yet emerged but the current mayor has declared categorically that he will not run.) *S* says, 'I want the next mayor to advocate gun control.' Here *S* refers to Chicago, and this by virtue of the fact that in uttering 'I want the next mayor to advocate gun control', she means that she wants the next mayor of Chicago to advocate gun control. In other words, *S* counts as having referred to Chicago because the proposition she meant is (in part) about Chicago. Notice that there is no difficulty whatever in ascribing to *S* the propositional speech act in question: *S* clearly intended *A* to believe that she wants the next mayor of Chicago to advocate gun control, and she is quite prepared to tell you that this is what she meant, what she implicitly said, and what she intended *A* to be informed of. Because these things are so clear, *S*'s utterance is a paradigm of implicit reference.<sup>73</sup>

Of course, interpreting attributive uses of "incomplete" descriptions (or other "incomplete" noun phrases, such as 'everyone' or 'no-one') is not always this straightforward, but that is besides the point. In respect of *meaning intentions* the examples in [19] and [19'] are on a par, and one is free to explore second and third grade hidden-indexical treatments in both cases.

Belief reports, according to Schiffer, are very different from statements made with 'It's raining' and 'I want the next mayor to advocate gun control'. I will quote Schiffer's argument here in close to its entirety. We are to imagine that *S* utters (32) during a conversation about airfare bargains:

(32) Harold believes that TWA is offering a New York-Paris return fare for \$318.

[20] According to the hidden-indexical theory, there is a property  $\phi$  of modes of presentation of the proposition that TWA is offering a New York-Paris return fare for \$318 such that *S* referred to  $\phi$  in her utterance. If this is true, then, presumably, it is because *S*, in producing her utterance, meant some proposition about  $\phi$  in just the way that [in the previous example involving her utterance of 'It's raining'] she meant some proposition about Chicago. But . . . it is doubtful that *S* meant any such thing [in the present example].

We had no trouble saying what *S* meant in uttering 'It's raining': she meant that it was raining in Chicago. But what that implies a reference to a type of mode of presentation does *S* mean in uttering

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<sup>73</sup> In both [19] and [19'], the implicit reference is to a *location*. This is not essential to the "paradigm" Schiffer is talking about. Donnellan's famous example of an attributive use of 'the murderer' would have served as well:

[19''] Two detectives *S* and *A* are looking down at Smith's mutilated corpse. They have no suspect and no clues as to who committed this act, but the state of Smith's body prompts *S* to say, 'The murderer is insane.' Here *S* implicitly refers to Smith, and this by virtue of the fact that in uttering 'The murderer is insane', she means that the murderer of Smith is insane.' In other words, *S* counts as having referred to Smith because the proposition she meant is (in part) about Smith. Notice that there is no difficulty whatever in ascribing to *S* the propositional speech act in question: *S* clearly intended *A* to believe that Smith's murderer is insane, and she is quite prepared to tell you that this is what she meant, what she implicitly said, and what she intended *A* to be informed of. Because these things are so clear, *S*'s utterance is a paradigm of implicit reference.

(32')? [I.e., *what does S mean in uttering (32') that implies a reference to a type of mode of presentation?* SN.] It must surely be

- (32') that there is something that both has  $\phi$  and is such that Harold believes the proposition that TWA is offering a New York-Paris return fare for \$318 under it.

for some particular property  $\phi$  of modes of presentation of the proposition that TWA is offering a New York-Paris return fare for \$318. *But . . . neither S nor her audience is aware of her meaning any such thing* [my italics, SN]. [In the 'It's raining' case] *S is consciously aware* of both the *form* of the proposition he meant (he is aware that he meant that it is raining *in Chicago*) and the implicitly referred to *thing* the proposition is about (he is aware that he meant that it is raining in *Chicago*). But [in the TWA example] it is doubtful that the non-philosopher *S* has conscious access to the form of (32'), and it is especially doubtful that she has conscious awareness of referring to any mode-of-presentation property. That is to say, if she did mean a proposition of form (32'), then *she has no conscious awareness of what property  $\phi$  that proposition is about, and no conscious awareness, therefore, of what she meant* in uttering (32) [my italics, SN].

Neither we nor *S* can say what mode-of-presentation property was referred to in her utterance of (32). Just try to say it. The referred-to property, if it exists, would be given by a completion of the form

The property of being an *m* such that to believe the proposition that TWA is offering a New York-Paris return fare for \$318 under *m* requires thinking of TWA, the offering relation, New York, Paris, the US dollar currency, the number 318 [and so on for the other components of the proposition] in . . . ways, respectively.

But the non-philosopher *S* has no access even to this form of specification, and who among us can offer to replace the three dots? . . . it is in principle possible to have knowledge of such a property even though one cannot specify it in the forgoing way . . . for example . . . knowledge of it under some quite extrinsic description. But I submit that it will be obvious on reflection that *S* has no such alternative way of explicitly picking out a property of modes of presentation to which she is implicitly referring in her utterance of (32). There is no sentence  $\sigma$  such that *S* can say 'I meant that  $\sigma$ ', where 'that  $\sigma$ ' explicitly refers to a proposition of (32')'s form. Thus, if the hidden-indexical theory is correct, then *S* has no conscious awareness of what she means, or of what she is saying, in uttering (32), and this is a prima facie reason to deny that she means what the theory is committed to saying she means (1992: 512-14).

The meaning-intention problem also arises, Schiffer believes, for implicit reference theories of both knowledge claims and referential uses of incomplete definite descriptions. According to so-called contextualist accounts of knowledge claims, for example, speakers make implicit reference to "epistemic standards", which Schiffer takes to be on par with making implicit reference to mode of presentation types:

[21] No ordinary person who utters "I know that *p*", however articulate, would dream of telling you that what he meant and was implicitly **saying** was that he knew that *p* relative to such-and-such standard. (1996: 326-27.)<sup>74</sup>

Similarly, implicit reference accounts of referential uses of incomplete definite descriptions such as 'the table' are vulnerable to the meaning-intention problem. For even if there are *some* cases in which speakers *do* implicitly refer to very obvious things, the plethora of cases in which they do not makes Schiffer's point just as destructive for its intended target. At the very least Schiffer can say this:

<sup>74</sup> Schiffer presents a barrage of other arguments against contextualist accounts of knowledge claims.

[21'] Typically, an ordinary person who uses 'the *F*' referentially in uttering 'The *F* is *G*', however articulate, will not be willing to say that what he meant and was implicitly saying was that an *F* that is uniquely such-and-such is *G*.

Assuming that the usual Fregean problems for belief reports carry over to knowledge claims, the full-blown implicit reference theorist will maintain that *S* makes implicit reference to *three* distinct things when uttering (33):

(33) Ralph knows the pillar-box is red.

Combining Schiffer's notation with Kaplan's (1978) notation for the propositional constituents associated with uses of descriptions, the "logical form" of (33) will be something like (33'):

(33')  $\exists m \exists s \exists r [\phi^* m \wedge \psi s \wedge \chi r \wedge K(\text{Ralph}, \langle\langle \text{THE}, \text{pillarboxhood}, r \rangle \text{red} \rangle, s, m)]$

where  $\phi^*$  is a contextually determined mode of presentation type,  $\psi$  a contextually determined property of epistemic standards, and  $\chi$  a contextually determined property that holds of exactly one thing that is a pillar-box.<sup>75</sup> Actually, it is not obvious to me there is anything in the result of combining implicit reference accounts of attitude reports and knowledge claims that ensures there is not something like a scope ambiguity here. Do the theories of modes of presentation and epistemic standards, together with their underlying metaphysics, ensure that knowing something relative to standard *s* under mode of presentation *m* is the same thing as knowing something under mode of presentation *m* relative to standard *s*?

I want now to look at several replies to the meaning-intention problem that are instructive, albeit unsatisfactory.

## 10.2 The Intention-Rejection Reply

According to the Intention-Rejection Reply, the meaning intention-problem arises only if it assumed that speaker-meaning is defined in terms of intentions about mutual knowledge, or at least in terms of audience-directed intentions. But this is incorrect. Certainly Schiffer stresses the point that on standard, intentional accounts of speaker-meaning, *S* cannot mean something without intending to be *understood*: *S*'s meaning that such-and-such involves *S*'s intending her audience *H* to *recognize* that this is what she means; in which case, *S*'s referring to something *A* involves *S*'s intending *H* to recognize that she is referring to *A*. And assuming such an account of speaker-meaning, the requirement that there exist some type of mode of presentation  $\phi^*$  such that *S* means that Ralph believes that TWA is offering a New York-Paris return fare for \$318 under a mode of presentation of type  $\phi$  cannot be satisfied unless *S* intends her audience to recognize that she means that Ralph believes that TWA is offering a New York-Paris return fare for \$318 under a mode of presentation

<sup>75</sup> Since, as J. L. Austin (1950) noted, a woman's hair might be blonde naturally but dyed red, or red naturally but bleached blonde, a contextualist might want to make room for the "way" in which something is being said to be red. I shall say no more about this. Pursuant to the remark I made earlier about the quantifier-variable apparatus in (31'), surely the hidden-indexical theorist doesn't need the quantifier-variable apparatus in (33') either.

of type  $\phi^*$ . In summary, if (i)  $S$  is aware of what she means, and (ii)  $H$  understands  $S$  perfectly well,  $S$  simply does not mean what the hidden-indexical theory says she means.

But notice that the point about  $S$ 's audience understanding her is not really necessary to generate the basic form of the meaning-intention problem—it just drills it home. Schiffer stated the basic problem in [19] without mentioning audiences explicitly. Of course, his own informal talk of *what S means* is audience-invoking.<sup>76</sup> But this should not obscure the fact that the meaning-intention problem is not circumvented by adopting, say, Searle's (1979) audience-free but still intention-based characterization of speaker-meaning. Indeed, even if one were persuaded (for some bizarre reason) that speakers' intentions play no role whatsoever in an account of speaker-meaning, the basic problem persists because the only assumption about speaker-meaning Schiffer's argument actually assumes is that speakers are *aware of what they mean*. (If there are philosophers who deny this, it serves no purpose talking to them.)

### 10.3 The Acceptable Mismatch Reply

The Acceptable Mismatch Reply misses the point of the meaning-intention problem in much the same way as the Intention-Rejection Reply, but it brings out an important fact about our use of natural language and leads nicely into a third, related reply. According to the Acceptable Mismatch Reply, when, in uttering  $x$ ,  $S$  refers to a mode of presentation type, it is not a requirement on  $H$  understanding  $S$  that there be a *single* type of mode of presentation type upon which  $S$  and  $H$  both fasten. Indeed, in some cases a shared mode of presentation-type might be impossible. The basic point originates with Frege, at least for first-person thoughts, and is broadened to third person cases by Evans (1982), Sperber and Wilson (1986), and others:

Two people may be able to think *of* the same man *that* he has gone, without being able to think exactly the same thought, because they might not individuate him in exactly the same way. Similarly, by saying, "He has gone" I may induce in you a thought which is similar to mine in that it predicates the same thing (that he is gone) of the same individual . . . It seems to us neither paradoxical nor counterintuitive to say that there are thoughts that we cannot exactly share, and that communication can be successful without resulting in an exact duplication of thoughts in communicator and audience. (Sperber and Wilson 1986: 193)

But there is no comfort in this idea for the implicit reference theorist of attitude reports—Sperber and Wilson themselves do not claim there is—because the basic form of the meaning-intention problem itself does not assume that successful communication involves mode of presentation type *replication*; it assumes only that speakers are *aware of what they mean*.

### 10.4 The Indeterminacy Reply

The Acceptable Mismatch Reply is closely related to the Indeterminacy Reply, according to which Schiffer's meaning-intention problem amounts to no more than the bald assertion that a speaker's meaning-intentions in acts of implicit reference must be held to higher standards of *determinacy*

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<sup>76</sup> As noted earlier, Schiffer believes that ultimately it should be possible to expunge reference to audiences in a final definition of speaker-meaning.

than those in acts of explicit, full phonic reference. This reply actually misses the point of the meaning-intention problem too, but I shall ignore this fact and simply show that there is no truth to the claim that Schiffer assumes higher standards of determinacy for implicit reference. The Indeterminacy Reply might be prompted by pulling together two passages from Schiffer, the first (allegedly) arguing that explicit reference involves *tolerable* indeterminacy, and the second (allegedly) motivating the idea that implicit reference involves *catastrophic* indeterminacy:

[22] Suppose you call Ernie Lepore in New Brunswick and ask him where Jerry Fodor is. 'He's here,' Ernie replies. To what does the utterance of 'here' refer? To New Brunswick? To Rutgers University? To Douglas Campus? To Davison Hall? To Ernie's office? The example is underdescribed, but even if I fully describe it, there need not be a definite answer. Almost certainly, Ernie's utterance of 'here' doesn't refer to some definite region of space. The word is being used to make a vague or indeterminate reference. (1995: 112)

[23] . . . the implausibility of *S*'s meaning a proposition of form (32') [is] on a par with that of a certain way of trying to extend the description theory to "incomplete" definite descriptions [used referentially]. The idea there is that, when a speaker utters a sentence like 'The dog has fleas', then there must be some property  $\phi$  such that she means the proposition that the thing that is uniquely a dog and  $\phi$  has fleas. What makes this so implausible is that there will typically be a number of potentially completing descriptions that are equally salient in the context (e.g., the dog that I own, the dog we are both looking at, the spotted dog in the green chair, and so on). Consequently, it is highly implausible that there will be one such description such that the speaker intends it to be understood between her and her audience that she means a proposition containing that very description.

Now, just the same problem arises with the meaning claim required by the hidden-indexical theory. For if a proposition is believed under one mode of presentation, then it will typically be believed under many modes of presentation. Further, each of those modes of presentation will instantiate infinitely many types of modes of presentation, many of which will be equally salient in the communicative context. This makes it extremely implausible that of all the equally salient types of ways that Ralph has of believing the proposition about TWA, *S* should mean—and intend to be taken to mean—a proposition about one definite one of them. (1992: 516)

Now Schiffer has been arguing *for* the theoretical importance of implicit reference for a long time, so even if, in [21], he is arguing that explicit reference often involves a tolerable degree of indeterminacy (as he surely is), he can hardly be construed as motivating the idea in [22] that implicit reference *per se* engenders catastrophic indeterminacy in speaker-meaning. He is simply pointing out (a) that the implicit reference theory of *attitude reports* leads to catastrophic indeterminacy, and (b) that this is not the *only* implicit reference theory that does so: the implicit reference theory of referential uses of incomplete definite descriptions, appealed to by those wishing to defend a unitary quantificational account of descriptions, also leads to catastrophic indeterminacy. This does not commit Schiffer to saying the meaning-intention problem arises for implicit-reference theories of incomplete quantifier phrases *per se*, for that is a very natural theory to hold in connection with the subject expressions in utterances of the following, for example (assuming the description in (34) is being used attributively):

- (19) Every widget I purchase cracks within a week
- (28) Most working people earn more than \$100 a month
- (29) Nero stamped out public drunkenness.
- (34) The next mayor will inherit a major budgetary deficit.

All we find with these cases, is the usual, tolerable form of indeterminacy we found in [18] and [18'].

This interpretation of passage [23] is supported by pulling together passages [19] and [22], the net result of which would have Schiffer saying the following:

[19/22] You call Ernie Lepore in New Brunswick and ask him how the weather is. "It's raining here," he replies. To what does his utterance of "here" refer? To Central New Jersey? To New Brunswick? To Douglas Campus? . . . Almost certainly, Ernie's utterance of 'here' doesn't refer to some definite region of space. The word is being used to make a vague or indeterminate reference. Moreover, nothing would be appreciably different if Ernie had not included the word 'here', if he had replied 'It's raining,' and made a vague or indeterminate *implicit* reference. Ernie's utterance would have been a paradigm of both implicit and indeterminate reference.

In summary, although Schiffer sees implicit reference to mode of presentation types as leading to catastrophic indeterminacy in a speaker's meaning-intentions, this has nothing to do with any *general* fact about implicit reference or with the *general* sort of indeterminacy that any theory of quantification (and all sorts of other theories) must be able to accommodate.

### 10.5 The Extrinsic Parameters Reply

The Extrinsic Parameters Reply aims to show that facts about ordinary uses of certain temporal expressions show the meaning-intention argument is too strong to be useful. Consider the following sentences:

- (35) It's noon
- (36) It's summer
- (37) The train is travelling at 100 mph
- (38) The collisions occurred simultaneously.

In its most simplistic form, the Extrinsic Parameters Reply is this: (i) When *S* uses (35), what he says is true only relative to a particular time zone; when he uses (36), only relative to a particular hemisphere, and when he uses (37) or (38), only relative to a particular rest-frame; (ii) thousands of years of speech testify to the fact that speakers and hearers can communicate perfectly well without knowing about time-zones, hemispheres, or rest-frames; so (iii) the fact that a speaker using one of these sentences is unable to describe clearly such a parameter is no barrier to his having clear meaning intentions; similarly, (iv) the fact that a speaker using a belief sentence or a knowledge sentence is unable to describe clearly the relevant mode of presentation type or epistemic standard is no barrier to his having clear meaning intentions.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>77</sup> The claim that we are all relativists of a sort about truth, that no-one takes propositions to be true or false absolutely because the same proposition can be true at one possible world and false at another is the confused product of allowing oneself to be steered more by formal machinery than by the philosophical problems engendering it. To express an interest in the *truth* of a proposition is to express an interest in how things *are*: A proposition is true or false depending upon how things are. The philosopher who finds solace in construing this as talk of propositions being true or false *relative* to the way things are has no more discovered a pervasive relativism than the logician who talks of truth in a model. Within a semantic framework that appeals to the machinery of possible worlds, the surrogate for a proposition's being true ("relative to the way

There is much that is problematic in this train of thought, not least of which is the fact that once speakers *learn* about time-zones, hemispheres and rest-frames, and learn a few additional words, they can easily describe the parameters relevant to the truth or falsity of what they are saying with (35)-(38) on particular occasions, and will, in fact, unprompted, often make explicit reference to these entities in ordinary conversation:

(35') It's noon GMT (/in London)

(36') It's summer in the southern hemisphere (/in Australia).

By contrast, learning about modes of presentations for a quarter of a century has not put *me*—or, I hazard, anyone else—in a position to describe clearly the alleged mode of presentation types relevant to the truth or falsity of what I say when I utter attitude sentences. (In ordinary talk, 'GMT' and 'in the southern hemisphere' are no more technical terms or theoretical jargon than 'acceleration', 'vacuum', and 'sentence' are.) So there is little to comfort the implicit reference theorist of belief reports in the following passages, despite the superficial feel good factor:

Consider our practices of reporting velocity. A claim that an object is moving at a certain velocity makes sense only if it is understood with respect to what the velocity is to be assessed. We say that velocity is relative to an observer, or a frame of reference—we must count something as stationary. But we articulate this additional parameter of velocity claims only when it is not obvious what is to count as stationary. We have in English a number of general-purpose constructions for articulating commonly suppressed constituents of a claim. We say, 'with respect to . . .' or 'relative to . . .' or 'in the sense that . . .'. The more likely the unarticulated constituent is to be unclear, the more likely it is that we have a natural way to articulate it.

In the case of belief reports, in which notions are unarticulated, we do have rough and ready ways to clarify just which notions we mean to talk about. We say, for instance, that Miles believes that Edward is a peasant in one way—the way related to the boy in front of him, not in the way related to the Prince. Or we add to the report, "that is, he thinks the boy in front of him, who really is Edward, is a peasant." Or we specify how Miles would or would not "put" his belief. Or we allude to the evidence which led Miles to form the belief, or to the actions it would be likely to bring about. Each of these devices can succeed in distinguishing among the two notions which in context can seem equally relevant, thus eliminating possible confusion about which notion we mean to talk about.

We do not, of course, have a very direct way of specifying the notions we mean to talk about in belief reports. This is due to the fact that it is almost always obvious which notion a speaker is talking about. Where it is not, we either use one of the devices just mentioned, or leave the language of belief reporting altogether and talk instead about what the agent would say or would do. (Crimmins and Perry 1989: 701)

Suppose I judge perceptually that two events happen simultaneously, and I am right. The fact that makes me right is that those two events were simultaneous relative to my certain frame of reference .

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things are") is its being *true at the actual world*, where the actual world is conceived as one of an indefinite number of ways things could have turned out. But the perfectly sensible idea that we can, *within such frameworks*, characterize a *proposition's* being true in this way should not mislead us into thinking that because there are roles in certain logics for talking about a *sentence's* being true/false (expressing a truth/falsehood, expressing a true/false proposition) with respect to collections of parameters ("circumstances of evaluation") that include worlds and times (and perhaps locations), that there are interesting choices to be made about *the nature of propositions*, that we are free to view "them" as true or false relative to worlds, or relative to worlds and times, or relative to worlds, times, and locations, or relative to worlds, times, locations, epistemic standards, aesthetic standards, and so on.

. . . The frame of reference in question is not determined by a representation in my thought, but by the broader situation in which my judgment takes place. A theorist who is analyzing the way an agent handles information and uses it to guide action may have to pay attention to factors the agent's cognitive system can safely ignore. The theorist's interest may be precisely how these factors can be ignored—how architectural or external constraints make internal representations unnecessary. It is the speed of light that allows us to get by with a two-place concept of simultaneity. It is the shortness of our arms compared to the width of time-zones that allows us to ignore the latter when we read our watches. (Perry 1993: 221)

Perry is talking here about factors *external* to us—time-zones and rest-frames—about which we may be ignorant but about which we may acquire knowledge and thereby easily refine our linguistic behaviour. Mode of presentation types are not like this at all. They are supposed to be things *under* which beliefs are *had*, and learning about their existence and a great deal of information about their roles in theories of language and mind doesn't even put theorists in a position to articulate the truth conditions of the propositions they actually express on given occasions using belief sentences if the hidden-indexical theory of belief reports is true.

### 10.6 The Tacit States Reply

I turn finally to what Schiffer sees as the implicit reference theorist's best bet: (a) concede that *S* is not "consciously aware" that she means a proposition of form (32') under any mode of presentation type, and (b) maintain that *S* meant such a proposition nonetheless because she *tacitly* had the requisite beliefs and intentions. Schiffer finds two serious problems with this idea:

[24] [According to the Tacit States Reply] not only do ordinary belief ascribers have no conscious knowledge of what they are asserting, they also turn out not to have the conscious thoughts they think they have. *S* clearly thinks she has conscious knowledge of what she is **saying** in uttering (32). She is quite prepared to say, "Look, what I am saying, and all that I am saying, is that Ralph believes that TWA is offering a New York-Paris return fare for \$318." In other words, she thinks she is consciously aware of what she is **saying** in uttering (32), but the tacit-intention line implies that here she is in error: the only proposition she **expresses** in uttering (32)—viz., some proposition of form (32')—is not anything of which she is conscious. What makes this error aspect of the tacit-intention proposal problematic is not merely that it riddles the propositional-attitude ascriptions of ordinary speakers with error; it also forces us to qualify our views about first-person authority in an important way. *S* does not have the privileged access to what she consciously means, intends, and believes in uttering (32) which one might reasonably have supposed to be part of a normal person's functional architecture. (1992: 515)

The weight Schiffer places in the second part of this passage on first-person authority about the contents of one's conscious beliefs and intentions and about what one consciously means, intends, and believes is sure to bother some with a strong anti-Cartesian bias, but I am inclined to treat Schiffer's remarks (like virtually all remarks about first-person authority, privileged access, and incorrigibility) as shorthand that could ultimately be spelled out without generating too much controversy. Any worry about reconciling Schiffer's objection to the Tacit States Reply with a definition of *referring-with* that appeals to certain tacit mental states was actually taken care of in §6.2. We could not construe Schiffer's (RW) as covering cases of referring with an aphonic because doing so would have meant attributing to an ordinary speaker, ignorant of syntactic theory, the belief that he and his hearer *H* have mutual knowledge about an expression whose very existence is

debated by linguists. The solution tentatively proposed was prompted by looking ahead to Schiffer's talk of "conscious awareness" in stating the meaning-intention problem, by philosophical talk about tacit beliefs, desires, and intentions, including Loar's suggestion that a speaker's communicative intentions as well as the audience's recognition of those intentions might be partly unconscious, and by Chomsky's talk of tacit knowledge of language:

**(RW')** In uttering  $x$ ,  $S$  **refers** to  $A$  **with**  $e$  if, and only if, (1)  $x$  contains  $e$ , and (2)  $(\exists H)(\exists R)$  *s.t.* in uttering  $x$ ,  $S$  intends (non-tacitly)  $H$  to recognize (non-tacitly) that  $S$  was referring to  $A$  in uttering  $x$ , and (3)  $S$  intends (tacitly)  $H$  to recognize (non-tacitly) that  $S$  was referring to  $A$  in uttering  $x$  at least partly on the basis of their (tacit) mutual knowledge that  $R(e, A)$ .

Unlike the rote modification of **(RW)**, which was quickly mentioned and dropped, **(RW')** is perfectly consistent with Schiffer's response to the Tacit States Reply: it does not riddle with error ordinary acts of reference with aphonics; nor does it force us to qualify our views about first-person authority:  $S$  still has privileged access to what she consciously means, intends, and believes when referring-with an expression, even if the expression is an aphonic she is not consciously aware of. This does not mean that **(RW')** is home free, of course. It is imperative that we find a way to separate referring with an aphonic from referring *via* an expression if we are to avoid catastrophe in trying to define *expression-reference* and *referring expression*, and **(RW')** does not give us a way of doing this. At best, it is a good place to start.

I hope Schiffer returns to the topic of implicit reference. If anyone has the ability to deal with the complications for the intention-based framework that are forced to centre stage by developments in linguistic theory, it is Schiffer.

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