

LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS, 00-01: Reference, Names and Descriptions

Term 1, weeks 1-5; KCL: F2 and Bbk: F 6 [Jennifer Hornsby]

Lecture outline:

1. Introduction: a naïve accounts meets philosophy
2. Mill, Frege and Russell on names
3. Kripke against the description theory of **names**, and a causal "theory"
4. Russell's theory of descriptions: for and against
5. Reference, knowing what, and bearerless names

Reading list

Readers

All of the following collections are useful, and in the list below symbols are used to show in which readers particular articles can be found:

X A.P. **Martinich** (ed.) *The Philosophy of Language*.

* R.M. **Harnish** (ed). *Basic Topics in the Philosophy of Language* (Harvester 1992 [and since])

† A.W. **Moore** (ed.) *Meaning and Reference* (Oxford Readgs in Philosophy), 1993.

‡ F. **Zabeeh**, E.D. Klemke and A. Jacobson (eds.) *Readings in Semantics*, U of Illinois 1974.

List [endnotes have application for Birkbeck students only]

X Burge, T. (1973) 'Reference and proper names', *Journal of Philosophy* LXX.

Davies, M.K. (1980) *Meaning Quantification and Necessity* (Chs. IV and VII).

*† Donellan, K. (1966) 'Reference and Definite Descripⁿs' *Philosophical Review*

X† Evans, G. (1973) 'The causal theory of names' *Proc.Aristot.Soc.Supp.Vol. 47*.

- X*†‡ Frege, G. (1892) 'On sense and reference', in e.g. M. Beaney (ed.) *The Frege Reader*, 1998
- Kaplan, D. "What is Russell's Theory of Descriptions?", in D.F. Pears (ed.) *Bertrand Russell*
- X * Kripke, S. (1980) *Naming and Necessity*, especially lecture 2.
- Larson, R. and Segal, G. *Knowledge of Meaning*, Ch.9.
- McCulloch, G. (1989) *The Game of the Name* (Oxford, Clarendon).
- † McDowell, J. (1977) 'On the sense and reference of a proper name' *Mind*.
- * Mill, J.S. (1843) *A System of Logic* Book I, Ch.2.
- Neale, Stephen (1990) *Descriptions* (esp. Chs.2 and 3).
- Quine, W.V.O. (1970) *Philosophy of Logic*, Chapter 2.
- *†‡ Russell, Bertrand (1905) 'On Denoting' *Mind* 14.
- Sainsbury, R.M. (1995) 'Phil's Logic §1', in A. Grayling (ed.) *Philosophy: A Guide* (vol 1).
- Schiffer, S. (1978) 'The Basis of Reference', *Erkenntnis* 13.
- Searle, J.R. (1958) 'Proper Names', *Mind* 67.
- X†‡ Strawson, P.F. (1950) 'On Referring', *Mind* 59.
- ‡ Strawson, P.F. (1964) 'Identifying Reference and Truth-Values' *Theoria* XXX, 96-118.

Proper names

The following from the list above are specifically on proper names:

Burge; Davies Ch.IV; Evans; McDowell; Mill; Searle; Sainsbury in Grayling (ed.) pp.65-76.

Definite descriptions

The following from the list above are specifically on definite descriptions:

Davies, Ch.VII; Donnellan; Kaplan; Larson and Segal; McCulloch Chs. 2 & 3; Neale; Russell; Sainsbury in Grayling (ed.) pp.77-86; Strawson

15 questions from recent exam. papers.

1. Are proper names directly referential?
2. Can a proper name have a Fregean sense but lack a Millian connotation?
3. What is Frege's puzzle about identity statements? Can the puzzle be solved without distinguishing between sense and reference?
4. 'The sentences "Hesperus is Hesperus" and "Hesperus is Phosphorus" differ in cognitive value. Therefore the name "Hesperus" and "Phosphorus" differ in sense.' Discuss.
5. Is there any merit in the view that proper names are abbreviations of definite descriptions?
6. 'Proper names must have descriptive meaning; otherwise we would not be able to understand sentences containing them.' Discuss.
7. Is Kripke's causal theory of the reference of proper names correct?
8. Are proper names rigid designators?
9. 'The thesis that proper names are rigid designators amounts to the thesis that they always take widest scope.' Discuss.
10. How can we use the name 'Pegasus' to talk about something that does not exist?
11. Does Russell's theory of definite descriptions apply to what Donnellan called referential uses of descriptions?
12. You come across a very dirty car, and you remark 'The owner is a careless person'. Does Russell's theory of descriptions apply to what you said?
13. Under what conditions does someone who utters a sentence of the form 'The F is G' speak truly?
14. One can successfully use a definite description to refer, although nothing fits the description. Can Russell's theory of definite descriptions accommodate this?
15. 'The distinction between referential and attributive uses of descriptions shows that Russell's Theory of Descriptions is wrong.' Does it?

Information for Birkbeck back-up