

The Language Revolution
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Class 10
Donnellan to Kripke

The Attributive/Referential Distinction and Belief

- There are attributive uses in which we believe the description holds, and in which we do not.
- There are referential uses in which we believe the description holds, and in which we do not.
- SM Smith's murderer is insane.

	Speaker believes that the attribute holds of a particular person	Speaker does not believe that the attribute holds of a particular person
Referential Use	In the courtroom, someone looks at the defendant acting crazy, and says SM of that person.	Someone who believes that the man on a throne is a usurper, yet refers to him as 'the king'.
Attributive Use	Someone who says SM while believing that anyone who would have murdered Smith must be insane, even though s/he believes the murderer to be a particular person.	Someone who says SM believing that anyone who murdered Smith must be insane, while not believing that any particular person is the murderer.

De Re and *De Dicto*

- A phrase is used *de re* when it is about a person.
- A phrase is used *de dicto* when it is about the words.
- ‘Ralph believes that someone is a spy.’
 - *De dicto*: there are spies
 - *De re*: Bernard J. Ortcutt is a spy.
- Not exactly attributive/referential, but close
 - Opaque contexts
 - Kripke: “Smith’s murderer, whoever he is, is known to the police, but they’re not saying.”



Why Does the A/R Distinction Matter?

- Donnellan believes the attributive/referential distinction is a blow for the logical analysis of language.
- Any analysis of what is said depends not merely on the sentences used, and their meanings.
- Instead, it depends essentially and irreducibly on a speaker's intentions.
 - mental states
- Intentions are not the kinds of things available for logical analysis in any obvious way.

Saving the Logical Analysis of Language

- Frege believed that the appropriate media for truth values are propositions.
- Propositions can be as fine-grained as we want.
- The same sentence may express a wide range of propositions.
- So, SM can express either proposition SM1 or SM2.
 - SM1 that anyone who murdered Smith is insane
 - SM2 that the person in the jury box is insane
- Each of these propositions is available for logical, or semantic, analysis.
- The question of which proposition was expressed is a matter of pragmatics.
- The problem vanishes, for the ambiguity is merely one of natural language.
- The fine-grained propositions lack the ambiguity.

Donnellan and the Revenge of 'Fido'-Fido

- Donnellan's referential use of definite descriptions (and names) recalls Mill's denotational view of names.
- Mill believed that names have no meaning.
- Their semantic value is just the object to which the name refers.
- Frege, Russell, and Strawson were descriptivists.
 - "It is no good using a name for a particular unless one knows who or what is referred to by the use of the name. A name is worthless without a backing of descriptions which can be produced on demand to explain that application" (Strawson, *Individuals* 20).
- Kripke revives what has come to be known as the direct reference theory of names.

Andrew on Kripke