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Expressions and their Articulations and Applications

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The discussion that follows rehearses some familiar arguments and replies from the Kripke/Putnam/Burge critique of the traditional Frege/Russell/Wittgenstein views on names and predicates. Its main contributions are, first, to introduce a novel way of individuating tokens of the same expression, (what we call "articulations") second, to then revise standard views on deference, (as this notion is understood to pertain to securing access to meaning for potentially ignorant, and confused agents in the externalist tradition going back to Putnam and Burge) and lastly, to emphasize the often conflated distinction between disambiguation and meaning fixing. Our line on deference is that it is not, and should not be conceived as, an intentional mental act, but rather indicates an historical chain of antecedent tokenings of the same expression.

Keywords: De facto deference, articulation, network, Kripke, Putnam, Burge, Dummett, Evans.

Introduction

The discussion that follows is largely extracted from two chapters of a book we are currently writing. Other than rehearsing some familiar arguments and replies from the Kripke/Putnam/Burge critique of the traditional Frege/Russell/Wittgenstein views on names and predicates, its main contributions are, first, to introduce a novel way of individuating tokens of the same expression, (what we call "articulations") second, to then revise standard views on deference, (as this notion is understood to pertain to securing access to meaning for potentially ignorant, and confused agents in the externalist tradition going back to Putnam and Burge) and lastly, to emphasize the often conflated distinction between disambiguation and meaning fixing. Our line on deference is that it

is *not*, and should not be conceived as, an intentional mental act, but rather indicates an historical chain of antecedent tokenings of the same expression. What any of these claims and distinctions amount to should be clear in what follows.

1. *Names, articulations and naming*

Suppose you pick up a name in a casual conversation, say, simply by hearing a group of interlocutors using it. Your interlocutors may have been using the name for a particular individual for some time, but for you it is novel. Should you opt to use the name in order to try to name the same individual as your interlocutors, it might be that whatever success you achieve with your use of the name piggybacks on whatever success your interlocutors had with their uses of the same name. That is to say, your success seems predicated on your deferring to the speakers who exposed you to the name.

Here is a simple illustration of how easy it is to pick up a name:

> A says: Napoleon was a famous military leader.
> B asks: Was Napoleon born in the 15th century?
> A replies: No! He was not!

B's success in naming Napoleon is predicated on deference to A. B has never been exposed to Napoleon's name before.

It might turn out that your interlocutors' own success also relies on deference to whomever they picked up the name from, and so on and so on through a network of users extending all the way back to an introduction of the name, where, we might presume, a connection between the name and whichever individual it names was somehow first forged. Put differently, by virtue of your deference to whomever first exposed you to the name, you thereby enter into a *network* of users, all tied together by deference to individuals who first exposed them to the name—a network that stretches all the way back to the name's introduction.

Of course, everything we've said so far about the establishment of, and successful inclusion in, a network of interlocutors leaves completely open how exactly (or even whether) an individual came to be the bearer of that name in the first place, that is, everything we've said so far leaves open the philosophical question of what, if anything, is "the semantic glue to stick our words onto their referents" (Lewis 1984: 221). That is obviously an interesting and important philosophical question, and it is one that has occupied the dogged attention of generations of meta-semanticists, but we don't know its answer and, for our present purposes, we don't have to. And so, it will *not* be our focus here. Instead, ours will be on the network itself, and what its existence suggests about the constitution of successful uses of a name, and in general, of language. This investigation requires answers to (at least) two questions:

1. What must a speaker know or do in order to successfully token/articulate a particular name on an occasion of use?
2. What must a speaker know or do in order to successfully apply that use of that name to a particular individual?

We note that, while we begin our discussion focusing on proper names, we are ultimately interested in questions as they apply to expressions generally: what does it take for a speaker to successfully token any expression, and what does it take for this token to have a successful application? We will turn to these questions in sections 3 and 4 below.

With respect to both questions (1) and (2), it should be obvious (though it is not clear that early proponents of deference acknowledged or focused on *both* features of linguistic usage) that successful tokening of a name and naming can occur even in the face of widespread error about, and ignorance of, not only what the name names but also the name itself. For example, a proper name may, and indeed, surely often is, likely to admit of many different *sorts of articulations*, both statically and dynamically. After all, it can be written, typed, spoken or signed, *inter alii*. And in any one of these media, there invariably is a high degree of flexibility for how it can be tokened; e.g., in how it can be spelled or pronounced.[1] Further, it may change its canonical spelling or pronunciation across time or place. And, of course, at any given time, it might even misspelled or mispronounced according to whatever standards are in place—and yet it might still be tokened (Hawthorne and Lepore 2011). What, we may ask, can possibly hold all these tokenings together as articulations of the *same* proper name?

This question has received very little careful attention in the literature. Perhaps, many contributors thought its answer was obvious. For example, there is very likely, in normal circumstances, a fact of the matter about which expression (that is, in the cases under discussion, which proper name) the speaker *intends* to use. Many may have thought this intention, by itself, can determine which name is being tokened.[2] But, of course, this depends on the intention. Suppose the speaker intends to use, with a particular articulation, that name the speaker picked up in a conversation or in a reading. Then, can we conclude that the speaker is using *that very name*? This view has the advantage that, regardless of how much off the mark, or however idiosyncratic, the speaker's tokening may (turn out to) be (perhaps, some

[1] We will return below to the question of how much tolerance is permissible before a loss of identity.

[2] See, for instance, Kaplan (1991; 2011). Kaplan (2011) qualifies the intention view somewhat: there is a certain standard of performance an utterance has to satisfy in order to count as a (even bad) performance, rather than non-performance. For instance, simply grunting might not qualify as uttering a word. However, provided such a standard is satisfied, intention suffices to determine the identity. See also Hawthorne and Lepore (2011) for a critical discussion. Hawthorne and Lepore also advocate for a standard that separates performances (even bad ones) from non-performances.

would have it, as we shall discuss below, provided that it meets some contextual standard for counting as a performance), or even how confused the speaker's concomitant beliefs may be about which expression is being tokened, the speaker can still succeed in using a particular name.

But we have to be careful here. We do not mean to suggest that each time someone speaks, they have to *explicitly* form an intention to use the name they picked up from A (where A is the individual who introduced the speaker to the name). Rather, our view is that, somehow or other (in ways that perhaps even psycholinguists don't fully understand yet), a speaker *selects* a name from her (mental) lexicon.[3] Of course, there is a fact of the matter about who introduced this speaker to the name in her lexicon that she is selecting; the name selected is identical to the name in the mouth—or more precisely, representation—of the agent who first introduced the speaker to it. In selecting the term, the speaker is, in a sense, deferring to the agent who introduced her to the term. But notice, in this way, deference should not be understood as the term is typically used, namely, as an active intentional mental act, but it is rather *de facto*—in effect, something that largely passively happens to a speaker. Therefore, someone might be mistaken, in the sense in which we are using the term, about to whom they are deferring in virtue of their being mistaken about who introduced them to the name that they selected. Nevertheless, no matter what, there is still an *historical* fact about who introduced the name into the speaker's (mental) lexicon—who they got the name from. So, in order to perform any utterance, a speaker has only to choose a particular linguistic form, one which features a representation of a certain name; given this, there is a fact of the matter about which name figures in the speaker's representation of an utterance: it is whichever name the speaker selected from her lexicon, which is that name that featured in the representation of whoever introduced the lexical item into the speaker's mental lexicon in the first place (and so forth back to the initial introduction of the name). "Deference" in this sense is *not* an intentional act by the speaker to token whichever expression the individual who introduced the speaker to the expression tokened. Rather, the speaker intends to token some particular expression in his (mental) lexicon (but there is a fact of the matter about which tokened expression introduced that lexical item into the speaker's (mental) lexicon in the first place).

A different sort of worry arises when there is a departure from an accepted conventional norm for the articulation of some expression. The greater the degree of departure, the more likely it is that confusion will ensue. The further off a spelling or pronunciation is from some accepted standard, the less likely the hearer will be able to recognize which name is being articulated; and then, there is also the worry that, because *different* names can share a single articulation, a hearer might

[3] For a further, more detailed, development of this point, see Stojnić, ms.

mistake which name the speaker is tokening. How many individuals do we all know whose name is typeset as "John"? *But* there is an historical chain of tokenings ending with the name's introduction[4] that determines which name is actually being tokened on any given occasion of use. The individuation is not a matter of any particular articulatory shape (*contra* Davidson (1979: 90); cf. Hawthorne and Lepore (2011)); the bond between a name and its sundry tokenings is secured through a community wide network of deference to others about which particular name is being tokened—despite whatever wide-spread error and ignorance surrounds any given usage.[5]

The *epistemological* worries concerning how we decide which name an articulation is of, we believe, have boundless (defeasible) solutions. For example, if we are talking about the butcher shop, and not the produce stand, then, most likely, the "John" we mean (that is, the name we articulated with "John") is the butcher's name and not the gardener's, even if both names are articulated with the same pronunciation and with the same spelling. This is much like how we go about "disambiguating" uses of "bank"; if the speaker is walking along the river when uttering "bank", we are likely to resolve one way, but if the speaker is talking about depositing money when uttering "bank", we resolve to a different expression—the same articulation, but different words.

There probably is no end to how many strategies we might employ in going about making these sorts of decisions, even though there is a fact of the matter about which decision is correct, and the potential for error always exists. This means that a speaker can mispronounce or misarticulate a name, while still tokening it, but at the same time the audience can be mistaken in "disambiguating" a name: they might be misled by the evidence available, taking speakers to have tokened one name, when in fact they were tokening another. Such epistemological considerations belong to the theory of disambiguation, not the theory of meaning (determination), in as much as they delineate the set of cues language users use to recognize a particular form as the one that has

[4] In the literature, there is invariably talk of a speaker *intending* to use a name with the same reference as the person's uses of the name from whom the speaker learned the name. (See, e.g., Kripke (1980), *inter alia*.) We chose to switch over to *de facto* deference talk instead, since (a) requiring the speaker to have such explicit intentions, we believe, is requiring too much, and (b) we believe, as already noted above, that *de facto* deference talk can be cashed out independently of intention talk (especially, if intentions are understood as beefy propositional attitudes). For more on this point, see Stojnić, ms; Stojnić and Lepore, ms.

[5] Recall, again, that deference isn't here understood as an "intention to defer", as a plan to token a certain symbol. Even if someone doesn't *intend* to defer to X, who introduced them to the term, the tokened symbol will mean whatever it meant in the mouth of whom it was acquired from (and so on)—the *symbol* will be *de facto* deferentially individuated. So, deference is *de facto*, not deference by plan or intention. The speaker simply has to select the expression from her lexicon; the individuation, and meaning, of the expression is determined by *de facto* deference to whomever introduced the speaker to the term.

been uttered, and not to determine how to interpret its meaning (cf. Stojnić, Stone, and Lepore, 2013; 2017).

In short, the take-home message so far is that it is all too easy, even at the stage of name identification, to conflate epistemology and metaphysics, disambiguation and meaning determination, and so, vigilance is required in respecting relevant distinctions—in this case, the distinction between an expression and its articulations. To repeat, though many individuals have names typeset as "John," on any given occasion of use there is a fact of the matter about which one of these different names is being tokened by an instance of this shared articulation.[6] And this fact is *fixed* by a speaker's tokening a particular expression, which is individuated by *de facto* deference. In this regard, we reject customary talk of numerous individuals bearing the same name, as in: "Proper names typically have more than one bearer. Thus, a contemporary token of 'Aristotle' might designate the famous philosopher or it might designate the late shipping magnate Onassis" (Devitt 2015: 110). We think not. There are (at least) two names "Aristotle". "Aristotle" is ambiguous, if you like.

This is not to deny that the audience may face hurdles, perhaps, for all intents and purposes, insurmountable ones—ones that inspire requests for elaboration and assistance—in identifying which name is being tokened. Nor it is even to deny that speakers might be confused in all sorts of ways about which name they are tokening. (For instance, they might erroneously believe that the name they are tokening is identical to the name they learned from A, when, in fact, it isn't.) This doesn't prevent them from either tokening the name, or applying it.

But, no matter how muddy the epistemology becomes, the metaphysics remains clear. The name being articulated, on any given occasion of use, is determined by *de facto* deference of the speaker to the name acquired first from some other speaker. And so, the answer to our first question (which one of us defends further in detail elsewhere (Stojnić, ms)) about what speakers must know or do in order to successfully token a particular name on an occasion of use is that they needn't *know* anything; rather, they must *do* something—namely, token a particular expression (select that expression) in their mental lexicon, which, in turn, defers (*de facto*) to the tokening that first exposed the speaker to the name; and so on and so on back to its neologism.

We are now ready to turn to our second question about what speakers must know or do in order to successfully *apply* a name, and, not surprisingly, we find that many of the warnings we had to heed about misarticulating a name have their echoes in a speaker's ignorance of, and errors in, applying that name. So, suppose that the speaker believes a name picks out a butcher, when, in fact, it picks out a gardener.

[6] This particular specification of our view assumes that names are not predicates (or generic names, in the sense of Kaplan (1990)). But even if it turns out that they are, what we have to say about predicates below suffices to establish our point about *de facto* deference all over again.

These sorts of error can persist, and may even be pervasive, and yet present no obstacles to successful naming. (If you believe, falsely, that "John" picks out a butcher, you will have (successfully) said something false when you say "John's a butcher".) How is that possible?

Once initially determined (however that is achieved[7]), successful naming can obtain even in the face of confusion and widespread error, again, both about the name's identity and its meaning. A use of the proper name "Aristotle" names whomever it names, regardless of any mistaken beliefs or other misinformation interlocutors carry into a conversation where this name is being used. This is because the network of *de facto* deferential speakers, "stretching back from our uses to the first uses of the name to designate Aristotle" (Kripke 1980: 25), secures this same naming for current users of the same name (where the fact that the same name is being tokened is itself secured through a network of *de facto* deference, as explained earlier).[8] Once it is settled that a speaker is using the name "Aristotle", and that this name names a particular individual, then the speaker's use also names that individual, regardless of how confused or ignorant the speaker is about which name is being used and whom or what it names.

All that matters for achieving these results is that someone exposed the speaker to that name, and it names some individual (through their own network of deference to whomever they picked up the word from); more precisely, and keeping in mind our answer to the first question, all that matters is that the speaker *is tokening* the name "Aristotle". So long as the speaker selects the name "Aristotle" from her mental lexicon in forming the utterance (where the identity of the expression is determined through *de facto* deference), and thereby, tokens the name "Aristotle", then they name whomever the name "Aristotle" names (if anyone) in the network of *de facto* deference that the speaker is participating in.[9] In this regard, the application of the name is fixed once the name itself is created.

[7] Again, we do not care if it's as a matter of a causal covariance, or a Fregean sense, or however a name's meaning is established. We are interested only in what is required of the speaker to count as a user of an expression, and not what is required of an expression to have meaning.

[8] Again, we are sidestepping important philosophical issues, because we *can*, given our purposes and aims about what, if anything, must be in the head of the neologizer of the name. Our interest is in the other members of the network, so to speak, and what, if anything, they must know or be connected to in order to successfully token, and successfully apply a name. We care at present only about how meaning can be exploited by a novice once created.

[9] In this regard, we are disagreeing with Kripke that a speaker when he uses a name "must ... intend when he learns it to use it with the same reference" (1980: 96). If we are right, the intention to use a term (assuming the use is not one whereby the expression is introduced and its meaning fixed) with a particular reference is relevant for the identity of the expression uttered, as well as the meaning that expression has on the occasion of use.

We are ready to move on to how we intend to expand the network model to other sorts of expressions.

2. *Challenges*

In Part 1, we tendered answers to two central questions about names and naming:

1. What does it take to successfully token/articulate a name?
2. What does it take to successfully use/apply a name, to name something?

We have spent some time defending a particular answer to our first question. According to us, speakers needn't know *anything* in order to token an expression. They need to *do* something: they need to select an item in their (mental) lexicon in forming their utterance. Expressions in the mental lexicon, in turn, are grounded by *de facto* deference, and so, are individuated by virtue of a causal/historical/social network of deference.

With respect to our second question about what speakers must know or do in order to successfully *apply* a name, we noted that many of the warnings about misarticulating a name have echoes in a speaker's ignorance and errors in applying that name. Our knowledge might be dramatically incomplete (as well as erroneous). Even if all we know about Feynman is that he's a physicist, we can still use "Feynman" to refer to a particular physicist, namely, Feynman. Indeed, even if whatever minimal information about Feynman we have is incorrect (e.g., we think he's a novelist), we can still use the name "Feynman" to say things about Feynman (cf. Kripke (1980)).

Likewise, even if it is commonly assumed that "Godel" picks out the man who first proved the incompleteness of arithmetic, "...it is perfectly intelligible to suppose that it might be discovered that Godel was not the first to prove incompleteness..." (Kripke 1980). But must there be some other description whereby we pick out Godel? And, if not, isn't the use of the name by someone so ignorant or misinformed a mere case of parroting? That is, if someone doesn't know anything about Godel at all, can she still *really* use 'Godel' to refer to Godel (cf., Dummett 1991: Ch. 4)? And if so, does that use count as a successful use?

According to us, what matters is whether someone exposed the speaker to a name of an individual. If so, then for all subsequent uses, the speaker *de facto* defers to the exposer with respect to the name. The speaker need not know that she does so. More precisely: so long as the speaker is tokening the name "Aristotle", the name names whomever it names in the network of deference the speaker is participating in (if it names anyone). The speaker *de facto* defers, because the name is grounded via the network.

Not everyone agrees. Dummett, for example, has replies to both the argument from error and the argument from ignorance. On our view,

if a child is introduced to the name "Newton" with the description "the man who discovered that there is a force pulling things to earth," then, even though this gives the child a false belief about Newton, the child can still reference Newton with her uses of "Newton". In this respect, therefore, even the description used to fix the referent needn't be true of individual named. Here Dummett balks, labeling the view—the 'heroic' course, namely, the view that "…someone who had no more than heard the name "Newton" without any means of fixing its referent, without knowing anything at all about its bearer, would nevertheless *understand* it and be capable of using it with the reference commonly attached to it" (Dummett 1973: 137, emphasis our own).

Dummett is equally skeptical about the limitlessness of ignorance. He writes, "...there are certainly cases in which a proper name is used without its user attaching to it anything that Frege would consider a sense. If, when I come home, one of my children says to me, "Mr. Cunningham telephoned and asked if you would ring him back", the child may no more know the sense or the reference of the name "Mr. Cunningham", which, let us suppose, he has never heard before, than does a piece of paper on which such a message is written; the child is acting merely as a recording apparatus..." (Dummett 1973: 138).

Dummett insists upon replacing the network model with a cluster/division of labor proposal, according to which, "…what makes it possible to entertain the possibility that Godel might be discovered not to have proved, or not to have been the first to prove, the incompleteness of arithmetic is the fact that there exist other generally accepted ways of determining the reference of the name "Godel". This is always the case with any name about whose bearer a good deal is known by at least some who use the name; and it is never the case with a name about whose bearer practically nothing is known save that it satisfies the description which fixes the reference of the name" (Dummett 1973: 139).[10]

[10] Note that in regards to individual speaker's ignorance, Dummett responds that "one of the ways in which it is essential to language that it is a common instrument of communication is that there is no sharp line between the case in which a speaker makes a fully conscious employment of the sense canonically attached to a word and that in which he acts as a recording apparatus. We are able to exploit the fact that a word has a generally recognized sense, which may be discovered by standard means, even when we have only a partial knowledge of that sense; and we do […]" "[it] is not possible that none of those who use a name have any criterion for identifying the bearer of the name, that all of the use it with only partial criterion in mind, but with the intention of referring to the commonly agreed referent" (Dummett 1973: 139–40). We caution, again, that is important to separate meaning determination—the metaphysical question we can set aside—from successful tokening and application of a term. Provided the meaning is fixed—in whichever way—there is no pre-requisite, on our view, on successful tokening or application that *any* speaker has even partial knowledge of the *meaning* or that they have an intention to refer to a particular referent, or defer to a particular community. We will return below to the claim, often repeated in the literature, that there has to be *someone* in the community who possesses the relevant linguistic knowledge.

In this passage lies the seeds of Dummett's dismissal of the network model; he further writes, "Kripke expressly wishes to allow that the association with a name of a description which in fact does not apply to the person or thing for which the name was originally introduced does not deprive that name of reference to that person or thing: it merely reveals a false belief about the referent of the name. There is therefore no room in Kripke's account for a shift of reference in the course of a chain of communication: the existence of such a chain, accompanied all the time by the required intention to preserve reference, must be taken as guaranteeing that reference is in fact preserved. Intuitively, however, there is no such guarantee: it is perfectly possible that, in the course of the chain, the reference has been unwittingly transferred. Once this is conceded, the account crumbles away altogether. We are left with this: that a name refers to an object if there exists a chain of communication, stretching back to the introduction of the name as standing for that object, at each stage of which there was a successful intention to preserve its reference. This proposition is indisputably true; but hardly illuminating" (Dumett 1973: 151).

Dummmett's view is obviously in sharp contrast with our own. And there is much in what he says in these quoted passages above that we take issue with; for example, his insistence on understanding, and his worries about shifting reference, as presenting insuperable problems for the network model. Elsewhere, we take on these challenges (Stojnić and Lepore, ms; Stojnić, ms). But, for now, it's best we proceed with our own positive view, according to which, to repeat, much like successfully tokening a name, successfully using a name doesn't require speakers to know (much of) anything.[11]

To successfully use a name, a speaker need only token it, i.e., select it from his (mental) lexicon. Its meaning (referent) is, in turn, grounded

[11] It is perhaps worth pausing for a moment on the shifting reference problem. Since on our account the meaning of an expression (if any) is transferred through a network of deference, what do we say of cases of apparent shifts in meaning, as might be with, e.g., 'Madagascar' (cf. Evans 1973)? If meaning is deferentially transferred through a network, then aren't we bound, via Marco Polo's mistake, to refer to a part of mainland African content with our uses of 'Madagascar'? While we have no space to defend this view here, we maintain that the alleged shifts in meaning are best understood as novel acts of neologizing, whereby a new expression is introduced and a novel meaning for it might be grounded (Stojnić, ms). Such (re-)baptsims can occur either transparently to agents involved, or tacitly (just as any other introduction of a novel word can be a conscious effort on the part of the speaker—as when the speaker says 'I'll name you 'Alice"—or can happen without interlocutors realizing they are introducing a novel word—as might be with some instances of zero derivation, e.g. by uttering "He houdinied his way out of the cell", without either the speaker or the audience realizing "to houdini" is not already a word). Notice that, how meaning gets fixed (if at all) in the re-baptism case, is the same metaphysical question of how meaning is fixed in the baptism case that we do not purport to answer here. What is important for our purposes is that the chain of deference only takes one to the (nearest) baptism event. That a homonymous expression might have been previously introduced with a different meaning is simply irrelevant.

by *de facto* deference to the tokening of the name by the member of the network from whom the speaker acquired it (and so on). With that said, we are now ready to transition from proper name expressions to predicative ones.

3. *Predicates and their tokenings/articulations and predications*

As in the case of names, we have two central questions:

1. What does it take to successfully token/articulate a predicate?
2. What does it take to successfully use/apply it (e.g., to ascribe a property)?

In brief, our main pitch is that the shift from names to predicates is seamless since, mostly, what goes for names goes for predicates—with some qualification. And so, our answers to the two questions driving this discussion will look familiar. We begin with common nouns.

The common noun "water" is not a name, but, much like one, at some point, and in some manner—perhaps, by speaking it—it was introduced into the language. And, in some manner (perhaps, by speaking it while pointing at a particular body of liquid, though, again, the details do not concern us), let's assume, its extension is fixed (and so, it is settled what "water" means). (As in the case of names, we don't really care about how exactly "water" was introduced, or how its meaning was fixed.)

Of course, there are differences between names and common nouns. For one, the extension of "water" is not what it *names*. The neologist who introduced the common noun was not intending to *name* a particular body of liquid, but instead might have been pointing at it as an exemplar of a property, and somehow thereby fixed its extension to include whatever it is *true of*. (Again, this part of the story is not our focus.)

There are still shared key features, despite these differences. We note the obvious, namely, just as with a name, a common noun can be spelled and pronounced in various ways, and, as a matter of fact, it has been across times and places. And, much like a name, it can be, and has been, misarticulated, if by that is meant the term can be successfully used (tokened) even when its use on a given occasion departs from its customary articulations. This is, indeed, a familiar, and perfectly general, lexical phenomenon, not isolated to names and predicates.

To illustrate, consider the distinct words "bear" and "bare". Were someone to write, "Bare with me!", our reaction would *not* be to ascribe a new meaning to an old word ("bare"), but, rather, to say the speaker misarticulated another old word ("bear"). The speaker *did* request the addressee to *bear* with the speaker, but misspelled the word "bear" as "bare"—a misarticulation. And so, the speaker can be taken not only to mean for the addressee to bear with the speaker*, but also even to have*

said it. (It is also possible, though less likely, that the speaker did, in fact, token "bare", perhaps because she mistakenly believed that "to bare" means *to bear*. Either of these mistakes are possible, but crucially, neither involves assigning *a new meaning* to the term "bare" (cf. Kripke (1977) on speaker reference).)

The difference between expressions and their articulations played a key role in our answer to the first question about names: namely, what does it take to token a name? So, our answer here to our first question about tokening common nouns is going to be the same as the one we gave in the case of names.

Which expression a speaker is tokening depends, on our current account, *on who*, so to speak, introduced the expression into the current *speaker's (mental) lexicon*; if that prior speaker tokened the word "bear," when (perhaps unwittingly) introducing the current speaker to the word which she is now tokening, then that is the word the current speaker is tokening, even if she articulates it as "bare". Or more precisely, if she selects the expression "bear" in her mental lexicon, where this is the expression she was introduced to by another speaker's tokening of "bear" (and so on), then she will have tokened this expression, even if she (mis)articulated it as "bare". So, on our account, one could be tokening, and so, saying that the addressee should bear with the speaker, even if she is misarticulating this as "bare with me". Notice, though, we are not saying the content asserted—*what is said* in the Gricean sense—is determined by speaker intentions. In particular, we are not endorsing Intentionalism about what—which content—the speaker asserts when speaking. Rather, which linguistic form the speaker uses depends on which expression she articulates. Which expression she articulated depends on which expression she tokened, i.e., which expression in her mental lexicon she selected in forming her utterance.

The situation is the same as in the case of names. When the speaker says, "Godel is smart", that the speaker is tokening the name "Godel," rather than, say, "Smith", is a matter of which expression the speaker is actually tokening. But that doesn't mean it's up to the speaker's intentions whom "Godel" names. That is a matter of the meaning of "Godel". A speaker can token "Godel" mistakenly, thinking it named Smith, or mistakenly articulate another name, e.g., "Smith" as "Godel". But neither fact makes it the case that the meaning of the name "Godel" is up to the speaker's intentions.

The point is perhaps even easier to see when the focus shifts to context-sensitive items. So, consider an utterance of "She is happy". That the speaker is using the third person singular female pronoun "she", rather than, say, the male one "he", or the proper name "John", or any other expression, is a matter of which expression is actually being tokened. But whom "she" picks out is *not* a matter of whom the speaker intends to pick out with the expression she is tokening; for example, if

pointing at Mary, "she" will pick out Mary, even if she intends someone else (see Stojnić at al, 2013, 2017). Further, one can assert "She is happy," pointing at a man, because one mistakenly misarticulated the third person singular male pronoun "he". In this case, the speaker doesn't mistakenly believe the man is a female; she just misarticulates the word. (This, we take it, is a common misarticulation for non-native speakers of English whose first languages lack gendered pronouns.) But one can assert "She is happy" tokening the third person singular female pronoun "she" because one mistakenly thinks of the man that he is female. In neither of these cases is it a matter of the speaker's intentions fixing the referent of "he".

It is worthwhile comparing these two types of error. In the first case, the speaker said of a male that he is happy; in the second, the speaker said nothing at all, or something false. In the first case, the speaker is making an articulatory error; in the second, the speaker is making a non-linguistic one. In both, the audience has resources to try to make sense of what the speaker said. They can reason the speaker made a slip, and try to figure out which word the speaker misarticulated, or conclude the speaker accidentally mistook a male for a female. They have to determine the logical form the speaker uttered, or try to make sense of the utterance, by identifying the speaker's background false beliefs. (Note that, with Kripke (1977), we can still maintain that one can 'speaker refer', i.e., manage to convey that the male the speaker "had in mind" is happy (though Kripke doesn't distinguish different sources of error). The audience can figure out that the speaker probably mistakenly used the female gender pronoun to refer to a man, and so figure out the message the speaker intended to convey. But even so, it is crucial to separate disambiguation from meaning (determination). Even if the speaker manages to convey the message she ultimately intended, this is not because some new meaning is attached to "he", just as, in the earlier example, it was not because some new meaning was assigned to "Godel". It is rather because the audience can disambiguate the form the speaker either tokened but misarticulated, or should have tokened save for their erroneous belief that "she" is a male-gendered pronoun, in "He is happy".)

What about our second question concerning successful application? What must speakers know or do in order for their uses of the common noun "water" to succeed in being about anything, and in particular, about water? Put differently, how is successful application achieved for uses of the common noun by speakers who are not neologizing the term—that is, ordinary folk in the same linguistic network?

According to the commonsensical view, competent speakers carry (clusters of) identifying or individuating criteria in their heads that they associate with a word (recall Dummett's claims above). They succeed in talking about something, e.g., with uses of "water", only if whatever is included among this stuff satisfies (a cluster of) the criteria they

associate with "water". This cluster is the meaning of the word. So construed, what speakers must know in order to know the meaning of "water", and so, to fix its extension, is something like: "whatever satisfies "water" does so *only if* it is what fills our oceans and lakes and rivers, comes out of our taps, quenches our thirst, etc."

Of course, not everyone agrees. After all, the information that interlocutors associate with the word "water" can be mistaken, or so incomplete it fails to separate what belongs to the extension of "water" from what does not (H_2O vs XYZ), and yet, it seems, that successful application of the use of the word might still result. As Evans reminds us, "We constantly use general terms of whose satisfaction conditions we have but the dimmest idea. "Microbiologist", "chlorine" (the stuff in swimming pools), "nicotine" (the stuff in cigarettes); these (and countless other words) we cannot define nor offer remarks which would distinguish their meaning from that of closely related words" (Evans 1973). How is this possible?

A familiar response is that, just as through a practice of deference, ordinary folks can use the words they use, so too, through a practice of deference, they can exact successful application of their words as well. If this is correct, then neither the false nor insufficient information in our heads need thwart our successful application of uses of "water". But, while appealing to deference is a common response, how should we understand this sort of deference; viz., deference to whom is relevant? And how can a speaker's deference to anyone help to secure the successful application of an expression, if (as we will maintain) no one need be any *less* mistaken or ill-informed than anyone else?

Here is where a division of labor often enters the discussion. The idea is that in order for there to be a successful application of a word, *somebody* in the network of users must know (a cluster of) necessary and sufficient identifying or individuating conditions for what falls under extension of that word (see, e.g., Putnam 1975). This "expert" needn't be the occurrent user who carries this information. Nor need it even be neologist who coined the term. For a concrete example, consider "water", where all that matters for successful application, on any occasion of use, is that whoever uses it defers to relevant experts about what "water" is true of, or at least about what the relevant individuative nature (property) is of whatever "water" is true of. That is, there has to be some arbiter in possession of relevant knowledge to whom others defer. There has to be an expert.

To elaborate, suppose a speaker carries erroneous or incomplete lexical information about the application of "water". The speaker has heard it used, but misremembered it as being about a liquid fluid state, and so, rules out its gaseous and frozen forms, e.g., or doesn't know enough to distinguish what it applies to from a range of other odorless, tasteless, thirst quenching liquids. Still, if exposed to the word, then, even though confused, or with incomplete knowledge about what it's

true of, its uses can still successfully apply. (For instance, they can successfully say something false if they say "Water is always liquid", or successfully make a request if they say "Give me a glass of water, please".) According to the division of labor thesis, the speaker need only defer to experts on the meaning of "water" for its uses to be successfully applied. Putnam, an early advocate of the thesis writes:

> We could hardly use such words as "elm" and "aluminum" if no one possessed a way of recognizing elm trees and aluminum metal.....Everyone to whom gold is important for any reason has to acquire the word "gold"; but he does not have to acquire a method of recognizing if something is or is not gold. He can rely on a special subclass of speakers. (Putnam 1975)

A commitment to the linguistic division of labor means that a speaker *cannot* enter the network surrounding uses of a noun like "water" unless that speaker defers to "experts" on the meaning of "water" (or on which property it expresses). This is partly what it means to be lexically competent with the word "water". What counts as an expert can vary from context to context. In some contexts, we may care more about underlying composition, and in others, more about functional relations. Different concerns may force us to change allegiances with respect to who the relevant experts are.

So understood, it should be clear that the neologist needn't be an expert. While pointing at some stuff, a neologist may presume that that stuff, and whatever else "water" projects to, shares some property in virtue of which all this stuff has the same composition, and so, thereby falls under the extension of "water". But this does not require the individual to know what that property's composition consists in. That individual may have erroneous or incomplete information about the denotation of "water". However, the underlying assumption is that there are experts somewhere in the network who have identifying or individuating information, and community's deference to them is required (though not sufficient) to account for successful uses of "water".

But why do we need experts? No matter how ignorant or misinformed anyone, *or everyone*, in the network is, including whoever neologized the expression, successful predication can still ensue. (Clearly, we can introduce a term labeling a poorly understood phenomenon, only to learn about the phenomenon later on, with the understanding that we possibly might never master it.) Indeed, Putnam's own paradigmatic example of "water" as used in 1750 is revealing in exactly this respect. Putnam writes (1975):

> In 1750, chemistry was not developed sufficiently to individuate what we call "water" from all other chemical compounds. No one knew about hydrogen and oxygen compounds. Still, when speakers used "water," they succeeded in picking out what we pick out with current uses. That's why it makes sense to say they were wrong about what their uses of "water" applied to, even though these uses still succeeded in picking out water and only water. In short, that's why we can say that we disagree with them about *water*.

How can Putnam reconcile these intuitions with the division of labor thesis? How can membership in the network require a division of labor if all past and present users of the term can be wrong about the composition of its extension? Putnam (1975) attempts to remain committed to linguistic division of labor, even in face of his own "water" counter-examples. He suggests that even in 1750 speakers were deferring to experts, just not past or contemporaneous ones; rather, future ones. (Mysterious!)

So, what can we conclude in the cases of an absence of experts? After all, there may never be an expert, even in principle, among members of our species—if that requires someone who uncovers the nature of the extension of "water". And if the world ended before there were an expert, it's not like everyone would have failed to talk about water.[12] So, what did Putnam intend; is it just a metaphor for *the nature of things?* Since there is a fact of the matter about the nature of whatever "water" picks out, it follows that, even though no science may ever uncover this nature, we can still imagine an omniscient expert who knows all natures.

The problem for Putnam with this suggestion is that it doesn't exploit the expert to determine what "water" picks out. It uses the fact the "water" is true of something-or-other, to determine what it would take to be an expert about *that*. In particular, this way of exploiting expertise doesn't require that anyone actually "possesses a way of recognizing" whether "water" is true of something, at least not anyone in our network (even considered diachronically).

The key idea here is that once the connection between a common noun and its denotation has been established (say, e.g., for "water"), it becomes explorable as to what the nature is of what is picked out by uses of the noun. And though, in some cases, there may be experts about the nature of this property, and though we may defer to them, there is no guarantee that such experts (ever will) exist. But no such guarantee seems necessary in order to secure successful uses of expressions of our language. So, if in order to successfully use a common noun a speaker must defer, then to whom must the speaker defer with a use of "water", if not to knowledgeable experts about the nature of what's in its extension?

Well, on our story, once again, we are assuming that the speaker who introduced the term somehow managed to fix its meaning, and so, its extension. We deny that this speaker did so solely by explicitly intending to pick out some particular sort of stuff or property, since this first speaker was almost certainly wrong about the extension of "water" as well as about nature of its extension, and so might have been every user of the word since. One way around this is just to say the speaker

[12] Does the move to context-specific experts help here? We do not see how. For one, just as there is no guarantee that there is an expert with respect to the nature of a property, there's no guarantee there is an expert with respect to the property relative to some contextually specified purpose we are interested in.

intended to pick out *that thing*, where "that thing" is whatever is the thing that's being actually picked out (if any). Such demonstrative intentions are cheap (easy to form), but they don't provide a rich body of information to be used in identification.

This brings us to our answer to the second question about the successful use of predicates. Accordingly, suppose a progenitor succeeded, despite an abundance of erroneous and/or incomplete information, in introducing a new expression and in fixing its meaning/extension. A network got initiated, where upon all future users of the word can defer (*de facto*) to a chain of speakers back to its initial application ceremony. As before, this requires no *intentional act* of deference on the part of the speaker. All the speaker needs to do is intend to select an expression from her mental lexicon. The expression's identity, and its meaning, is determined by *de facto* deference to the network. And so, the answer to the second question is just as with the answer to the first question about expression tokening; namely, it's what speakers do, not what they know, that enables them to apply words successfully. A speaker selects an *expression* in her (mental) lexicon. In selecting this expression, she *de facto* defers to whomever passed the expression on to her. This doesn't require the speaker or the introducer to be experts or possess any identifying information, or even that the speaker forms an intention to defer to anyone (including experts).

4. *How far does the account extend?*

So far, we have speculated about proper names like "Godel" and common nouns for natural kinds like "water"; but how far can the network model be pushed? Defending his own version of the network model, Burge (1979) argues it has "an extremely wide application," and it does not depend on the kinds of words, say, that "Godel" and "water" are.[13] Indeed, he writes, the network extends to "an artifact term, an ordinary natural kind word, a color adjective, a social role term, a term for a historical style, an abstract noun, an action verb, a physical movement verb, or any of various other sorts of words" (1979). In fact, Burge is clear that the network extends to "any case where it is intuitively possible to attribute a mental state or event whose content involves a notion that the subject incompletely understands" (1979). Similarly, Putnam (1975), though he highlighted natural kind terms, notes that deference is practiced with many other kinds of words as well.

[13] Arguably, Burge would disagree with our non-intentional way of characterizing deference. As explained earlier, throughout most of the literature, it has been assumed that the appropriate kind of deference requires at least an intention to defer. If we are right, even this requirement is too strong. Be that as it may, since our argument crucially relies only on the possibility of ignorance of, and error about, an expression's articulation *and* its meaning, then whenever we have a case of apparent successful use of a term in spite of the possibility of such ignorance and error, our account will equally extend.

But given *our* view of deference, how far does the network model extend? We think the arguments from ignorance and error extend to most (all?) expressions. Clearly, the distinction between expressions and their articulations extends to all expressions. And it seems that, for *any* expression, a speaker can be mistaken about, or ignorant about its articulation. On our account, tokening any expression requires simply selecting it from a mental lexicon. Potential ignorance or error about its identity or articulation are no obstacle to successful tokenings; the expression is individuate by *de facto* deference to the tokening which introduced it into the speakers mental lexicon. Further, we think likewise, for virtually any expression the speaker can successfully *use* it—apply it—regardless of their ignorance or error about their meaning. We have seen how this extends to names and predicates. We think they quite generally, indeed even to connectives. Think about the debate over the meaning and logic of a conditional (cf. Grice (1989a), McGee (1985)) or the issues concerning commutativity of a conjunction in English.[14] Surely, it is not an obstacle to the successful tokening or application of the English conditional, or conjunction, that one might be mistaken about, or even have false beliefs about, some of the inferences that the conditional licenses. While establishing these extensions and what are their virtues in full is something we attempt elsewhere (Stojnić and Lepore, ms), here we note that, as long as the arguments from ignorance and error extend to a class of expressions, it should be clear, so do our answers to (1) and (2).

Conclusion

As sated at the outset, our goals here have been modest. We argued for an account of linguistic deference understood not as an intentional mental act—underscored by an intention to defer—but rather as what we called *de facto* deference—deference as a matter of historical and causal connections that trace the way the linguistic item was introduced into the speaker's mental lexicon. This allowed us to elucidate how speakers can successfully token and apply expressions despite the fact that they might be ignorant, or confused about the expressions' articulation and meaning. To token an expression, and to apply it successfully, speakers don't have to *know* anything; they rather have to do something: they have to select an item from their mental lexicon in forming their utterance. Which item it is that is selected, in turn is determined by the *de facto* deference to the item that was tokened by whomever introduced the speaker to the word. Similarly, its meaning is determined by *de facto* deference to whomever introduced the speaker to the word (and so on, back to the neologizing event). This way of indi-

[14] Some argue that apparent failures of commutativity are due to pragmatic effects (e.g., Grice (1989b)); the proponents of the dynamic semantics for conjunction, in turn, typically argue for a non-commutative meaning for "and" (see, e.g. Groenendijk and Stokhof (1991), or Heim (1982)).

viduating expressions not only explains how one can successfully token and apply a term, despite potential ignorance and error, but allows us to carefully distinguish the interpretive task of disambiguation—the process whereby audience determines which term was uttered—from the metaphysical process of meaning determination. We take this to be a theoretical virtue of our account.

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