**Thought, Meaning and Reference:
Cognitive and Contextualist Challenges to the Truth-Conditional View of Meaning**

By

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Philosophy

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario

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Your file *Votre référence*
ISBN: 978-0-494-71607-6
Our file *Notre référence*
ISBN: 978-0-494-71607-6

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Abstract

The sentence “Never leave for tomorrow what you can do today” means simply that: never leave for tomorrow what you can do today. It doesn’t presuppose the existence of some task, nor does it necessarily express some greater moral sentiment. To do either of these things it has to be used by a particular person on a particular occasion. This alone, however, doesn’t get us very far. For the sentence to achieve its intended effect, not only does it have to be used, but the intended audience has to recognize the speaker’s intention to use it in the intended way. These intentions are partially, although not entirely, satisfied by the audience grasping the conventional meaning of the sentence. To fully satisfy the speaker’s intentions, the audience has to determine what was particularly meant by utterance of the sentence. This requires the determination of both what the sentence means and what the speaker means by (and intends to achieve as a consequence of) using the sentence. Following Paul Grice, the processes responsible for determining the former are the central concern of semantics while the latter concerns pragmatics.

In the following paper I argue that a Gricean-inspired semantics-pragmatic distinction is broadly compatible with a non-intentional approach to “what is said”, and minimalist conception of context so long as one distinguishes between the distinct kinds of semantic content associated with the utterance of a particular sentence. This thesis directly challenges the mainstream view that Grice’s distinction can only be sustained if one either adopts a broadened view of context or rejects an externalist approach to semantic content. Failure to opt for either is conventionally argued to result in a dilemma. This paper argues that this dilemma is false and revealed as such when one gives up on the mono-propositionalist claim that the utterance of a sentence expresses a single proposition.

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Introduction

At the heart of this paper lies the viability of two interdependent distinctions central to what Grice (1989) calls his 'wider program'. The first is his distinction between sentence meaning and speaker meaning or between what speakers commit themselves to in virtue of the meaning of their words and what they mean by, or convey as a consequence of, what they have said. Grice takes the specification of speaker meaning and sentence meaning to factor into the determination of what is said (what our words say) and he claims that it should be distinguished from what we imply by uttering them. Neo-Gricean accounts typically take what is literally said to be the appropriate concern of semantics, and distinguish it from what is implied, which is taken to be the appropriate concern of pragmatics. So construed, the distinction between semantics and pragmatics is intended to capture what Grice claims is one of two ways to divide the total signification of an utterance. Grice states that one can divide the total signification between 'what is said' (in his favoured sense) and what is implicated, or one may distinguish between what is part of the conventional force (or meaning) of the utterance and what is not (1989, 41). Either way, Grice limits the considerations that should factor into the determination of what is expressed by the use of sentence to what is literally said; or more precisely, what the sentence means in virtue of the expressions employed and what is typically conveyed by their use. Failing to fit into either category, Grice claims that consideration, while possibility relevant to determining what is implied, should not be factored into the determination of what is said.

Despite his work being an explicit departure from the inherited tradition, the respective distinctions drawn by Grice have nevertheless been interpreted along the

traditional lines where sentences express, narrowly in virtue of their linguistic meaning, a truth evaluable proposition and correspond to a fully formed thought¹. The problem with coupling Grice's notion of 'what is said' with the traditional view of propositions surfaces in various distinct, yet related, ways. The first, and perhaps most obvious, is that his distinction between sentence meaning and speaker meaning is rendered problematic because what is expressed narrowly by a sentence (if interpreted narrowly as its truth-conditions) is too underdetermined to count as the input for speaker meaning specification. This problem is compounded by Grice's commitment to a syntactic correlation constraint on sentence meaning that limits considerations accounted for in the determination of what a sentence means to "the elements of [the sentence], their order, and their syntactic character" (Grice, 1989, 87). This constraint proves problematic if one holds the output of sentence meaning specification to be the sole input into speaker meaning specification and requires the output of both to be a truth-evaluable proposition which is grasped by a speaker's audience. It is problematic because, in some cases, the propositional content expressed narrowly by what is literally said fails to either correspond to the thoughts speakers have about what is said or be robust enough to be independently truth evaluable. While such cases, and the problems caused by them, are prevalent and often debated, , it is generally agreed that sentences such as (1), (2), (3) all require information which is not supplied by the sentence.

(1) It's Raining.

(2) Everyone is Ready.

¹ For those sympathetic with Bertrand Russell's proposition are the structured entities with objects and properties as their constituents. This view of propositions has been debated and often contrasted with a view of propositions that treats them as a set of possible worlds/states of affairs in which the sentence is true. The central difference between the two is that in Russell's view, two propositions that are true in all the same states of affairs can still be differentiated.

(3) Jack drinks too much.

In such cases, appeals to typically pragmatic considerations are needed to make the propositions expressed by (1) (2) (3) truth-evaluable. To be precise, it is not the case that appeals to context are problematic in themselves, but that the kind of appeal required is manifestly reflected in a sentence's truth-conditions. In (1) context is needed to specify where it is raining, in (2) context is needed to specify the domain over which the quantifier "Everyone" operates and to specify what everyone is ready for, and in (3) context is needed to specify what Jack drinks too much of and what Jack drinks too much for.

These cases present two related problems for the Gricean schema. The first is that is that the content expressed by sentences (narrowly in virtue of their linguistic meaning) often does not reflect of the content of a speaker's thoughts about them. Provided that what the speaker meant must be calculated² or determined narrowly from the what the sentence means, then his account cannot deal with sentences such as (1) (2) and (3). This is because such sentences are not propositional in the traditional sense (they are not truth-evaluable) and thus cannot be the object of a speaker's propositional attitudes³. This creates a more local concern. Given the often underdetermined nature of sentence, can Grice sustain his meaning constraint on understanding? Grice's meaning constraint or M-constraint limits the considerations that should factor into the determination of 'what is

² Content is "calculated" in Grice's framework if it is not part of what is said and determined relative to a set of guiding conversational maxims. In contrast, content is part of a sentence's conventional force, and thus need not be calculated, if it passes Grice's tests for non-detachability and non-cancelability. Passing both tests, content counts as part of what is said and is part of what is meant by the use of a particular sentence.

³ A propositional attitude is a particular kind of mental state that connects a speaker to the proposition expressed by the use of a sentence on a particular occasion. (Russell 1918, 227). Talk of propositional attitudes is motivated by the fact that our thoughts are about the propositions expressed by sentences rather than the particular sentences used.

said' to either those narrowly related to the expression employed or those that are part of the sentence's conventional force (or what is typically conveyed by its use). Failing to fit into either category, Grice claims that the consideration should be taken as part of what is implied or conversationally conveyed. The semantic contribution of (1) (2) and (3), when constrained to the truth-conditional content expressed by their individual expression, prove to be ill-suited to either. This is problematic provided that the content expressed by 'what is said' is taken to correspond to both a truth-evaluable proposition and a fully determined thought.

The inability of Grice's account, when interpreted along the traditional lines, to address this concern has provoked some Contextualists to deny a Gricean inspired semantic-pragmatic distinction. While details differ, Contextualists including Robyn Carston (2004) and Kent Bach (2006) generally contend that what is evaluated is some combination of the content expressed by a sentence along with other considerations related to the conditions associated with the use of the sentence. Both contend that semantic processing is initiated by the combination of linguistic and non-linguistic considerations. Both also agree that semantic processes progress along a path of least effort until a sufficiently plausible candidate for evaluation comes to mind. For Carston, this is "...until an interpretation that satisfies the expectation of relevance is found; then stop." (Carston 2004b: 822). For Bach, rather than the presumption that relevance motivates semantic processing, he suggests that the end aim is: "figuring out what a speaker means an addressee presumes that the speaker intends him to figure this out." (Bach 3, 2006).

While concurring on various points, Carston, unlike Bach, gives up on the traditional presumption that it is primarily a sentence's truth-conditional content that factors into its evaluation that drives semantic processing. It is this prioritized place of sentences (and the things we know about them prior to their use on a particular occasion) in semantic processing which I hope to preserve. In line with the Grice I believe that the presumption of truth underpins the ascription of semantic content to sentence. Ascribing to this view, I claim that one does not need to either loosen his constraint on meaning or appeal to a broadened notion of truth-conditions to deal with underdetermined sentences. Rather, I claim that what is needed is a more robust account of what factors into sentence meaning specification which requires one to reject several of the traditionally held views of propositions, their role in communication, and their relation to thought.

The particular view of propositions rejected holds the utterance of declarative sentences, narrowly in virtue of its linguistic meaning, to express a truth evaluable proposition which corresponds to the speaker corresponding thought. Commitment to this view, when faced with underdetermined sentences, requires one's audience to supplement what is said with whatever other considerations are necessary to get the speaker from the proposition narrowly expressed by a sentence to the speaker's corresponding thought. The dependency on context to meet the demands placed on the proposition expressed by sentences is what muddies the traditional Gricean distinction between 'what is said' and 'what is implied' and motivates the inclusion of considerations typically allotted to pragmatics into semantics. By re-evaluating the demands placed on the proposition expressed my aim is to afford the needed explanatory room to both preserve Grice's traditional distinctions while addressing the concerns that

motivate the it's criticisms. The particular view drawn into question is the assumption that the end aim of communication is the expression of a clear unambiguous thought or proposition through language. To address the noted cases, I argue that we must reject the implicit assumption that appeals to communicative considerations must proceed until the proposition expressed is fully determined and is reflective of the speaker's corresponding thought. In particular I argue, in line with John Perry and number of other contemporary theorists, that we must reject mono-propositionalism: the assumption that the utterance of a declarative sentence expresses a proposition, and that the proposition expressed is (i) the bearer of truth value, (ii) the bearer of cognitive value, and (iii) what is (literally) said and communicated (Corazza and Korta 2009, 2).

Commitment to this view has played a central role in the development of the debate and how the positions in the debate are typically defined. In particular, it has played a central role in the classic division of positions based on the principle of effability or the extent to which it is possible for one to make their thoughts (however construed) available to others through a given language (Carston 2002, 32). Sympathy with minimalism⁴ (the view espoused by semantic minimalists) is generally coupled with the view that for every overtly context-sensitive statement there is an equivalent context-invariant sentence that can be formulated to express the same thought. Getting from the former to the latter requires narrowly fixing the agent, time, location and place of the utterance. Sympathy to moderate Contextualism⁵ (sometimes called Indexicalism) is

⁴ "Minimalism" refers to the position held by thinkers such as Cappelen and Lepore (2005) and Emma Borg (2004) who defend a narrow view of semantic context (as constrained to the agent, time location). According to Cappelen and Leopore (2005, 2), the most salient feature of semantic minimalism is that it recognizes only a narrow class of context-sensitive expressions and hence acknowledges only a very limited effect of the context of utterance on the sentence content of an utterance.

⁵ Moderate Contextualists, like minimalists, recognize the context-sensitivity of overtly context-sensitive expressions such as "I" and "you", however, they also recognize less overt types of context-sensitivity

coupled with the view that for any underdetermined sentences, there is an equivalent context-invariant sentence that can be formulated to express the same thought. (to deal with the overtly context sensitive elements) and appealing to the conventions typically associated with the use of such a sentence (to reveal the covertly context-sensitive elements). The main job for a theory of language, in either case, is to set out the conditions or constraints that get us from an utterance (a sentence in context) to the expanded truth evaluable proposition or statement.

Despite rejecting these positions on the ground that they don't get us far enough, more radical forms of Contextualism⁶ (Bach 2006, Carston 2004) nevertheless buy into the assumption that the end aim of language processing is the expression of a clear unambiguous thought. Rooting their claim in this assumption, Contextualists claim that semantic processing must be supplemented by extra-linguistic pragmatic processes to determine which of the possible thoughts expressed by a particular sentence are in fact intended to be conveyed by its use. To determine this, Contextualists claim it to be necessary to appeal to the speaker's motivating intentions along with whatever other clues that context (broadly construed) provides. Committed to the notion that the object of evaluation corresponds to a fully determined thought, theorists such as Carston do not merely advocate the need to account for these intentions when evaluating 'what is said' but advocate to include them as part of the communicative construct being evaluated. This move is underpinned by her implicit assumption that appeals to communicative

caused by the use of terms such as "foreigner" which they likewise claim to trigger grammatically-mandated context exploitation.

⁶ Radical Contextualists hold some variation of the view that all expressions are context sensitive and that context-sensitivity is not constrained to only to the expressions employed (Cappelen and Lepore 2004, 6).

considerations must proceed until the proposition expressed is fully determined and is reflective of the speaker's corresponding thought.

Motivated by this assumption, Contextualists advocate an expansion of the class of considerations that factor into the output of semantic processing. This need is rooted in the claimed underdetermined nature of the literal meaning of most sentences. Two types of cases are typically employed to support claims of this sort. The first arises when the surface semantic structure of a sentence fails to reflect the evaluative constraints typically associated with its use on a particular occasion (i.e., the sentence "It's raining"), and the second arises when the words employed fail to provide enough cues to determine which of the possible corresponding thoughts are to be evaluated for the truth of 'what said' (i.e. "Jane is tall"). In the former case, sentences such as "It's raining" lack an appropriate domain restriction and thus seem to be trivially true, while in the latter case, there is a determination of the possible comparison class and thus it seems impossible to assign a single truth value. The two problems, while related (both stem from the need to appeal to the conditions associated with the use of a sentence), are distinct. In the former case, the sentence "It's raining" if relativized to context along the lines Kaplan suggests, expresses a proposition which is trivially true. In the latter case, the sentence "Jane is tall", even when relativized to a context cannot be assigned a truth value as it can be completed in several ways relative to a given situation. While both examples have elements of both cases, the latter sort are loosely considered as instances of sentence indeterminacy while cases of former sort are considered instances of term underdeterminacy (Carston 2002, 20).

The presence of indeterminate sentences proves to be problematic because we cannot possibly know from what is literally said (or on the basis of our knowing the meaning of the words employed alone) what beliefs we must attribute to a speaker in advance of understanding more broadly the conditions associated with the utterance's evaluation. This is claimed to be problematic for Grice's program because his account is taken to provide a principled explanation of how speakers, as rational agents, navigate from the information narrowly conveyed by language to the broader set of beliefs that motivate its use on a particular occasion, and not vice versa. Contextualists claim that such cases represent grounds by which to justify the intrusion of content from pragmatic processes such as free enrichment. This necessity is rooted in the fact that given the content narrowly contributed by a sentence's literal meaning, various interpretations of 'what is said' would be possible. This proves to be problematic because the class of possible inferences are left unconstrained.

While related, the problems with underdetermined sentences differ in important respects. The problem with underdetermined sentences is that they seem to contradict sentiments regarding why people choose language to communicate, and how to judge its use beyond merely being grammatical. That is, if one prompts a natural language speaker to describe the truth-conditions associated with the sentence "It's raining", they would likely specify some constraint on the appropriate location. This reading proves to be problematic if Grice's notion of 'what is said' is taken to be more or less a mapping onto truth-conditional content. If 'what is said' is constrained in this fashion, then the normative conditions typically associated with the sentence are ignored when examined as a whole. To address this, Contextualists advocate the expansion of a sentence's

propositional form to include the constraints necessary to reconcile our natural intuitions about a sentence's truth conditions with the formal characterization of them.

The prevalent presumption underpinning both claims is that the success or failure of Grice's broader program rests on a high degree of congruity between the belief expressed narrowly by 'what is said' and the subsequent belief induced in one's audience about 'what is said'. This notion is rooted in the broad assumption in truth-conditional theories that speakers choose their words in such a way that the belief expressed by their speech reflects a belief that they hope to subsequently induce in another individual. This belief has its roots in the work of Frege, among others, and his internalist view which considers that understanding a sentence entails grasping its associated thought. Despite the broad rejection of Frege's positing of an intermediate layer of semantic content (namely sense), most participants in the semantic-pragmatic debate still assume that the proposition expressed by a sentence must reflect the intentions, belief or thought that motivates its utterance on a particular occasion. The result of this assumption is that the determination of 'what is said' rests on an appeal to considerations not manifestly reflected in the act itself but rather by the prior intentions and beliefs that motivate it. This, in my opinion, is problematic, and an end that Grice would have strongly rejected. Grice, as we shall see, went to great lengths to restrict the analysis of 'what is said' to considerations narrowly reflected in the act itself. This restriction is one that many Contextualists have attempted to evade while still preserving the insights of his division. The strict division of the two, however, needs be preserved and cannot be escaped, as Relevance theorists have persuasively argued. What can be escaped, or for that matter,

dissolved, is the claimed dilemma that is argued to result from the maintenance of a strict division between ‘what is said’ and ‘what is implied’.

One particularly clear articulation of the claimed dilemma is formulated by Carston in *Thoughts and Utterances* (2004) in which she claims that if one accepts the type/token distinction then the linguistic meaning of a phrase or lexical item is not propositional. Carston defends the view that individuals can grasp the linguistic meaning associated with a word without fixing propositional content associated with their use. If such a claim stands, issues arise with the Grecian approach, which holds the denotation of a compound to be a function of the denotation of the parts, and its view that the only contextual considerations related to fixing the propositional contribution of particular terms as those parameters relevant to fixing the truth-conditional content associated with a particular sentence. If one wants to preserve the traditional approach and account for broader contextual phenomena, Carston suggest that one is faced with the ‘Isomorphism Dilemma’. The Isomorphism principle claims that the cognitive input (stable propositional content) of an utterance directly corresponds to its minimally structured semantic input. She directly associates it with Frege’s claim that: “...we are able to distinguish parts in the thought corresponding to the parts of a sentence, so that the structure of the sentence serves as the image of the structure of the thought” (Frege 1923/77:55).

According to Carston, someone wanting to maintain the Isomorphism principle has the options of either positing a hidden linguistic constituent corresponding to each of the pragmatically-inferred elements or to deny that they are part of what is said. She dismisses the latter alternative on the grounds that it renders ‘what is said’ as not truth-

evaluable. If one pursues the former alternative, Carston suggests that no meaningful distinction can be drawn from what contextual considerations count. That is, there is no way to determine how much and what kind of contextual context should be included. Put otherwise, she claims that if semantics is limited to the conventional meanings of types of expressions, then the semantics of an utterance does not determine what is said. If all that figures in the determination of 'what is said' counts as semantics, then pragmatic reasoning about the specific intentions of a speaker intrudes into semantics. Carston, not surprisingly, rejects the Isomorphism Principle. Carston's strong essentialist linguistic underdeterminacy thesis claims that the proposition expressed by an utterance (that is, 'what is said') is not fully determined by the meaning of the linguistic expressions used to convey it. Here, the meaning associated with a given utterance is both more fine grained than linguistic meaning and, perhaps more pertinently, the result of both linguistic and non-linguistic processes.

Evading the dilemma, so construed, involves addressing the assumptions that underpin the two central claims that have so far been foundational in my treatment of the debate. The first is that 'what is expressed' narrowly by the use of a sentence is inherently underdetermined, and that 'what is grasped' when someone understands 'what is said' is fully determined (or corresponds to fully formed thought). The second is that context is what is used to travel from the former to the latter. Combined, theoretical success is marked by the ability of an account to provide a broad enough notion of context to get one's audience to the thought expressed using the expressions employed without losing Grice's distinction between 'what is said' and 'what is implied'. Carston claims this to be impossible and so she rejects Grice. For those sympathetic with Grice,

the mark of success is the ability of an account to correctly predict the truth-value that natural language speakers would assign to any given sentence when it is uttered on a particular occasion with reference to their preferred notion of context. Naturally, all parties claim to get this right. Each claim that their notion of context correctly predicts the content expressed and truth-value assigned. Whether or not this is the case is a matter entirely separate, because the problem so far rests on two incompatible assumptions: first, that sentences themselves are inherently underdetermined; and second, that the intentions manifestly reflected in the act of uttering a sentence reflect the beliefs formed by one's audience about it or the thoughts they associate with it. These assumptions are rooted in what one might call the 'traditional view' of language.

According to what we might call the 'traditional picture' of communication, both language production and comprehension is primarily driven by the end aim of attributing a single unambiguous thought to speaker that corresponds with the sentence that he or she has employed. Within the analytic tradition, this picture has prevailed as the presumption that a declarative sentence, narrowly in virtue of its linguistic meaning, both expresses a truth-evaluable proposition and corresponds to a fully formed thought. While differing in perspective about the role assigned to language, both Frege and Russell did subscribe to some form of this view. This view relies heavily on the assumption that natural language speakers, provided they are competent, will successfully and predictably pair a given sentence with its associated proposition prior to their use on a particular occasion. The following thesis paper shows that a variation on the traditional assumption, here called 'propositionalism', plays a prominent role in the debate over the viability of Grice's wider program and its applicability to the contemporary debate over how to divide

semantics from pragmatics. The particular variation on the view drawn into question relates to the assumption hereafter called ‘monopropositionalism’. It holds that, leaving implicatures aside, the utterance of a sentence expresses a unique proposition, which is reflected in either what is said by the utterance, its content, or its truth-conditions. Despite playing a central role in the conditioning of the debate, I argue for the rejection of this view in favour of the alternative ‘plurapropositionalist’ model proposed by John Perry in *Reference and Reflexivity* (2004). The rejection of a mono-propositionalist framework allows for both a situated view of language, such as that defended by Corazza and Dokic, and a welcome solution to various claimed cases of semantic underdeterminacy which are caused by subscribing to a such a view of propositions.

While I am critical of appeals to a speaker’s subjective states by cognitively-oriented accounts and appeals to non-linguistic content by Contextualists accounts, I believe that truth conditions, if interpreted as either strictly in referential (or extensionally) or non-referentially (or intentionally), pose a problem. Grice’s notion of ‘what is said’ cannot be preserved without recognizing that it has both referential and descriptive dimensions to it. The argument that I defend in this work is that the Gricean semantics-pragmatic distinction is broadly compatible with a non-intentional approach to, and minimalist conception of sentence-meaning so long as one distinguishes between these distinct kinds of semantic content associated with the utterance of a particular sentence. This is a controversial thesis. The mainstream view is that Grice’s distinction can only be sustained if one either adopts a Contextualist view of sentence-meaning or rejects the descriptivist approach to semantic content expressed by sentences. Failure to

opt for either is argued to result in dilemma. This dilemma is false and will be revealed as such when one gives up on monopropositionalism.

Looking Ahead

The remaining portion of the thesis is divided into three chapters. The first sets the stage for the current debate by chronicling the development of formal truth-conditional semantics and its less formal intention-based counterpart. It opens by examining how analytic philosophers at the turn of the twentieth-century attempted to solve the problems associated with the need to account for variance in the semantic value of non-synonymous co-referring terms. After presenting the solution proposed by Gottlob Frege in “Sense and Reference” (1892), I consider the resulting criticisms and the effect that these criticism have subsequently had on how the task of sentential analysis is now interpreted. In particular, I consider the criticisms waged by Wittgenstein, Davidson and Austin concerning Frege’s emphasis on the meaning of words and the treatment of reference. Having examined these claims, I then explore how criticism against early approaches to sentential analysis has affected contemporary theories of language. In particular, I look at the contrasting responses presented by truth conditional-theories and speech-act theories. The chapter concludes with an examination of Grice’s attempt to reconcile the respective approaches into a single framework.

While Grice’s proposed distinction between ‘what is said’ and ‘what is implicated’ serves to reconcile the aims of the two approaches into a complete framework, truth-conditional approaches still face issues regarding how the considerations relevant to the determination of ‘what is said’ narrowly relate to the linguistic meaning of the constituent terms of a sentence. The critics broadly divide into

two schools: those who think semantics should incorporate pragmatic considerations and those who argue that semantics should set aside considerations relating to the particular psychological states of agents. Opting for the latter alternative is claimed to result in a dilemma. The second chapter explores at length the development of this dilemma and its role in the development of Carston's alternative to the Gricean schema.

Briefly, Carston's formulation of the dilemma is as follows. She first argues that there is no principled way to draw a distinction between the intentions manifestly reflected in a sentence (the object of a propositional attitude) and the contents of the beliefs one's audience has about the sentence when it is uttered on a particular occasion. This, she claims, is because if a sentence is constrained to the consideration narrowly reflected in 'what is said' (understood to be a sentence's truth-conditions) then the output of semantic processing is not propositional. For the vast majority of sentences to count as propositional (or truth evaluable), Carston claims that we must appeal to considerations other than what is literally said. In particular, she claims that without reference to a speaker's embedded and associated intentions it is unlikely, if not impossible, to determine either the truth or a relevant interpretation associated with a given utterance in most instances (Carston 2002, 185). Her claim relates not only to what she terms *saturation*⁷ but more broadly to what she calls *free enrichment*⁸. Accepting this, she claims that there is no principled way to distinguish between the considerations that should factor into the determination of what is literally said (the object of propositional

⁷ The term "saturation" refers to cases where appeals to context are linguistically mandated by the employment of a particular expression. If a sentence contains either overtly or covertly context-sensitive expressions, this is claimed to be necessary prior to the assignment of a truth-value to it.

⁸ The term "free enrichment" refers to cases where appeals to context are not linguistic mandated but nevertheless necessary for the sentence to express a truth-evaluable proposition when uttered. Freely enriched content is communicated by an utterance and possibly represented in its underlying logical form, yet it is not the result of a grammatically-triggered process.

attitudes) and what is implied. This is problematic because in the Gricean model the beliefs entertained by a speaker's audience about the speaker are claimed to be derived (or calculated) narrowly from what is (literally) said and not accounted for in its determination.

Faced with this dilemma, Carston suggests that we should collapse the distinction and opt instead for a model of communication that constrains the object of the audience's communicative attitude to considerations which are maximally relevant to the determination of what is explicated. Loosely put, a sentence is explicated if a sentence's logical form⁹ is appropriately developed according to the principle of relevance. The need for a notion such as explication arises out of the obvious necessity for a theory of communication to have a mark for what counts as an instance of understanding. The absence of such a notion not only seems to confound the otherwise clear intuition of most individuals that in some sense we distinguish 'what is said' from 'what is meant' but runs against the very basis on which truth-conditional theories are built. Namely, that understanding 'what is said' is marked by a speaker's ability to specify the conditions under which a sentence, or in the case of Carston, the utterance of a sentence is either true or false. The problem, however, is that the introduction of the notion of implicature runs Carston into the same dilemma that her counterparts face. If the object of understanding (the truth-conditional content expressed) is not a sentence, and it is not constrained by the linguistic meaning of the expression employed, how then do we decide what should factor into what counts as an instance of understanding? Carston has a lot to say about

⁹ The term "logical form" refers to a certain level of mental representation of a linguistic expression which is derived from a sentence's surface structure. The term was popularized by Noam Chomsky's appeals to logical form, but it became used more generally to meet the need to explain the operation of inferences when linguistic meaning does not sufficiently constrain the conditions necessary for the evaluation of a particular utterance.

what should be included and what hasn't been included traditionally. The problem is that Carston does not tell us where or how to draw the line.

I claim that the problem of scope¹⁰ proves to be detrimental to Carston's account. If we allow any appeal to a speaker's broad intentions to count, understanding each other becomes at best a matter of luck. If we narrowly allow appeals to the intentions manifestly reflected in the act itself, we cannot develop explicatures in the fashion that Carston suggests. Carston opts for neither and instead assumes, without explanation, a privileged place of knowledge about what should count as an appropriate explicature. This privileged knowledge of the output allows her to focus her attention on an explanation of how we get there. Of course, once we are told where to go it seems to be rather clear sailing getting there. Given the underdetermined sentence "On the top shelf" and a sufficient amount of priming, Carston tells us the resulting explicature (on the occasion in question) is *The marmalade is on the top shelf*. The problem, however, is that process of getting there and knowing where to stop is explained from the perspective of someone who knows where she is going. In the absence of such a marker, the principled way to ensure that the resulting explicatures developed by one's audience reflects both one's own beliefs and those held by other members in the audience is, at best, left wanting. I claim that this as a result of Carston's failure to draw a distinction between the speaker's prior intentions that motivated the communicative act and the resulting attitude (or set of beliefs entertained about a particular utterance) induced in one's audience about the particular communicative act. Once such a distinction is drawn, and in particular, the overlaps considered, the clear implausibility of her account is revealed.

¹⁰ By the term "scope" I mean the class of considerations that should factor into the determination of what is said.

In the second half of Chapter Three, I look at the work of the Eros Corazza and Jérôme Dokic who defend what they call Situated Minimalism or Situationalism. It holds that a speaker, in uttering a given sentence, expresses a minimal proposition to the extent that the audience understands ‘what is said’ and that the speaker and audience understand each other (share the view of what is the appropriate interpretation) insofar as they can both correctly identify the relevant situation¹¹ to which the utterance corresponds. In such an account, the proposition expressed is independent of the situation in which it is expressed and, as such, is not distinctly associated with one situation but rather is uniformly expressed by a sentence across all possible situations (provided that it is devoid of indexical terms). According to Corazza and Dokic, context exploitation does not need to result in the formation and grasping of a specific proposition. We may understand each other insofar as we grasp similar propositions. The proposition that a speaker’s audience grasps may remain undetermined as long as one can recognize the existence of some “enriched” proposition or other, which one need not to be able to specify (Corazza 2004, 11).

Corazza’s solution preserves the general structure of the Gricean framework, but it nevertheless represents a weakening of his cognitive constraint on semantics. To recall, the Gricean schema in its original form holds linguistic meaning to fully determine the appropriate interpretation of ‘what is said’ and the proposition expressed is taken to fully determine the epistemic routes exploited by the audience in determining both sentence and speaker meaning. Corazza’s solution, in contrast, takes linguistic meaning to only determine the considerations relevant to evaluation of ‘what is said’, leaving the particular epistemic paths that an audience uses to determine a speaker’s associated

¹¹ The term “situation” refers to a partial possible world.

thought open to determination relative to situation of use. This has various advantages. For one, it allows for the rendering of a narrowly externalist account of linguistic meaning and minimalist view of ‘what is said’ while still affording the necessary explanatory room to account for how mental phenomena (such as belief, knowledge, intention, and perception) factor into interpretation. Second, it addresses concerns related to underdetermination without needing to appeal to processes which expand the underlying logical form of the propositional expressed. As such, it avoids the need to postulate the presence of unsaturated or incomplete terms when expressions lack a fully determined corresponding reference or entity. Last, the solution provided is amenable to either a Russellian or Fregean view of propositions and, as such, is compatible with a pluralist conception of propositions.

Corazza and Dokic provide a welcome solution to one of two types of problematic cases facing minimalists: namely, cases where natural language utterances depend on an understanding of the world that goes beyond what the message itself contains. What the pair highlights is that shared knowledge about the situation interlocutors find themselves in supplements communicative success but need not enter into the proposition minimally expressed. While the truth conditions associated with the use of a sentence determine the necessary ends that its associated semantic content(s) must meet in order to either express a truth value or perform its imbued semantic functions, they do not, and need not, reflect how these functions are to be satisfied on a particular occasion. Because of this one need not include in proposition expressed considerations that factor in the evaluation of what is said. What must be is represented is what is being evaluated not how one goes about evaluating it on a particular occasion.

While a welcome solution to one form of semantic underdeterminacy, this alone fails to address the more general intuition that the semantic contribution of individual expressions fails to account for instances where the determination of ‘what is said’ requires detail that natural language suppresses. In such cases, language users seem to exploit the recognition that their audience can, given their knowledge of language, work the details out for themselves. To discuss this, I turn to Perry’s Reflexive-Referential Theory and his discussion of what he calls a sentence’s reflexive content. This theory is and the justification for its need is explored in chapter four.

In *Reference and Reflexivity* (2001), Perry provides an enriched and expanded account of content which reconciles the seeming divide in philosophy of language and provides a grounded point to interface semantics and pragmatics (Perry 2001, 8). His unique semantic account is rooted in a rejection of propositionalism, and the recognition of what he claims to be a fundamental distinction between the types of content on which language rests. This expanded view of content, combined with a further developed characterization of indexicals, provides an insightful solution to cases where the truth-conditions of a sentence, if strictly interpreted in a referential or descriptivist fashion, fail to capture the relevant considerations to the determination of ‘what is said’. The welcome result of rejecting a mono-propositionalist framework is that one can re-conceive of David Kaplan’s distinction between the character and content¹² of a term as a more general distinction between the linguistic content of a statement (content expressed, or the truth-conditional content conveyed narrowly by its use) and the mental content of a statement (content grasped, or the complete content of a propositional attitude). With this

¹² Kaplan’s notion of “character” and “content” is typically taken to replace Frege’s notion of “sense”. The former is the linguistic meaning of an expression, and the latter is the proposition (or propositional component) expressed by an expression in a context.

distinction, supplemented by an explanation by John Perry of how we get from the former to the latter, one can avoid the Contextualist critique while still preserving the insights that underpin it.

(I) Thought, Meaning and Reference

Language is unavoidable. It is the medium we use to engage with philosophical questions, express our thoughts and ideas, and characterize and describe the world. Perhaps most importantly, language serves to further our individual and collective aims and interests. Our ability to achieve such ends is fundamentally rooted in our linguistic capacity to induce beliefs that reflect our own psychological states in other human beings, provided their competency and co-operation. This capacity requires a particular kind of shared knowledge of how language functions that we exhibit in various ways. Natural language speakers can, in principle, distinguish between an infinite numbers of grammatical sentences in a given language. Syntax has as its goal the discovery of the rules that allow speakers to make such distinctions. Speakers also know what is meant by a sentence in virtue of their knowledge of the meaning of the words used and the rules that govern their combination. This knowledge is marked by a speaker's capacity to distinguish the conditions under which any given sentence is taken to be true. Specification of these conditions by truth-conditional accounts is taken to be an accurate guide to the propositional content associated with the use of sentences.

The focus on the relation of truth to language is the consequence of a view held by a long lineage of thinkers that the linguistic meaning of declarative sentences to be tightly related to the conditions under which they were taken to be true. In the truth-conditional tradition, declarative sentences are the central subject of semantic scrutiny and logical analysis because their use is typically taken to express, given an indicative mood, something uniform (a proposition) that depends narrowly on the meaning of their constituent expressions. The propositions expressed by these sentences are what

advocates of such approaches evaluate when truth or falsity is in question. Investigations into the nature of truth and its relation to meaning and reference naturally coincide with the formal counterpart of language: logic. Logic systematizes valid arguments whose form (or particular composition and ordering) is taken to preserve truth. When logic appeals to form, it appeals to the grammatical structure of a sentence or a set of sentences. Because of this dependence, logic, grammar and a theory of truth are often taken to constitute three parts of a single discipline: what Donald Davidson calls the 'logic of grammar' (Davidson and Harman, 1975). The central idea is simple and natural: find a finite number of parts from which all sentences are constructed (the vocabulary), state the truth-affecting characteristics of the parts (the expressions), and then give the truth-conditions of the sentences on the basis of the truth-affecting characteristics of the parts (the semantic contribution of parts) and the way the parts are assembled (the syntax). These formal semantic considerations, when extended to instances of actual language use, cumulatively figure into the determination of the proposition expressed by a sentence when used on a particular occasion.

While propositions are in part a convenient theoretical construct, their existence, reflective of their relationship to both the thoughts and the sentences we use to express them, is rooted in the notion that when speaking in a literal sense one seems to be able to say or express the same thing by employing different terms or using different languages. What is uniformly expressed by different sentences that convey the same thing using different words is their associated proposition. Belief in propositions has had a distinguished history in analytic philosophy. Three of the founding fathers of analytic philosophy, Gottlob Frege, Bertrand Russell, and G. E. Moore, believed in propositions.

Many philosophers since then have shared this belief and it is widely, though certainly not universally, accepted within philosophy today. Amongst contemporary philosophers who believe in propositions, many (and perhaps even most) take them to be structured entities with individuals, properties, and relations as constituents.

1.1 Frege and Russell

Traditionally, propositions have been interpreted as statements that either affirm or deny something and whose truth depends on facts about the existence or nonexistence of the corresponding content they denote. So construed, the truth-value of a proposition is inextricably bound up with the nature of the sentence used to express it. When a statement expresses a true proposition, then it either affirms the corresponding positive state of affairs or denies the corresponding negative state of affairs. If there is no state of affairs to which the proposition can be taken to correspond, then it is false; if there is, then it is true. Frege, departing from the inherited tradition, conceived of propositions - the fundamental bearers of truth and falsity and the objects of the attitudes - as ontologically-distinct structured entities that bear a meaning (understood in functional terms) and semantic value (truth or falsity) narrowly in virtue of the linguistic construct used to express them. In doing so, Frege collapsed a historic distinction between the meaning of a term and its reference.

The historical separation of the meaning of a term and its semantic contribution is reflected throughout the Western philosophical tradition. Distinctions of this sort can be cited in the work of Antoine Arnauld, William of Ockham and the Stoic logicians, among others. Arnauld and Nicole, in *The Port Royal Logic* (1662), drew a distinction between an idea and its extension; William of Ockham, in his *Summa Logicae* (c. 1323) drew a

distinction between a term in mental language and what it supposits; and the Stoics logicians divided an utterance, its signification, and the name-bearer (Mendhelson 2005, xv). Perhaps the most popularly cited historical example of this distinction is found in J.S. Mill's "Of Names" (1881) where the distinction is clear between a word's denotation (or what it refers to) and a word's connotation (or what it implies). Mill took this distinction to be crucial to preserve the distinct logical role played by what he called *connotative terms* (terms that denote a subject and an attribute) and non-connotative terms (terms that signify either a subject or an attribute but not both). Mill claimed that the only names of objects which connote nothing are *proper* names, and further argued that these have, strictly speaking, no signification (or, what we might call 'informational value').

While it is appealing to examine the strict separation of a term's meaning and reference in isolation, it proves to be problematic when their operation in a sentence is examined. Two sentences may demand knowledge of the same state of affairs in the world by an evaluator, but this does not seem to necessitate that they both convey the same information. Descriptivist accounts, following Russell, dealt with the problem of cognitive significance by claiming these differences to be fundamentally rooted in variances of how descriptions designate. Others, following Frege, argued that variances in cognitive significance were unrelated to word or sentence reference by introducing an intermediate layer of intentional content, which they referred to as its sense. What makes the two notions of truth-conditions incompatible is the role the respective process are taken to play in determining the semantic content expressed by the use of a sentence on a particular occasion. Despite differing views on the nature of the proposition expressed by

a sentence, both Russell and Frege took the utterance of a sentence to express (presuppositions and implicatures aside) a single proposition, and narrowly held sentences to express propositions (Corazza and Korta, 3). Debates over the correctness of either Russell or Frege's conception of propositions have since operated under both the assumption that a sentence express a single proposition, and that it is strictly sentences not their conditions associated with their use which allows them to express propositions. This has resulted in the subsequent demand that a single proposition reconcile the insights of both referential and descriptivist accounts. Both of the noted assumptions - that sentences are the base bearers of meaning and that they express a single proposition – have since played a central part in shaping proposed solutions to problems related to the underdetermined nature of semantic content.

Awareness of the inherent problems posed by the ignorance of the relation between the linguistic meaning and the semantic contribution of a term was first brought to light in Frege's essay "On Sense and Reference" (1892). In it he poses the following question: "Sameness [Gleichheit] gives rise to challenging questions which are not altogether easy to answer. Is it a relation? A relation between objects, or between names or signs of objects?" (1892, 151) Frege considers two possibilities that result from the question of identity: either it is a relation between objects or a relation between signs. These possibilities then pose a puzzle. If identity is a relation between objects, it must be a relation between a thing and itself. But if everything is identical to itself, then it is trivial to assert that a thing is identical to itself. Hence, every statement of identity should be analytic and knowable *a priori*. The significance of 'a = b' would thus turn out to be

the same as 'a = a'. Yet, it seems intuitively clear that these statements have differing cognitive significance. One conveys new information, while the other is trivial at best.

In *Begriffsschrift* (1879), his book on logic, Frege proposed a metalinguistic solution: identity is a relation between signs. The statement 'a = b' thus asserts a relation between the signs 'a' and 'b'. In the *Begriffsschrift*, Frege, concerned with a sentence's 'content', gives up on the traditional subject/predicate distinction as it pertains to language and instead opts for logico-mathematical function-argument distinction. The traditional distinction of the subject from predicates is related to the asymmetry between the logical categories in which subjects, as opposed to predicates, fit within. The referent of "Socrates" falls into the class of things called subjects because being an individual it can be something or part of a group of something but not be shared by other things. The term "smoking", in contrast, falls into the class of things called predicates because it is a property of at least one thing possibly shared by many things, rather than being something or in a group of something. While all simple propositions are composed of a subject and predicate there is obviously more than one kind thing that falls into the class of thing called subjects or one kind of property that falls in the class of thing called predicates.

Rather than categorizing terms according to their extension, Frege opts instead to categorize them according to their function. A function is a mapping between a particular kind of input and output which takes as its argument an input of a particular type that completely determines its output. This formulation allowed Frege to treat the semantic values of predicates as functions from objects to truth-values; sentential connectives as functions from truth-values to truth-values; and quantifiers as second-level functions

from concepts (first-level functions) to truth-values. The problem with this solution is that, as Frege points out, the choice of a particular sign to stand for a particular object is arbitrary or conventional. Hence, it is also arbitrary or conventional that two different signs have been used for the same object. Since this is so, the statement 'a = b' would merely report an arbitrary decision about nomenclature, and not a substantive fact about the world. But statements of the form 'a = b' can be used to report substantive facts, and not just arbitrary conventions.

In "On Sense and Reference", an alternative semantic framework emerges, along with a more promising solution to the problem of identity. Motivated by the need to account for differences in the semantic value of co-referring expressions, Frege drew a fundamental distinction between the reference of a term and the means by which its reference is determined. Considerations relating to the latter belong to the realm of sense, while considerations related to the former relate to the denotation of a term. Frege claimed the denotation of a name to be the object it picks out, and the sense of a name to be its particular mode of presentation. Since different names with different senses can have the same denotation, identity statements can both be true (for the names have the same denotation) and informative (for the names have different senses). Accordingly for Frege, meaning breaks down into the criterion for the identification of some object, which, when grasped, allows us to fix its associated reference (Taylor 1998, 8). It is the sense of an expression that is the ingredient of its meaning that determines its semantic value. According to Frege, the sense of an expression is a normative¹³ constraint that

¹³ In Frege's account, the semantic value (or sense) of a particular term is not determined by the particular speaker belief about it but rather is determined by its relation to what is conveyed more generally by all instances of the term's use.

determines which uses of the expression are correct and which are incorrect, and it is what someone grasps when they understand the use of a particular expression. Following his earlier commitment to the compositionality of semantic values, Frege held that the sense of a complex expression was determined by the senses of its constituent parts.

Frege viewed the independence of sense and reference to be important in order to preserve both the principles of compositionality and substitution. What, then, is their relation? Sense contains a condition, the unique satisfaction of which, by an object, is both necessary and sufficient to determine its reference. Accordingly, a word, and in particular a name, refers to an object so long as the object satisfies the particular conditions of identification established by its use. In grasping the sense of a name, one grasps the particular conditions of identification and is thus able to identify the object. The sense of a sentence is determined by the senses of its constituents, and as such, any two terms which have the same sense refer to the same object. This provides a welcome solution to the problem of identity. An informative identity statement presents an instance in which two sets of identification conditions associated with two different names are able to refer to a single object.

The central advantage of Frege's formulation is that the sense associated with the constituent term of a sentence denotes concepts and objects independently from the dispositional states of agents. While the evidence of an individual having a particular thought is manifest in his or her ability to express a corresponding sentence, the thought expressed by the sentence is either true or false independent of the agent. Despite the recognition of the need to account for considerations related to the associated beliefs of a speaker about the proposition expressed, Frege took the strict division of objective

thoughts from subjective ideas to be necessary to avoid rendering a view of meaning dependent on private experience. Frege's attainment of this end rests in his distinction between the apprehension of a thought (thinking), the recognition of the truth of a thought (judgement) and the manifestation of this judgement (assertion). While different sentences can express the same thought, thoughts themselves do not determine what is to be regarded as the subject (Frege 1951, 174). Frege states that analysis of the same thought can make it appear as a singular judgement, as a particular judgement and as a universal judgement. Likewise, he suggests that the same sentence can be conceived of as an assertion about a concept and also an assertion about an object (Frege 1951, 175). While sentences can be conceived of in this way this is not how they are presented. To see how they are presented, one must look at what is asserted (the sentence). Sentences, like the thoughts to which they correspond, are made up of a subject and a corresponding predicate. He claims that we declare our recognition of the truth of a particular thought by using sentences in the indicative form. Sentences express thoughts which are true in virtue of their sense, not their denotation or correspondence of the sense to something else (Frege 1956, 292).

The seeming advantage of Frege's account, at least in part, lies in its ability to deal with empty, or non-referring, or non-denoting expressions. That is, in such an account, the proper name 'Odysseus', despite lacking a reference, still retains its meaning by expressing a sense. This is because while 'Odysseus' may have conditions of identification associated with it, there is no object in the world that satisfies these conditions. Despite the fact that there is not an object that satisfy this condition, the employment of the term nevertheless seems meaningful because we seem to understand

sentences which employ it; for instance, “Odysseus was sent to Ithaca”. Whether Frege’s positing of a mediating sense is a plausible solution to the problem of no-reference and co-reference is debatable. For one, in order for it to be a plausible solution to the problem of no-reference it seems necessary that it be possible for an expression to have a sense and no reference. Accepting this, it seems that the notion of sense gives up on the idea that the sense of a proper name is directly informed by the reference that satisfies it, and renders a view of sense akin to Russell’s notion of individuating description (which could be understood with or without a reference satisfying it). If one attempts to escape the interpretation of Frege as holding a Descriptivist view of proper names, then one is forced to claim that certain sentences (such as those that employ fictional names) do not express propositions. The existence of sentences that contain an empty name, as a consequence of this view, cannot bear a truth value and thus present truth-gaps (Taylor 1998, 12). Rather than taking this to be a problem with his approach, Frege took the existence of empty names, and their inability to refer on his approach, to be a general defect of natural languages.

While separating sense from reference, Frege took the semantic value of a referential expression to be directly informed by the object to which it is taken to correspond. This view is informed by the Referentialist orientation of writers such as John Stuart Mill (1881) who took proper names to be tags of objects. Mill viewed proper names to hold no signification above and beyond the object to which they refer. While the alternative to such a view took root in Frege’s work, Bertrand Russell’s treatment of the topic in “On Denoting” (1905) opened the way for the now typified Descriptivist alternative. Frege separated concept and object, but his solution was an attempt to

preserve the underlying assumption that the very possibility of grasping the sense of term rests on a pre-established relationship between words and object. Russell's theory of descriptions further distanced meaning from reference by holding the meaning of names to be a description with no predetermined relation to a particular object. Russell affirms the existence of propositions, yet he takes them to be complexes of ordinary concrete objects (the referents of words) rather than complexes of Fregean senses. So understood, the statement "a = b" and "a = a" both express the same proposition and differ only in how they go about fixing the referent of "a" and "b". The result of Russell's rejection of sense is that a sentence's particular mode of presentation no longer plays a determinate role in shaping the proposition expressed by sentences.

Russell's approach to meaning differs from Frege's approach in two important ways. The first relates to the fact that he does not take the meaning of a referring expression (such as "Hamlet") to be constituted directly by its referent, (i.e., Hamlet). To recall, Frege suggests that someone grasps what is meant by the use of the term "Hamlet" when they grasp some unique identifying condition that isolates Hamlet as the referent of "Hamlet" (i.e., the protagonist in William Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*). Russell, in contrast, argues that when someone grasps what is meant by the use of the term "Hamlet" what they grasp is some unique description that uniquely characterizes the protagonist in William Shakespeare *the Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*. The second divide relates to the author's views as to the relation between expression employed in sentences and their reference. While Frege took the reference of "Hamlet" to Hamlet to be mediated (by some identifying description or condition), Russell takes it to be unmediated. The inherent problem with this view is that terms such

as “Hamlet” despite having properties typical to proper names do not function like proper names as they do not have - at least properly speaking- a reference.

To address this concern Russell formulated an alternative descriptive account of meaning. Russell, voicing concerns in part shared by Frege, suggests that one should distinguish between a sentence’s surface grammatical form (what Frege called its “mode of presentation”) and its logical form (a representation of a sentence’s truth-affecting parts). There are various reasons why this is desirable, at least from the perspective of logic. For one, differences in a sentence’s surface grammatical structure may be irrelevant insofar as logic is concerned. Second, and more importantly for Russell, sentences seem to differ in ways that are often not represented in their surface grammatical structures. Russell took the latter point to be of particular relevance with respect to sentences containing what he called ‘denoting phrases’. Russell divides denoting phrases into three categories: indefinite descriptions or denoting phrases that do not denote anything in particular, definite descriptions or denoting phrases that denote one definite object, and ambiguous descriptions (or denoting phrases that seem to have properties of both). Russell, in an attempt to introduce an intermediate layer of semantic content to address the latter two cases suggests that sentences containing descriptions (such as "The King of France is bald") can be systematically translated into the description-free equivalent “Anything that is the King of France is bald”. According to Russell, translating sentences containing descriptive aspects into their description-free alternative solves both the problem of no-reference and co-reference without the need to posit the existence of an intermediate layer.

The result of Russell's rejection of sense is that a sentence's particular mode of presentation no longer plays a determinate role in shaping the proposition expressed by sentences. Russell is able to do so while still preserving the possibility of accounting for the difference in semantic value of co-referring expressions by drawing a fundamental distinction between the reference of a term and the means by which its reference is determined. The consequence of Russell's separation of the two is that rather different sentential structures can, in his account, correspond to the same complexes of contents and thus express the same proposition. The descriptivist account, while advantageous in this respects, contradicts the intuition that singular terms by nature of its meaning refers to a particular object. Moreover, as an explanation of natural language use, this account fails to explain why one can use different sentences and words to say the same thing and how we can say something true despite having associated false beliefs (Perry 1988, 5).

Propositionalism

While they differed frequently, Frege and Russell both held intensions, associated with the use of a word or sentence, to fully determine extension or the truth of the associated set of things designated by it. Treated as such, when two terms differ in extension (apply to different sets of things) then they were taken to reflect different intensions. The consequence of the rigid relation between intensions and extension was that a speaker's competence with a term was marked narrowly by their ability to associate it with the appropriate intension and exhibited by the agent's ability to discern the terms of extension from its anti-extension. As a consequence of this constraint, which Kenneth Taylor (1995) calls 'Frege's cognitive constraint on reference determination', the linguistic mechanisms typically taken to be responsible for a speaker's ability to

determine a sentence's reference were taken to fully determine their routes of epistemic access.

The consequence of this Internalist approach was twofold: first, the criterion for the correct application of a term was subsequently treated as being introspectively available to the linguistically competent agent without reference to considerations external to them; second, sentences were taken to designate (stand for, refer to) truth values. Semantic content, so construed, is completely transparent to individual agents provided that they are competent language users. Accepting this, an agent need not invoke something external to them in order to individuate the contents associated with the use of an expression; as competency entails, knowledge of the conditions that determine the reference of terms. This view was paralleled by a similar commitment to what is loosely termed 'propositionalism': the view that the utterance of a sentence expresses a unique proposition that is reducible to its truth-conditional content and corresponds to a fully formed thought.

Propositionalism is rooted in Frege's collapse of the distinction between the meaning (or significance) that individual words have prior to their use and the derivative meaning they acquire as a result of being combined with other expressions into a truth evaluable sentence. This distinction has its roots in the work of thinkers as far back as Aristotle. Despite the acknowledgment that some parts of speech have meaning as a matter of convention, Aristotle claims that words and sentences alone do not express any positive judgement. To be propositional, Aristotle claims that sentences must have "in them" either truth or falsity, that is, they must express a judgment. This is because an expression's meaning, while it is an intrinsic component of a propositional assertion, it is

not tied directly to truth for Aristotle. While expressions can have a meaning prior to combination, Aristotle claims that the meaningfulness of a sentence depends on whether the relation denoted by the sentence between the subject and predicate subsists. If a sentence does not affirm or deny some particular relation between a subject and a predicate then, while meaningful, it is not propositional. To this end, Aristotle divides thoughts and sentences into two broad classes: those that do not involve truth or falsity, and those that must be either true or false. He suggests that what defines the latter class of thoughts and sentences is that they imply combination and separation. Treated independently, he claims that nouns and verbs are like thoughts without combination or separation. While significant, they are neither true nor false.

Despite the fact that they are not propositional, parts of speech can have either an independent meaning or a proper meaning. According to Aristotle if a word or expression independently refers to an object it has, what he calls, an 'independent meaning', and likewise, if they indicate something other than themselves they have, what he calls, a 'proper meaning'. The lack of a proper meaning or independent meaning does not entail that a word has no meaning. All words, according to Aristotle have a meaning. Aristotle provides two reasons for this. For one, he notes that a sound which we take to signify a word is significant since it is associated with a particular convention. Second, he notes that words are significant since they are symbols of mental experience. To this end, he notes words "...are the symbols of mental experience and written words are the symbols of spoken words... Just as all men have not the same writing, so all men have not the same speech sounds, but the mental experiences, which these directly symbolize, are the same for all, as also are those things of which our experiences are the images." (Aristotle

2004, 1) Aristotle points to nouns as examples of words that have a proper meaning prior to their combination with other words. In contrast, Aristotle considers verbs to have no proper meaning unless combined with other words. In either case, to constitute a proposition, either positive or negative, words must be combined. However, combination alone does not result in words being meaningful in this sense. To be meaningful in this sense prior to combination they must express a judgement, either positive or negative.

From Aristotle's treatment, one can derive two distinct senses of the term 'mean': the conventional meaning of words prior to their combination in a sentence (to have a meaning), and the derivative meaning they acquire as a result of their combination into truth evaluable sentences (to be meaningful). As we have seen, Frege, in an attempt to account for the differing semantic value of referential terms, collapses this distinction. Formulations following Frege achieve this by introducing a cognitive constraint on reference determination. This constraint typically entails holding the mechanisms of reference determination (explicated by extensionalist accounts) to fully determine the routes of epistemic access. So construed, a speaker's intensions, or the psychological state associated with the use of a word or sentence, fully determines its truth or the extension of the set of things designated by its use. By collapsing the two distinct senses of the term 'mean', such accounts are forced to adopt a policy that still pervades various contemporary debates regarding what considerations should factor into the determination of a sentence's propositional content and truth-value assignment. The policy is that a good semantic theory is one that can predict from the values plugged in, no matter how the world turns out to be, the proposition content expressed by a given sentence, its truth-value and its corresponding thought.

1.2 Meaning and Use

As a consequence of their shared commitments to propositionalism, in combination with an internalist view of reference, both Russell and Frege took sentences, narrowly as a function of their meaning, to express fully determined propositions which correspond to fully determined thoughts. Debates regarding whether Russell or Frege's conception of propositions are correct have since operated under both assumptions. Resultantly, there has been a subsequent demand that a single proposition should/could reconcile Referential and Descriptivist approaches. This picture was brought into question by the work of Ludwig Wittgenstein, who, among others, argued that the two assumptions are incompatible and cannot both be satisfied. While Wittgenstein attacked a host of views, of particular importance was what Davidson terms the 'building-block theory' (Davidson 1977, 99). At issue was the approach to semantics, by early Wittgenstein, Russell, Frege and others, of focusing narrowly on the analysis of the concept of reference, and the assumption that the analysis of how singular terms refer would afford a means by which to explain both the operation of the sentences in which they are embedded, and ultimately, an explanation of truth.

Wittgenstein (1953) highlights that most of us are rather good at determining the extension of particular terms when used on a particular occasion, yet we are typically unable to articulate any intension that specifies what all uses of a particular term have in common. Because of this, Wittgenstein was heavily critical of the presumption that speakers have first-person authority over the content associated with the use of a particular sentence. He insisted instead that the criteria for the correct application of terms depends on the conditions typically associated with its use and the community

where its use is embedded. In contrast with the earlier approach, Wittgenstein was sympathetic to a normative view of meaning and insisted that the criteria for the correct application of terms crucially depend on the practices of a community.

One of the central aims of Wittgenstein's work was to undermine the determinate role typically taken to be played by sense, and the notion that all expressions are either definable by analytic definition or indefinable and hence explained by an ostensive definition. He forcefully proclaims in "Philosophical Investigations" (1953) that the meaning of an expression is narrowly a matter of use. He further highlights that, even when treated as a function, it is not altogether clear what this function is or for that matter, what it means to stand for something. That is, it is rather unclear from such a formulation what 'stands for' means when one claims that "To say that a word has a certain meaning is to say that it stands for something other than itself". If it means that the word merely 'stands in place of something else', we have done little to forward an explanation of its meaning. That is, such an explanation fails to capture the sense of the term typically associated with the specification of the meaning of a linguistic expression. According to Wittgenstein, to look for the expression 'stands for' is to fall folly to a philosophical trap. He cautions philosophers to "ask not for the meaning of expressions but instead ask for its use" claiming further that "For a *large* class of cases — though not for all — in which we employ the word 'meaning' it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language". (PI 43)

Despite broad recognition that Frege and Russell's accounts rested on a problematic assumption - that knowing what is meant by a term entails fixing its reference - the assumption that a sentence's truth-conditions fully determine the

propositional content has failed to subside. This assumption has played heavily into the debate over how to divide semantics from pragmatics. Most who currently engage in the debate over the role of semantic versus pragmatic content concur that, at least in terms of processing, there is no point at which semantics ends and pragmatic begins. Instead, arguments generally relate to the respective role allotted to semantics, and the extent to which an utterance's associated truth-conditions are dependent on the speaker's associated intentions. Addressing this, most accounts differ centrally on which, and to what extent, certain expressions linguistically mandate from context supplementing in a given speech situation in order for their associated logical form to have the necessary truth-conditions required for evaluation. Broadly, the respective positions on truth conditions fall into two schools of thought. These are often dubbed as the truth-conditional semantic and the truth-conditional pragmatic approaches to meaning.

The older truth-conditional semantic approach, advocated by Donald Davidson, Alfred Tarski and others, is characterized centrally by its formal and realist inclinations. It broadly maintains that in order to discover the meaningfulness of declarative sentences one must set out their necessary and sufficient truth conditions. This aim is taken to require that theorists specify the conditions under which declarative sentences are claimed to be true. The satisfaction of this aim is importantly not taken to make directly explicit meaning thought expounding of truth conditions, but rather to expose *inductively* the conditions under which any declarative sentence can be evaluated for truth. As such, it is primarily a philosophical, not empirical, endeavour. According to such accounts, the truth conditions of a declarative sentence are understood to be constituted by its constituent expressions associated set of *logical conditions*. By nature of this, the

meaningfulness of declarative sentences is understood to be borne directly as a result of the specific meaningfulness of constituent terms.

The alternative and less formal truth conditional pragmatic approach to language originated in the work of J.L. Austin, John Searle, Paul Grice, Kent Bach and others. The central difference between this approach and its more formal counterpart is its increased reliance on the speaker's associated performative intentions in the performance of speech acts. The central focus of speech act theories is the unique relation that utterances have, when understood as being analogous to actions, to the set intentions that agent's associate with their production. Advocates of this theoretical orientation still appeal to truth conditions in order to explain meaning, however, they appeal to those associated with the utterance of a sentence on a particular occasion. The treatment of truth in such theories is more centrally concerned with the performative role in communication. These accounts of truth centrally draw on speaker intentions to explain the meaning associated with words and sentences. Along with increased attention paid to intentions came various criticisms of the methodology and framework on which truth conditional accounts of language traditionally operated.

The central difference between this approach and its more formal counterparts is the increased focus on the speaker's associated performative intentions in the production of particular speech acts. Speech act theories focus on the unique relation that utterances have, when understood as being analogous to actions, to the set of intentions an agent associates with their production. Rejecting the notion that the meaning of sentences can be reduced to the meaning of their composite parts, various advocates of this theoretical orientation still appeal to the notion of truth-conditions to explain meaning. The treatment

of truth by truth-conditional pragmatic theories, however, is more centrally concerned with the performative role of truth in communication.

Motivated by Austin speech act theories draw a distinction between the various layers of a single speech act by distinguishing between the types of intentions associated with it. His work highlighted that, while there may be a host of other intentions associated with a particular speech act, it seems to be the case that individuals expect to achieve three things by saying something. These achievements loosely align with the types of expectations individuals typically intend for their utterance to satisfy. They can be classified as the intention to say something, the intention to do something, and the intention to affect some state of affairs. Following Austin (1962), the actions that these intentions correspond with are respectively called locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. According to Austin, a single speech act, or the act of 'saying something', can embody all three types of actions, each of which corresponds to a set of nested intentions. These intentions, while constitutive of the single act of uttering something, can be individuated relative to the roles played in communication. The conditions for success of the respective parts are as follows: an illocutionary act succeeds if the hearer recognizes the attitude being expressed; a perlocutionary act succeeds if the ensuing state of affairs is that which the speaker sought after in acting in the fashion he or she did; and a locutionary act succeeds if the hearer grasps the propositional content of the utterance and its associated force.

Searle (1969), motivated by his teacher Austin, was centrally critical of the notion that the treatment of language has been characterized in terms of grasping the meaning of a feature uniformly associated with linguistic types prior to their use. Searle suggests that

linguistic expressions should be interpreted as marks of intention that we are able to understand because their use is rule-governed. Searle asserts that a failure to properly understand these rules is the result of philosophers failing to distinguish regulative rules from constitutive rules. The former are rules that “regulate a pre-existing activity, an activity whose existence is logically independent of the existence of the rules”. The latter are rules that “constitute (and also) regulate an activity the existence of which is logically dependent upon those rules” (Searle 1969, 48).

Searle suggests that, accepting this, semantics should be restrained to considerations narrowly related to constitutive rules which determine the propositional content expressed by the utterance of a sentence. The semantic content expressed by a sentence, so construed, is attributed to its use on a particular occasion (its utterance) rather than when it is examined independently of context. The welcome effect of this is that one can separate the propositional content expressed by the utterance of a sentence from the force of an illocutionary act. Propositional content, so construed, narrowly pertains to what a sentence means in virtue of the linguistic conventions that govern the assignment of meaning to the instance of use. While the information afforded by the appeal to regulative conventions associated with the use of a sentence may be relevant to the evaluation of ‘what is said’, according to Searle, it neither functions in the same way as the semantically contributed content, nor does it enter into the proposition expressed.

The problem with Searle’s formulation and focus on the truth-conditions of utterances rather than sentences is that it assumes that most illocutionary acts are performed with an intention to conform to a convention rather than with a particular aim in mind. (Bach 1994, 10) This is problematic because it excludes the possibility of giving

an explanation of how hearers determine what is meant narrowly from what the speaker has said.

Grice: What is Said and What is Implied

The first attempt to address these concerns while still preserving the claimed relation of meaning to truth-conditions is found in the work of Paul Grice. Grice claimed that interlocutors first grasp the conventional meaning associated with an utterance, and in turn, use it to infer (by reference to a set of normative communicative maxims) a speaker's intended non-natural meaning. The output of the class of considerations used to determine that which was said was dubbed the *semantic* content of an utterance, whereas the seemingly untamed class of other considerations was called *pragmatic* content. Since Grice, the semantic-pragmatic distinction has been continually re-characterized along different lines as a result of different considerations being deemed more or less suited to the task. As a consequence of this, the distinction between semantics and pragmatics is now loosely used to refer to a distinction between meaning and use, truth-conditional and non-truth-conditional meaning, and context-independent versus context-dependent expressions.

Grice's driving intuition for this approach arose from the now common-place view that there is a class of nested reflexive intentions narrowly associated with the performance of an utterance and that its satisfaction requires a hearer to grasp narrowly 'what is said' (Perry, 51). This seems to intuitively follow from the fact that a speaker's intentions are, at least in part, satisfied by how an audience grasps the respective meaning associated with a speaker's words. Success seems to rest heavily on a set of normative expectations about how a particular utterance will exploit a context to convey a

conventionally established meaning. These normative expectations, established by their associated conventions of use, are taken to be roughly equivalent to the associated truth conditions of an expression.

In line with the traditional paradigm, Grice took these truth conditions to be narrowly determined by the linguistic meaning of constituent terms. What he took to be at issue in the representation of the proposition expressed by a speaker on any particular occasion was these and not the truth-conditions associated with particular episodes of language use. Grice, rather than disband truth-conditional theories, attempted to preserve their insights within a broader speech act theory by dividing semantic content according to the intentional states that motivate the utterance of a sentence. The welcome effect of construing 'what is said' along the traditional lines is that a privileged position is reserved for the proposition expressed narrowly by a sentence, as a speaker's intentions are at least in part satisfied by their audience grasping a sentence's truth conditions.

(II) The Gricean Schema

Grice's core treatment of meaning diverges from the speech act theorists, in particular Strawson, because he sympathizes with a correspondence view of meaning. He suggests that it is possible to formulate a theory which captures the intuitions that underpin speech act theories through an account of meaning that characterizes truth as a correspondence between an utterance and the thing described by its use. It is for this reason that Grice's framework appeals to a truth-conditional approach because meaning as truth is preserved as an informative means by which to specify what he calls "the timeless meaning of complete and incomplete utterance-types" (Grice 1967, 91). Timeless utterance types, in Grice's schema, are the initial inputs for sentence meaning specification. The inferential processes responsible for the specification of both sentence and speaker meaning are constrained to considerations narrowly related to the conventional meaning of sentences. Communicative success, in this regard, is achieved when a speaker chooses his or her words in such a way so that the hearer recognizes the communicative intentions.

Despite the persistence of various disagreements regarding how to best interpret Grice, his theory of conversation and treatment of meaning (1957, 1989) have since led to a rather uniformly accepted view of how language operates to convey meaning relative to truth. This view considers language to be a rule-governed activity, where rules play a determinate role in the establishment of what counts as a sentence (syntax) and what sentences mean (semantics). Speakers use meaningful syntactical objects (words) to perform intentional speech acts, which sometimes coincide with the pre-existing sentence meaning, and sometimes do not (pragmatics). In order to determine the latter, one

necessarily has to establish the former, which demands grasping the proposition expressed by what is said. What centrally distinguishes the content associated with 'what is said' from that associated with 'what is implicated' is that the former is truth conditional and is linguistically encoded, while the latter is not truth conditional and is implied relative to a set of conversational maxims. Conversational maxims are the set of operating assumptions which guide the inferential process and are loosely held to be true. When a speaker is being cooperative and is speaking truthfully, informatively, relevantly, perspicuously, and otherwise appropriately, then conversational maxims are generally satisfied.

While the meaning that a speaker associates with the utterance of a particular sentence may diverge from its literal meaning, in the Gricean model, what is evaluated when the truth or falsity of particular utterance is in question is what is literally said. The literal meaning of a sentence in this model is entirely determined by the semantic contribution of its constituent terms and the syntactical rules that define / describe how they are combined. The success of this view rests on intentions playing a narrow and explicitly non-semantic role in shaping what is literally said along with a narrow view of how context effects semantically complete propositions expressed. Gricean intention-based accounts of meaning that employ this model characterize speaker-meaning as a type of intentional behaviour. Linguistic acts, so understood, are primarily psychological, rather than semantic, phenomena. The consequence of this is that the semantic considerations relevant to the determination of sentence and expression-meaning depend directly on speaker-meaning (Schiffer 1988, 2). This treatment presents the challenge of both providing a satisfactory characterization of mental content and explaining how such

representations relate to the constituent parts of what is said. Typical characterizations of mental content hold it to be a kind of complex propositional attitudes, with the notion of what is meant (or speaker-meaning) reduced to a set of interrelated audience-directed attitudes distinguishable via the associated kind of intentions and their associated satisfaction conditions. In this characterization, the speaker's intentions can be determined narrowly from what is said because of the tight correlation that subsists between a speaker's intentions and the manifestation of the intentions in the utterance of a particular sentence.

2.1 Types of Meaning:

Words, according to Grice (1957), have a non-natural meaning and when employed in a sentence to make a statement as a consequence of their linguistic meaning systematically contribute content to the proposition expressed. Their meaning is non-natural because it is arbitrarily associated as a matter of convention. That is to say, there is no causal relation between the symbol employed and the linguistic conventions associated with their use. Following the truth-conditional approach to language, Grice held that the contribution of a word to sentence meaning was fixed prior to use. This is because, to use the ontological type token distinction, the instance of a word's use (tokens) is tied together by its membership in a class. Membership in the class is not defined by any feature of the symbol itself (the sound made) but rather by the tokens systematic semantic contribute to sentence's truth-conditions. According to Grice, the contribution of a well-formed expression to the proposition expressed depends on the meaning the speaker attributes to its use in making a statement. It is important to note here that Grice distinctly uses the term 'statement' instead of 'sentence'. Sentences are

composed of words whereas statements are made up of expressions. The derivative meaning ascribed to a particular expression results from the combination of words into a sentence and is dependent on the sum linguistic meaning of the statement in which it is embedded (Grice 1957, 378). Because of this dependency, expressions can have either a natural or non-natural reading. If the inferred beliefs that result from their use in making a statement conform to the beliefs typically yielded, then it is natural; if not, then it is unnatural.

As Grice highlights, however, the two are not so easily divisible. Something (such as an event or expression) is meaningful, or can be said to mean something, insofar as it is of significance to a particular person or group of people. That is to say, it can only have a meaning in the normal sense of the term when its occurrence is taken to indicate, signify, cause, or produce a result. The significance of an event, according to Grice, can either be natural or non-natural. He provides the following two examples to highlight the contrast he has in mind: “Those three rings on the bell (of the bus) mean that the bus is full,” and “Those spots mean (meant) measles” (Grice 1989, 213-214). This difference between the two stems from the fact that while both statements are technically cancellable only the former will still be rational when it is cancelled. If, in the former case, a bus driver mistakenly rings the bell, it will still ‘mean’ the bus is full even though it may not be true. The latter case does not seem to capture, or able to be subjected to this treatment. Grice uses the term ‘means_{NN}’ to refer to this specific non-natural usage, and defines it by stating that “‘A means_{NN} something by *x*’ is (roughly) equivalent to ‘A’ intended the utterance of *x* to produce some effect in an audience by means of the recognition of this intention’” (Grice 1989, 220).

According to Grice, failure to recognize that expressions can be used either in a way which conforms to the conventions typically associated with their use or diverge from them is the cause of the debate between formalists and informalists. He characterizes the debate by focusing on disagreements over the meaning of “ $\sim$, $\wedge$, $\vee$, $\supset$, $\forall x$, $\exists x$, ix ,” and their supposed English counterparts “*not, and, or, if, all, some (or at least one), the*” (Grice 1989, 22). Formalists like Davidson contend that the contribution of expressions and their logical connectives is roughly equivalent to their logical counterpart when employed on a particular occasion. Informalists like Austin point out that their use in conversation suggests otherwise. Grice attempted to address this debate by maintaining that:

The common assumption of the contestants that the divergences do in fact exist is (broadly speaking) a common mistake, and that the mistake arises from inadequate attention to the nature and importance of the conditions governing conversation. I shall, therefore, inquire into the general conditions that... apply to conversation as such, irrespective of its subject matter. I begin with a characterization of the notion of “implicature”. (1989, 24)

To address the claimed “mistake” Grice distinguishes between the conventional “timeless” meaning of a sentence and “what is implied by its use on a particular occasion”. (Grice 1989, 24). According to the standard Gricean account, what distinguishes the content associated with the former from the latter is that the former is truth-conditional while the latter is not and that the former propositional content associated with utterances is linguistically specified while the latter is not. Understood in this fashion, the noted logical connectives may have both a conventional meaning akin to that ascribed to them by formalists. However, when used in a sentence on a particular occasion, they can take on a novel meaning in virtue of the speaker’s conformity to the norms that govern conversation.

For Grice, when interlocutors first grasp the conventional meaning associated with an utterance, and then, in turn, use it to infer the speaker's intended non-natural meaning by reference to a set of normative communicative maxims. Gricean theorists contend that interlocutors engage in "conversation," as a general concept, only when following the 'Co-operative Principle': "Make your conversational contributions such as is required at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (Grice 1989, 26). He posits that in order to work out implicatures, one must rely on the following five pieces of information: (1) the conventional meaning of the words used, together with the identity of any references that may be involved; (2) the Co-operative Principle and its maxims; (3) the context, linguistic or otherwise, of the utterance; (4) other items of background knowledge; and (5) the fact (or supposed fact) that all relevant items falling under the previous headings are available to both participants and both participants know or assume this to be the case. (Grice 1989, 31) With this distinction, Grice broadly divides between two types of implicatures. Conventional implicatures are those which contain an implication explicitly within statements. Grice gives the example: "He is an Englishman; he is, therefore, brave"; here, the relationship between the consequence, "being brave," and the antecedent, "being an Englishman," is inherent in the utterance (Grice 1989, 25). The implication that being brave is a consequence of being English in the noted example can also be achieved without the explicit use of the employing the logical operator $\supset$ or some equivalent English counterpart ("therefore").

Grice distinguishes conventional implicature from what he calls conversational implicature. These are a subclass of what he calls "non-conventional implicatures" (1989,

26). They are particular because they are essentially connected with certain general presumptions that underpin communication. When a speaker ostentatiously violates a maxim, they do so to convey a meaning which diverges from that conventionally associated with the meaning of the words they used. Nevertheless, speakers often unostentatiously violate maxims of conversation. In such cases, their purpose is not to observe the principles of cooperation. While their reasons may differ, one particular example of these motives may be to mislead their audiences. Setting aside such cases, conversational implicatures can come in one of two forms. In some cases, speakers ostentatiously violate maxims of conversation by making claims that, relative to the context of use, manifestly diverge in meaning from what is conventionally implicated by what is said. Grice classes such cases as particularized conversational implicatures. He contrasts such cases with others where the conventions associated with the use of particular expressions result in general conversational implicatures. In both cases the particular meaning attributed to the use of the sentence depends on considerations that are not narrowly related with the constituent expressions (1989, 37). Regarding conventional implicature, Grice provides the following example:

(1) "He is in the grip of a vice"

Given a knowledge of the English Language, but no knowledge of the circumstances of the utterance, one would know something about what the speaker had said, on the assumption that he was speaking standard English and speaking literally. One would know that he had said something about some particular male person or animal x that at the time of the utterance was either (1) x was unable to rid himself of a certain kind of bad character trait or (2) some part of x's person was caught in a certain kind of tool or instrument (approximate account, of course). But for a full identification of what the speaker had said, one would need to know (a) the identity of x, (b) the time of the utterance, and (c) the meaning, on the particular occasion of utterance, of the phrase *in the grip of a vice* [a decision between (1) and (2)]....In some cases the conventional meaning of the

words used will determine what is implicated, besides helping to determine what is said.

To test if a feature of a particular expression is conversationally or conventionally implicated, Grice suggests two tests. First, he suggests that a property may be conventionally implicated if it displays a high degree of non-detachability, insofar as the implicature that results from what is said and not by virtue of the manner of the expression. He suggests that implicature is non-detachable insofar as it is possible to find another way of saying the same thing, or approximately the same thing which simply lacks the implicature. The second test he proposes is non-cancellability. Something is cancellable if one can find a situation of use in which the utterance of the sentence would simply not carry the implicature. While he suggests that all conversational implicatures are cancellable, he suggests that the fulfillment of the test is not intended to decisively establish the existence of a conversational implicature. Indexical content, due to its fixed relation to context, passes both tests and, as such, is part of a sentence's conventional meaning that need not be conversationally implicated.

M-Constraint on Understanding

While a speaker's audience narrowly relies on 'what is said' to determine which of the possible implicatures should be drawn, this does not entail that 'what is said' fully determines 'what is meant', what is suggested, indicated, or implied. While certainly the case in some instances, the particulars of Grice's treatment of the relation between a speaker's beliefs states and the intentional acts which subsequently result from, and are induced by them should not be overlooked. It is commonplace to ascribe to Grice the view that his notion of conversational implicature is a species of speaker meaning, and that speaker meaning divides exhaustively into 'what is said' and 'what is implicated'.

This, however appealing, is a mistake (Saul 2002, 228). According to Grice, only the narrow class of inferences drawn directly from ‘what is said’ should be count as constituting what the speaker meant. Grice explicitly constrains this class to those intentions which satisfy the speaker’s M-intention. While Grice’s formulation of this constraint (1989) varied throughout his work, his motivation has always been clear: one should always keep separate what the speaker meant_{nn} and what the speaker meant to achieve by his use of a particular sentence. Grice (1957) stresses this point on several occasions:

I think it follows that from what I have said about the connection between meaning, and recognition of intention that (insofar as I am right) only what I may call the primary intention of an utterer is relevant to the meaning_{nn} of an utterance. For if I utter x, intending (with the aid of the recognition of this intention) to induce an effect E, and intend this effect E to lead to a further effect F, then insofar as the occurrence of F is thought to be dependent solely on E, I cannot regard F as in the least dependent on recognition of my intention to induce E. That is, if (say) I intend to get a man to do something by giving him some information, it cannot be regarded as relevant to the meaning_{nn} of my utterance to describe what I intend him to do. (Grice 1957, 386)

This stripped down notion of ‘what is said’ Grice calls the “utterer’s type occasion meaning”, and is narrowly derived from the “utterance type occasion meaning”. (Grice 1989, 91) In this regard, the audience understands ‘what is meant’ by ‘what is said’ if the representational content of the hearer’s corresponding intentional state is the same as that expressed by the speaker’s use of the sentence employed.

In order to specify the nature of the intended response, Grice clearly excludes any consideration not directly related to the meaningful act in question from speaker meaning. Responding to alleged counter examples that target the sufficiency of the noted analysis (Grice considers the following statement: “they meant something by applying

the thumbscrews” 1989:93). Grice claims that speaker intentions, insofar as they relate to ‘what is said’ are fulfilled if the hearer identifies the speaker’s corresponding intentional state. This requires that the hearer infer what the speaker meant in uttering the sentence from the meaning of the sentence. This, however, does not directly entail grasping any of the following three possibly resulting inferences:

- (1) They applied the thumbscrews with the intention of producing a certain response on the part of the victim.
- (2) They intended that he should recognize (know, think) that they applied the thumbscrews with the intention of producing this response.
- (3) They intended that the prisoners recognition (thought) that they had the intention mentioned in (2) should be at least part of his reason for producing the response mentioned.

He notes: “If in general to specify in (1) the nature of the intended response is to specify what was meant, it should be correct not only to say that the tortures meant something by applying the thumbscrews, but also to say that they meant that he should (was to) tell them what they wished to know. But in fact one would not wish to say either of these things; only that they meant to tell.” (Grice 1989, 93) To avoid the inclusion of the kind of possible inferences Grice suggests in (1) (2) (3) into ‘what is meant’, he places a constraint on the analysis of meaning as restricted to the analysis of M-intentions. In 1969, Grice presents following definition:

“U meant something by uttering x” is true if, for some audience A, U uttered x intending:

- (1) A to produce a particular response r
- (2) A to think (recognize) that U intends (1)
- (3) A to fulfill (1) on the basis of his fulfillment of (2).

Grice (1969, 1989),

The success of this restriction on analysis (1969, 1989), often dubbed as the ‘iterative approach’, has faced a host of criticisms. Most notably, it became the subject of scrutiny by Strawson (1964), Searle (1969), and Schiffer (1972). (See Korta and Carrascal 2009) This criticism, while undermining the broader aims of his project as a whole, left unaffected his earlier (and much simpler) treatment of M-intentions as a reflexive intention.

A meant something by x” is (roughly) equivalent to “A intended the utterance of x to produce some effect in an audience by means of the recognition of this intention.

Grice (1957, 1989)

This formulation relies on the hearer grasping the stripped-down notion of speaker meaning is Grice’s ‘utterer’s type occasion meaning’ (Grice 1989, 91). The intentional state induced from the satisfaction of the class of intentions narrowly relates to grasping ‘what is meant’ by ‘what is said’, and thus is reflexive. It is a reflexive intention in that it is satisfied by how the audience grasps the conventional meaning associated with words. The point of emphasis is that when a speaker expresses proposition *P* by means of a sentence *S*, it is not enough for the speaker to mean that *P—S* must also be a sentence, which is used to mean that *P*. Restricting semantic analysis in this fashion is advantageous as it allows for an account of linguistic meaning that can be used to characterize understanding, at least in one sense, because it is achieved when a speaker understands the linguistic significance of ‘what is said’. So understood, the distinction between semantics and pragmatics can be formulated in terms of truth. Something is the proper concern of semantics and is ‘meaningful’ in the relevant sense insofar as it affects the conditions under which a sentence that employs it is taken to be true. Considerations

accounted for in the evaluation and interpretation of propositions, relative to a particular situation of use, are the concern of pragmatics.

2.2 The Semantic-Pragmatic Distinction

While a portion of the information conveyed during linguistic communication is linguistically mandated (and thus reflected in a sentence's truth-conditions), some contextual information, while relevant, isn't directly attached to what is literally said. This presents a theory internal problem for Grice if the viability of his 'wider program' is taken to rest on the strict distinction between 'what is said' and 'what is implicated'. Most commentators have been happy to treat Grice's notion of 'what is said' as more or less a mapping onto truth-conditional content (Levinson 2001, 170). This view is encouraged by Grice's treatment of logical connectives (Grice 1989, 22). The problem with this approach, however, is that the truth or falsity of what is literally said is often unreflective of the truth conditions natural language speakers would normally take to be conveyed by the use of sentence on a particular occasion. Consider the following three sentences:

- (1) I had dinner.
- (2) You are not going to die.
- (3) It's raining.

If prompted a natural language speaker would likely not consider the utterance of (1) to be true so long as the speaker had eaten dinner at any point in the past. Its use is typically taken to imply that the person has had dinner on the night in question. Likewise, when prompted, a natural language user would likely take the utterance of (2) to relate to the potential dangers of the situation at hand rather than the broader question as to whether or not the subject is in fact immortal. Last, a speaker would likely take the utterance of (3)

to imply that relevant location in question is that which they are situated in. It is not enough, it seems, for (3) to be true that it be raining somewhere, what matters is whether or not it is raining in the relevant situation.

Contextualists argue that if truth-conditions are narrowly construed along the line favoured by formal semantic systems, then sentence's fail to provide a sufficient input to pragmatic processes (such as in the preceding cases). This is taken to be problematic if, in Grice's account, the development of a truth-evaluable proposition is taken to be a necessary precursor for implicatures to be developed. If this assumption is made, then the unwelcome effect seems to be that 'what is said' is both determined by and determines implicatures. This is taken to be particularly problematic in cases such as (1) (2) and (3) since Grice explicitly limits considerations related to 'what is said' to content narrowly derived from the expressions employed. In such cases, Contextualists claim that understanding the utterance requires a process of completion to produce a full proposition that Grice does not afford explanatory room for (Bach 1994, 126).

The role of this extra-linguistic information presents a unique problem for those concerned with explaining natural language use. The extra-linguistic information seems to be relevant for the determination of the meaning of an utterance and the truth-value of an utterance. While it is broadly accepted that certain terms called *indexicals* are context-sensitive in an explicit way, the sensitivity of other terms that seem to have a more or less fixed meaning have been the focus of much discussion. Traditional positions have taken the fixed nature of most terms (at least at the surface level) to be necessary for successful use in communication. This is because, at first sight, it seems to be impossible to

associate a meaning with a sentence if it were the case that most expressions were sensitive to context in the way 'I', 'here', and 'now' are.

This is an intuition worth preserving because it grounds what many linguists and philosophers acknowledge to be a necessary distinction between genuine context-sensitivity and mere under-specification. The former cases are preserved for a class of expression types typically referred to as *indexical expression*. A term is, in a broad sense, an indexical expression because its semantic content depends upon context. One can only be said to grasp the intended meaning of these expressions when they occur in a particular context, as it is their occurrence which informs the semantic content they convey. Prior to their use on a particular occasion, such expressions have a *linguistic meaning* which falls short of determining the content of an expression. In a narrow sense, indexical expressions are a particular class of context-sensitive terms whose linguistic meaning fixes their semantic contribution. The meaning of such expression types is, or includes, a *rule* which informs how to fix or determine its semantic contribution. That is, for a particular token of the particular expression type one can determine what is conveyed by its use as a function of the circumstances of utterance. Understanding the meaning of 'I' involves knowing the rule that an occurrence of that word refers to the speaker who produced it; the meaning of 'today' is the rule that a token of that word refers to the day on which it occurs. In English, most theorists accept the class of indexicals as consisting of, but not being confined to, the personal pronouns 'I', 'you', 'he', 'she' and 'it'; the demonstrative pronouns 'that' and 'this'; the adverbs 'here', 'there', 'now', 'today', 'yesterday', 'tomorrow', 'ago', 'henceforth', and the adjectives 'actual' and 'present' (Kaplan 1987, 2). What makes these terms unique is that, while not

having a fixed content, the linguistic rules that govern their use fully determines the consideration that need be accounted for in determining their referent in each context (Kaplan 1977, 1989). As such, their relation to context is fixed prior to their use on a particular occasion and is not affected by their combination with other expressions operators.

The basic intuition that genuine context-sensitive terms are confined to indexicals (narrowly construed) is compromised by the fact that certain expressions, while they lack a fixed relationship to context, are nevertheless unspecified without reference to it. Unlike the sensitivity of indexical expressions such as ‘I’ and ‘now’ at the surface level, Contextualists maintain that other terms such as ‘raining’ and ‘tall’ also have a meaning which is partially determined by context. This they claim to be the case since their conventionally established ‘linguistic meanings’ are similarly under-specified in such a way as to allow them to function like ‘free variables’ (Recanati 2004, 9). This latter type of context sensitivity is often termed ‘under-specification’, while the former is called ‘token-reflexivity’ to highlight the particular type of context sensitivity. The reliance on context in order to deal with this sort of semantic deficiency inherent in language is especially obvious when an utterance such as “Jane is tall” is made. What makes this problem more perplexing is that the semantic deficiency presented often cannot be resolved by merely positing ambiguity, vagueness, and so on. Moreover, even when one seems to have a clear conception of ‘what is said’ by narrowly examining the semantic content, what is effectively communicated and meant by the utterance often differs drastically depending on the situation.

Given the underdetermined nature of most utterances it is natural to inquire why sympathy with minimalism continues to subsist. The obvious reason is that there is a general appeal and compatibility of the account with the pre-theoretic intuition held by most linguistics and logicians about the operation of language in practice. This alone, however, does not get one very far. In large part, the intuition underpinning the minimalist movement is akin to that which supports any formal theory: a preference of explanatory power and precision over explanatory breadth. Grice, in this sense, is appealing due to the amenable nature of his notion of 'what is said' to the view of truth-conditions typically employed by formal accounts to the explain meaning of a sentence prior to its use on a particular occasion. The attribution of this view of meaning to Grice is by no means a stretch. Grice, as a consequence of his position framed as a response to the speech act tradition, is often attributed a view of 'what is said' construed narrowly along the lines of what Davidson envisioned as relating narrowly to truth. Because of this, the Gricean distinction between semantics (what is said) and pragmatics (what is implicated) is often reduced to a distinction between truth-conditional content and non-truth-conditional content. The former semantically-contributed content is claimed to determine the truth or falsity of the utterance, while the latter content, even if inconsistent with the corresponding state of affairs, merely makes the utterance seem false. In Grice's account, it is a necessary precursor for implicatures being developed that the hearer first grasps the semantic content. According to Grice, ascertaining the meaning of the semantic content rested on disambiguation, indexical resolution, and reference fixing, to mention a few. These processes were argued to take place prior to and to provide the input for the subsequent pragmatic processing.

In line with the theoretical aims of early truth-functionalist accounts, context is accounted for entirely in terms of truth-conditions.¹⁴ Accordingly, agent-centred beliefs have been excluded from considerations about an utterance and the agent's broader intentions associated with the particular act of uttering. These considerations, while certainly affecting the truth-conditions of particular episodes of language use, have been taken to fall into the broader class of considerations relevant to evaluation. In large, this is justified on the grounds that role is not mandated by the meaning of the constituent expressions. The distinction afforded by the separation of truth-conditions that are associated with meaning (as opposed to those related to use) carries with it various explanatory advantages. Its appeal comes from the intuitive sense that sentences are true within a context, irrespective of an agent's beliefs or broader intentions associated with the circumstance. This, however, rests heavily on the ability to distinguish the semantically mandated features of context from the broader set of considerations relevant to evaluation in a given circumstance. Contextualists argue that there is not principled way to divide the two¹⁵.

If this is, in fact, the case, several of the central and accepted Gricean tenants used to support the semantic-pragmatic divide are undermined. This is most centrally problematic for the classic Gricean distinction between truth-conditional and non-truth-conditional content. If non-linguistic content enters into the proposition expressed, 'what is said' both determines and is determined by the subsequent pragmatic processes. Put otherwise, Contextualist claim that fixing the proposition expressed by a sentence on a

¹⁴ This is achieved by holding a sentence's truth-conditional content to express a proposition relative to context, and by restricting what is claimed to count as an instance of context sensitivity to those terms whose meaning (and in particular the semantic content attributed to their use) varies when the contextual parameter is changed.

¹⁵ See Schlenker "Indexicality and De Se Reports" (2008).

particular occasion requires an appeal to the very type of considerations that Grice took to be related to implicature. The unwelcome effect of this seems to be that ‘what is said’ is both determined by and to be determined by implicature. This paradoxical end has been dubbed by Stephen Levinson (2000) ‘Grice’s circle’.

There are various strategies for an attempt to evade Grice’s circle while still preserving his distinction. The first and perhaps simplest is to reinterpret the distinction as being theoretically motivated rather than being a procedural or temporal distinction. So construed, the claim of circularity, while attuned to the early Gricean distinction, fails to respond to more recent classifications of the respective processes. In such accounts, the semantic-pragmatic distinction is not a question relating to the temporal division of processing inputs and outputs, but rather one relating fundamentally to the method of content production and the associated intentions. Beyond merely examining how communicative content is supplied, accounts may use this distinction to examine the respective roles of types of content in communication, their level of granularity, and their relation to speaker. If one accepts this re-characterization of the problem, a possible solution is to simply expand the class of relevant considerations which a speaker’s audience can appeal to in determining the proposition expressed. There is some textual support to show Grice’s general sympathy to such a move. Despite his strict distinction, Grice did allow for several exceptions which he believed to be necessary for the determination of the semantic contribution of particular expressions. For instance, he allowed for appeal to context for disambiguation, indexical resolution and reference-fixing. These processes were argued to take place both prior to and provide the input for

the subsequent pragmatic processing. Moreover, in some passages Grice seems to state his explicit support for such a move. He notes:

I am not sympathetic toward any methodological policy which would restrict one from the start to an attempt to formulate a theory of meaning in extensional terms. It seems to me that one should at least start by giving oneself a free hand to make use of any intensional notions or devices which seem to be required in order to solve one's conceptual problems, at least at a certain level, in ways which (metaphysical bias apart) reason and intuition commend. If one denies oneself this freedom, one runs a serious risk of underestimating the richness and complexity of the conceptual field which one is investigating. (1975, 136)

While welcoming this expansion, it seems to run against Grice's typical treatment of 'what is said' as in some sense being directly derived from the meaning that one (at least initially) ascribes to sentences rather than their speakers. The assumption being that sentence meaning specification provides the input for speaker meaning specification in the determination of 'what is said' and not vice versa. Avoiding this trap involves escaping the characterization of the respective processes in terms of their priority in language processing.

This end can be rather easily achieved by simply reinterpreting the semantic / pragmatic divide along the alternative lines that Grice suggests. Grice posits that one can divide total signification between 'what is said' (in a favoured sense) and what is implicated; or one may distinguish between what is part of the conventional force (or meaning) of the utterance and what is not (1989, 41). Adopting the latter approach seems to solve two problems. First, it supports the interpretation of the noted stages as not being temporally successive; and second, it explicitly excludes content which is conversationally implicated, while leaving open the possibility to include content that is conventionally implicated. While a welcomed shift, as Grice notes, either division results

in three elements, namely, what is said, what is conventionally implicated, and what is non-conventionally (or conversationally) implicated.

The problem with this tripartite division is that it assumes that ‘what is said’ can be determined either prior to, or at least in some sense independently of, what is conventionally or conversationally implicated. For such manoeuvring to work, considerations necessary to evaluate the truth or falsity of ‘what is said’ either must be directly related to what is literally said (narrow semantic content) or must be inferred directly from the utterance of what is said (speech act content) and thus be part of the sentence’s conventional force (broad semantic content). To count as conventionally inferred content, in this sense, it first must be part of the M-intended effect of, or response to, the utterance of x (along the noted lines), and its specification needs to provide material to answer strict concerns in relation to what U meant by uttering x (Grice 1989, 91). This manoeuvring both seems to explain Grice’s exceptions and in part seems to provide theorists with a means by which to access the possibility of further such exceptions.

This approach certainly has its merits. For one, most theorists who currently engage in the debate over the role of semantic versus pragmatic content concur that, at least in terms of processing, there is no point at which semantics ends and pragmatic begins (Taylor 2007, 65; Clapp 2007, 253). Instead, arguments generally relate to the respective role allotted to semantics and the extent to which an utterance’s associated truth-conditions are dependent upon a speaker’s associated intentions. (Corazza and Dokic 2002, 173). While this is a useful tool, it is by no means an adequate response. While most agree on the broad utility of the distinction, most accounts differ centrally on

which, and to what extent, certain expressions linguistically mandate context-supplementing in a given speech situation in order for their associated logical form to have the necessary truth-conditions required for evaluation. Put otherwise, while such a distinction may offer a means to escape Grice's circle, it leaves unaddressed the claim by Contextualists that context, if construed narrowly in the fashion Grice envisioned, results in the dilemma introduced in chapter one.

Dividing the Debate

This problem has provoked a variety of responses. While various critics of Grice do not deny the semantic-pragmatic distinction, they claim that the presence of inferentially unconstrained¹⁶ utterances are grounds for including content which does not directly descend from the literal meaning of 'what is said' into the class of semantics considerations (See Perry 2001, Recanati 1990). They claim that in establishing 'what is said', interlocutors naturally account for aspects of context that do not directly relate to the literal meaning of words but are nevertheless necessary for a sentence's evaluation. Such claims are often supported by the seeming disparity between 'what is said' and 'what is understood' (Recanati 2001). If one takes the analysis of sentences to be capable of capturing considerations relevant to the latter, then they claim it to be necessary that the underlying logical form of a sentence include content otherwise absent in what is literally said. Appeals to logical form arose out of the attempt to explain the operation of inferences when linguistic meaning does not sufficiently constrain the conditions necessary for the evaluation of a particular utterance.

¹⁶ A sentence is inferentially unconstrained if narrowly from what is said the speaker either i) cannot draw the appropriate inferences or ii) can draw from what is said competing and possibly inconsistent inferences.

Moderate Contextualists, or Indexicalists, who advocate this position claim that a semantics that narrowly explains the contribution of repeatable features of certain expression-types to the meaning of sentences fails to explain how speakers determine the meaning or truth of the sentences in which such expressions occur. Such theorists, while sympathetic to the view that any proposition can be represented by an utterance of some sentence in a natural language, differ from their Minimalist counterparts as to the class of context sensitive terms, and the degree to which processes, such as *saturation*, affect an utterance's underlying conceptual content (Carston 2004, 33). The idea underpinning such processes is that a sentence's underlying logical form contains something akin to a hidden indexical that exploits context in a predictable fashion in order to provide the necessary constraints needed for the evaluation of utterances (Recanati, 1995, 9). The use of saturation instead of free enrichment is useful because it reflects a mandatory (linguistically triggered) contextual process and avoids the problems that arise for Contextualists in the formation of an explanation for what triggers free enrichment, if not the utterance itself.

The problem with such exceptions is that they muddy an otherwise clear division of labour. This presents two related problems. Generally it has been argued that reference fixing, indexical resolution, and disambiguation entails an appeal to the very types of consideration which Grice took to be related to implicature. The unwelcome effect, as noted, is that 'what is said' is both determined and is to be determined by implicature. To this end it has been argued that if one affords any such exceptions then there is no principled way to limit them (Carston 1999, 2002a, 2002b). That is, if the justification that motivates such exceptions is to fix the truth value of sentences containing overtly

context sensitive elements, then why not also allow for other exceptions to accommodate for what Contextualists claim are covertly context-sensitive elements of expressions, such as ‘hidden indexicals’ or ‘unarticulated constituents’ (Recanati 2002).¹⁷

The inherent problems with addressing such concerns relates both to how to limit appeals to context, and to determine what kind of features of context can be appealed to in specifying a sentence’s relevant truth-conditional content. Among most moderate Contextualists, two possible answers are typically entertained: the relevant features are the non-perspective or objective features of the context, like the identity of the speaker or the time or the place of utterance, and the relevant features may be perspectival or intentional features, such as the mental states of the speaker or the beliefs entertained by them. The former is typically taken to be an “objective” view of context while the latter a “subjective” view of context. In either case, the prevailing notion of context is one which is, in some relevant sense, informed by, yet independent from, the particular expressions employed or the situations in which they are employed. Minimalists contend that very little context is necessary to get a fully formed thought, whereas Contextualists say a lot of context is required. While the positions differ on this point, both accounts generally agree that the kind of context-supplementing needed is either directly informed by, or inferred relative to, the linguistic expressions employed.

Relevance theorists claim that the interdependence of the two sets of processes is inescapable if the proposition expressed (‘what is said’) is dependent on context-based processes. They claim this to be the case because content-supplementing unavoidably

¹⁷ For a discussion of unarticulated constituents and hidden indexicals, see Cappelen and Lepore *Insensitive Semantics* (2005).

relies on various non-linguistic processes. This consequence is not welcome because it intimately relates to Grice's delineation of the respective processes. While Grice held that all pragmatically-derived content was conversationally implicated, he maintained that it arose only from the application of conversational maxims to previously determined semantic content. Failing to sustain a clear distinction, Grice seems to presuppose the division in communicative labour that he had hoped to prove. This end is extremely problematic for those defending the explanatory priority or cognitive role of a semantically minimal proposition. Given the highly underdetermined nature of expressions (outside of a context) a retreat of semantics to the narrowly linguistic mandated content seems to deny the possibility of it then being a bearer of a truth-value, as Grice had first hoped.

Carston argues that without reference to a speaker's embedded and associated intentions it is unlikely, if not impossible, in most instances to determine either the truth or a relevant interpretation associated with a given utterance (Carston 2002, 185). Her claim relates not only to what she terms *saturation* (linguistically mandated pragmatic processing) but more broadly to what she calls *free enrichment* (non-linguistic pragmatic processing). Free enrichment occurs when context-sensitive content is supplemented despite not being triggered by the expression or utterance itself. Relevance Theorists (Sperber & Wilson 1986, Carston 2002) claim that this content is inferred from the mental states attributed by a particular hearer to a speaker's ostensive communicative act. As such, the mental representation associated with the act is taken to be an "intrinsically higher order mental state" which requires 'metarepresentations'. These metarepresentations directly correspond with Carston's account to that which the speaker

intends to make manifest in acting in the particular way (Carston 2002, 44). The central idea behind free enrichment is that, during interpretation, hearers don't simply grasp the semantic content of an utterance relative to a context and derive its implicatures, they also "develop" the logical form of the utterance by pragmatic means (Carston 2002, 143). As Carston points out, exclusion of a speaker's non-linguistic intentions associated with natural language use fails to explain why underdetermined statements differ in terms of their associated truth values depending on use.

Sympathy for the need to appeal to non-linguistic processes in determining what is said is generally coupled with the belief that the product of evaluation relies on the broad intentions of the speaker associated both with the act of utterance and the situation of use. Such accounts advocate expanding the class of considerations that factor into the object of evaluation past those narrowly accounted for in determining what is said. The most radical advocates of this position, including Carston (1999, 2002), Levinson (2000) Recanati (2004), deny a Gricean-based distinction between semantics and pragmatics. The basis of such a claim is rooted in the fact that both intentions and context, when examined, contribute significantly in the processes of belief fixation and thus meaning ascription. The need for such processes arose due to the claimed underdetermined nature of language. An utterance, according to Relevance-theoretic accounts, can be underdetermined in two ways. Either it can be underdetermined insofar as its truth-value may vary with use (referentially indeterminate), or it can be intrinsically incomplete and thus 'what is said' can be completed in any number of ways (inferentially unconstrained). These two claims, while related, are rooted in rather varied assumptions about how language functions to convey meaning and what an account attempting to explain it must

achieve. Claims regarding referential indeterminacy relate to the contribution of the constituent parts of 'what is said', while claims related to completion and the inferentially unconstrained nature of 'what is said' relate to the operation of sentences as a whole when employed in a particular context.

2.3 Kaplanian Minimalism

The persistence of these claims has led most minimalists to reject the kind of formalism endorsed by Davidson and opt instead for a more moderate alternative. This entails the allowance of certain exceptions to Davidson's strict separation of meaning and reference for a narrow class of expressions that refer to a fixed part of the world irrespective of their conditions of use in virtue of their meaning. The problem with this is that even if one makes room in such a category for indexical expressions, most sentences are underdetermined. That is, they do not narrowly express a truth evaluable proposition in virtue of their linguistic meaning. Responses to the minimalist's claims come in various forms. Cappelan and Lepore (2005) have defended Semantic Minimalism as the only sustainable position to hold. Rather than defend the particular advantages of their preferred approach as a ground by which to reject the varying forms of Contextualism, they argue that the alternatives fail to provide a tractable means to divide a sentence's semantic content from its broader speech act content. They, like other minimalists, go to great lengths to show that a formal semantic theory could not be developed and / or defended which takes the intentional states of a speaker to be relevant in determining the literal meaning of an uttered sentence. The problem with this is that they fail to provide a systematic means to account for instances where an utterance narrowly in virtue of literal meaning does not provide sufficient grounds by which to evaluate the proposition

expressed. To address this, some minimalists, including Emma Borg (2004), have simply advocated an altered view of what should count as the “formal input” to semantics. Rather than a formally described sentence-type, Borg argues that the input should instead be a syntactically individuated sentence-type *relativized to a context of utterance*. This move is broadly endorsed by Minimalists sympathetic with Kaplan’s¹⁸ claim that sentences express propositions relative to contexts.

Kaplan’s three-dimensional semantic framework distinguishes between a sentence’s character, content, and extension. For Kaplan, an expression’s character, or linguistic meaning fully determines its associated content, and in doing so, fixes its extension. It is pre-semantically established by linguistic conventions and in use it is thus capable of determining the content of a given expression in every context (Kaplan 1977, 505). Unlike its counterpart, character is not associated only with truth conditions but, in a very real sense, is the embodiment of them. Content, in contrast, is that which is evaluated when the truth or falsity of a particular statement is in question and is a function from possible circumstances to extensions (Kaplan 1977, 501). According to Kaplan, it is not associated only with fully formed sentences but with any part of speech (Kaplan 1977, 501). Kaplan claims that certain terms, which he calls ‘directly referential expressions’, have a fixed content that can be represented by a constant function (Kaplan 1977, 502). Included in this category are proper names and indexicals, and excluded are descriptions, even if definite. In a Kaplanian account, an utterance devoid of terms whose character and content diverge can be a candidate for truth-evaluation without reference to context. As such, character is a function from possible contexts to contents

¹⁸ Kaplan is appealing to minimalists, as his account restricts the considerations that factor into the propositions expressed to those narrowly required to determine the semantic contribution of the individual expressions employed.

(Kaplan 1977, 505). Kaplan's account, reflective of criticism waged by Kripke and Putnam, maps character in a 'possible worlds' approach to semantics and in doing so avoids the need to rely on a Russellian notion of identifying descriptions to explain reference. The account preserves the role played by propositions in the Gricean schema because the character of the singular referring expression fully constrains the content expressed by their use, and in doing so fixes their extension. This is advantageous as the linguistic meaning of a sentence's constituent terms fully determine the proposition expressed by their utterance across all possible circumstance of evaluation.

For Kaplan, indexicals are taken to be directly referential expressions that have both a referent that is determined by associated semantic rules and a fixed propositional component in all possible circumstances (Kaplan 1977, 493). Operators that attempt to meddle with indexical character are called 'monsters' by Kaplan, and he claims they do not exist and cannot be expressed in English unless we sneak in a quotation device (Kaplan 1977, 511). The content associated with a sentence containing an indexical expression is yielded by combining the content associated with its particular parts. This is the case more broadly for the truth-values of any statement containing only singular constituents as they have direct reference to situational coordinates and thus cannot be varied by operators. Conversely, the truth-values of statements that rely on indirect reference to situational coordinates can be varied by operators (Kaplan, 508). Thus importantly, Kaplan holds that when 'what is said' using a pure indexical in a context is evaluated in an arbitrary circumstance, the relevant object is always the referent of the indexical with respect to the context *c* (Kaplan 1977, 500).

Implicit in this treatment of context is a narrow characterization, confined to what Kaplan calls the ‘fixed and proper features’ of the sentence in a context. Without this narrow characterization of context, one might argue (as some radical Contextualists do) that even proper names are context sensitive in some sense. Kaplan is aware of this and notes that his characterization of context, if left unaddressed, prevents his account from explaining cases where context sensitive expressions appear to be logically true in all contexts while logically false in some circumstances. This contradiction arises as a result of the fact that the indices only operate on a fixed aspect of context and leave the determination of other circumstantial indices open for operation (Kaplan, 509). Kaplan uses the utterance “I am here now” to demonstrate this problem. While the content of the narrow class of indices invoked necessarily guarantee this statement’s truth in all possible worlds, it is certainly not necessary that in all possible worlds “I am here now” is true (Kaplan, 509). The difficulty here, for Kaplan, is to maintain the standing and proper nature of the indices $\langle w, x, p, t \rangle$ that represent context, while still accommodating the ‘improper’ indices which represent circumstances (Kaplan 1977, 509).

For Kaplan, the solution to this problem is to introduce a system of double indexing where one set of indices accounts for context and another accounts for circumstance. Here, the distinct use of the term ‘circumstance’ and ‘context’ requires some clarification to avoid terminological confusion. According to Kaplan, possible occasions of use are called ‘contexts’, while possible circumstances of evaluation he calls ‘circumstances’. The contextual features of a given speech situation include one or more designated features present in all possible occasions of use, while the more fine grained features relevant in a possible circumstances of evaluation are called circumstance

features. This is important insofar as a directly referential term may designate different objects in different contexts; however, when evaluating ‘what was said’ in a given context, only one object will be relevant in all circumstances (Kaplan 1977, 1979, 1989).

The adoption of this view of semantic content marks a clear departure from the inherited view of propositions. Namely, the view that holds that every sentence expresses a proposition that is either true or false in virtue of its linguistic meaning and that it corresponds directly to fully determined thoughts about the world. Typically accounts that endorse a Kaplan inspired view of reference fall under the title of *New Theories of Reference*. While there are several varieties of the New Theories of Reference, they are united by a uniform rejection of Frege-inspired view of propositions that emphasized the role of a sentence’s mode of presentation in shaping the thought associated with an utterance. Instead, a variation of the Russell-Kaplan singular proposition¹⁹ is accepted. Advocates hold that many locutions (e.g. proper names) refer directly to items, which contrasts with the traditional or old theory of reference that implies that names and relevantly similar locutions express descriptive senses or are disguised descriptions. A sentence expresses a proposition whose constituent referring expressions refer to parts of the world independently of the meaning a speaker associates with a particular instance of its use. The driving intuition of such a view is that individuals individuate thoughts, not by the associated sense of the sentence, but by the objects and sequences of objects to which they correspond (Perry 1977, 496). According to Perry to understand a sentence, it is neither necessary nor sufficient to have grasped and associated a complete sense with it (Perry 1977, 497). So understood, the utterance of a sentence in a context only yields an

¹⁹ Singular propositions (also called ‘Russellian propositions’) are propositions that are about a particular individual in virtue of having that individual as a direct constituent.

incomplete sense and an object. Propositions, in such accounts, are taken to be ordered pairs (more generally ordered n-tuples) of the object referred to and the property (or relation) predicated. This approach stands in sharp contrast to the Fregean model where a sentence's particular mode of presentation determines both its semantic contribution and underlying logical form.

The result of rejecting a fully determined view of content is that one is able to reinterpret intentional content, understood by the truth-conditional model as a representation of a speaker's corresponding intentional state in entirely extensional terms. So construed, the meaning that speakers attribute to their use of referring expressions (mental content) is distinct from semantic functions performed by such expression function to refer to parts of the word in virtue of their linguistic meaning (semantic content). Achieving this entails a rejection of a view of truth-conditions as a representation, with a particular kind of relation to the actual or possible states of affairs, and an acceptance of some variation of the 'possible worlds' approach instead. The idea is a simple one. When two sentences have the same truth conditions they will be true in all of the same possible worlds; when two sentences differ in truth-conditions they will differ in the world in which they are taken to be true (Lycan 2007, 153). Advocates of this view, including Lewis (1972), characterize the meaning of a sentence as "...something that determines the conditions under which the sentence is true or false. It determines the truth-value of the sentence in various possible states of affairs, at various times, at various places, for various speakers, and so on" (Lewis 1972, 22).

(III) The Contextualist Claim

Despite the acknowledgment of the role of pre-semantic processes in the limitation of the class of possible inferences and the contribution of most sentences of a complete proposition, Contextualists still maintain that sentence meaning alone does not sufficiently constrain the possible interpretations of a sentence when uttered. Two types of cases are highlighted in support of such claims. The first relates to the dependence of expression meaning on the situation of use, while the second relates to variances in truth-value despite a fixed context of use. Both present problems for the Gricean distinction between ‘what is said’ and ‘what is implied’, provided that the former is taken to be narrowly determined by the literal meaning of a sentence’s constituent terms while the latter is taken to depend on use of a sentence in making a statement. Take, for example, the utterance of the grammatically well-formed sentence “Her water broke.” Even if the referent of the indexical expression “Her” is fixed, the statement can be used to refer to a rather divergent set of possible states of affairs depending on the situation of use. For instance, it could plausibly be employed to refer to either a situation in which the referent’s plumbing has failed or a situation in which the referent is exhibiting early indications of labour. According to Contextualists, the relevant interpretation of such situations, while informed by the linguistic meaning of the constituent terms, does not narrowly depend on the conventions that govern the use of a sentence’s constituent terms.

The extensive use of underdetermined sentences in natural language communication has led Contextualists, and especially Carston, to question and reject a narrowly linguistic view of context. Contextualists claim that in establishing ‘what is said’, interlocutors naturally account for aspects of context which do not directly relate to

the literal meaning of words but are nevertheless necessary for its evaluation. Such claims are often supported by the seeming disparity between ‘what is said’ (a sentence’s truth-conditions) and ‘what is evaluated’.(the object of a propositional attitude) If one considers the analysis of sentences to be capable of capturing the considerations relevant to the latter, then they usually claim it to be necessary to include content otherwise absent in what is literally said in a sentence’s underlying logical form. Appeals to logical form arose out of attempts to explain the operation of inferences when linguistic meaning does not sufficiently constrain the conditions necessary for the evaluation of a particular utterance. Contextualists who advocate this position claim that a semantics that narrowly explains the contribution of repeatable features of certain expression types to the meaning of sentences in which they occur fails to explain how speakers determine the meaning or truth of the sentences in which such expressions occur. At issue is not context-sensitivity but rather expression sensitivity. In some cases, ‘what is said’ alone does not sufficiently constrain the class of possible inferences, and thus hearers are forced to rely on non-linguistic considerations to determine what the speaker means.

To accommodate claimed disparities in ‘what is said’ and ‘what is evaluated’, Carston, along with others including Kent Bach, have argued that semantic analysis should include both the constituent parts of ‘what is said’ and whatever pragmatic considerations are necessary for the truth evaluation of such sentences. Carston further holds that without reference to a speaker’s embedded and associated intentions it is unlikely, if not impossible, in most instances to determine either the truth or relevant interpretation associated with a given utterance. Her claim relates, not only to linguistically mandated pragmatic processing, but more broadly to what she calls ‘free

enrichment' (non-linguistic pragmatic processing). Carston, reflective of her cognitive science and computationalist orientation, argues that the inclusion of intentional content through free enrichment while collapsing the traditional semantic / pragmatic distinction affords a broader and more accurate account of language phenomena. This is strongly supported by the amount of information that can be incorporated into Carston's account and the array of communicative events that it can explain. In contrast to the Neo-Gricean models of grammar that pair each sentence in a context with a representation of its expanded logical form, Carston advocates the development of an explanatory approach that systematizes the interface among syntactic, semantic and pragmatic processes relative to both how context is exploited and the speaker's associated intentions.

Carston's claim seems at least in part to be supported by the fact that the semantic proposition expressed by most utterances is inherently undetermined; that is, natural language speakers are commonly faced with sentences which, despite reference fixing and disambiguation, lack a clear truth-value based on a narrow context of use. Take, for example, the utterance of the sentence "Suzy is too tall". Relevance theorists such as Carston, Sperber and Wilson point out that when one is presented with utterances such as this, natural language speakers often take for granted the extra-linguistic information relied in determining a sentence's truth or falsity. Depending on the particular context, the utterance "Suzy is too tall" could either mean "*Suzy is too tall for the playhouse*" or "*Suzy is too tall for her pants*". To this end, Relevance theorists argue that extra-linguistic information, although not linguistically mandated, needs to be incorporated into the sentence's expanded logical form through the process of free-enrichment in order for a proposition to be expressed. That is, utterances are often made in speech situations with

the implied understanding that the objects referred to, unless otherwise specified, are those which are salient at the time and place of the speech act. This type of reliance on shared background knowledge and assumptions seems to persist broadly in communication which requires the intersection of various types of extra-linguistic information for its success. It seems to be the case that the assignment of a truth-value and meaning to a given utterance is not only relative to its narrow context, but more broadly contingent on the pragmatic content associated with it. Motivated by this, Relevance theorists argue that the employment of a distinct linguistic expression in an utterance only plays a concurrent evidential role in the identification of what the speaker has explicitly communicated ('what is said').

3.1 The Relevance Theoretic Approach

Being able to explain cases where sentence meaning alone does not fully or sufficiently constrain the proposition expressed provides Relevance theorists with a considerable advantage over both the Minimalists and Indexicalist positions. Though important, this is not taken to be the central justification for their interpretation, rather relevance theory is largely supported by recent developments in cognitive science. These developments have prompted a view of language (cognitive pragmatics) that incorporates an autonomous level of unconscious syntactically-driven mental computations as an integral component of communication. Relevance theorists have argued that this development undermines the central position given to natural language semantics in understanding communication. While recognizing the role of natural language sentences in communication, the cognitively-oriented Relevance approach does not take it to be "...the point of investigative departure". (Carston 2004, 23) This is because the

Relevance-theoretic approach views pragmatic processing as an environmental phenomena, triggered by the "...other's ostensive gestures of the face, hands, voice, etc.", (Carston 2004, 25) all of which have to factor into an explanation of communication. The employment of distinct linguistic expression in an utterance plays only a concurrent evidential role in the identification of what the speaker has explicitly communicated ('what is said'). In this respect, the deterministic role ascribed to semantics in alternative accounts is undermined by a consideration of a broader scope of inputs into understanding.

Carston (2004) is in part rooted in her understanding of actions (both communicative and otherwise) as being partly voluntary and partly involuntary. A person's voluntary communicative behaviour, in such an account, is argued to be triggered by both conscious rational inferences and the psychological attributions of beliefs, desires and practical inferences to others. While the former conscious rational process can be understood at the personal level with reference to logic, reason and so on, the latter cannot. That is, it is not possible to infer merely from the utterance "John ate the food and got sick" that the speaker intended the hearer to understand that: John's sickness is a consequence of him eating the food. This is because such an explanation, given by Grice (1989), relies narrowly on the normative view of speech acts as reasonable or justified, and ignores the sub-personal role of intention in speech production. Carston highlights a potential flaw in Grice's narrow use of presuppositions about the agent in the determination of communicated content. She considers an example of an 'ordinary situation':

...it's breakfast time and, coming into the kitchen, I see my companion searching around in the lower reaches of a cupboard; knowing his breakfast habits, I guess that he's looking for a jar of marmalade and I utter: "On the top shelf".

Carston 2002, 3

She notes that although the proposition expressed is something to the effect of 'The marmalade is on the top shelf', the linguistic semantic input to the pragmatic processor is, arguably, just whatever meaning the language confers on that prepositional phrase; that is, far from fully propositional logical form, the utterance is one that consists just of a location constituent (which denotes a property) (Carston 2002, 3). In such situations Carston claims that the meaning conveyed by the utterance can be inferred in "the complete absence of any coded material (say, on the basis of just an ostensive facial or hand movement)" (Carston 2002, 3). This possibility seems to pose a problem for a Gricean-type account in which a given utterance is taken to be a single instance of the more general personal-level activity of interpreting behaviour. According to Carston, when such a schema is used to tease out speaker meaning, one importantly neglects the embedment of the personal process within a sub-personal system. This is problematic because an individual's sub-personal orientation seems to affect what they intend to communicate in a very distinct way.

In the Relevance-theoretic position, the output of the vast majority of utterances are enriched propositions that are communicated as 'explicatures' with the "...uninformative, irrelevant, and, sometimes, truistic or patently false, minimal propositions playing no role in the process of utterance understanding" (Carston 2002, 8). Carston takes this position on free enrichment to be fundamentally in opposition to its alternatives, as she claims that the linguistic representations produced by various utterances do not rely, in such an account, on the minimal semantic proposition expressed

by them. That is, the process of semantic determination of the utterance's literal meaning does not relate in any meaningful way to the explicit content expressed by the utterance (Carston 2002, 8). Thus, the insistence that the meaning conveyed by the utterance has a psychological reality is unfounded. This insistence is what causes other accounts of communication to wrongly explain meaning and truth narrowly in terms of linguistic content. Underpinning this denial of situation triggered content, Carston suggests an attempt to preserve the principle of semantic compositionality. She contends, however, that the principle of semantic compositionality can be maintained if one is willing to give up the direct relation between semantic contents and truth-conditions. This can be achieved if semantics is viewed as a system of mappings between elements of linguistic form and certain kinds of cognitive information. The output of such a mapping in the Relevance theoretic account would generally be "...a sub propositional schema for the (pragmatic) construction of fully propositional representations." (Carston 2002, 8) Here it is the affordance of free enrichment that importantly inputs situationally specific conceptual constituents into the sentence's decoded logical form.

While this position seems to be supported by various data, it seems to raise the obvious problem of determining the extent to which the literal meaning of a sentence constrains its communicated content. On Carston account it seems that it does not constrain it all. That is she writes "the content of a communicative intention may be inferred in the complete absence of any coded material (say, on the basis of just an ostensive facial or hand movement), ... when a code is involved it need do no more than provide whatever clues... the speaker judges necessary to channel the inferential process in the right direction."(3) In response to this potential contention Carston's posits that

interpretation is constrained by the comprehension strategy (which is adopted in all situations for deriving the intended interpretation of the utterance) It is as follows;

Consider interpretations (disambiguations, saturations, enrichments, implicatures, etc) in order of accessibility (i.e. follow a path of least effort in computing cognitive effects); stop when the expected level of relevance is achieved.

Here importantly the process need not progress strictly from the logically form, rather it merely need's to progress from considerations of relevance. This position, while intuitively appealingly and extremely adaptable, affords no structured means to determine either what is said or the associated truth conditions. This fact, in the presence of an alternative which can meet the demands set out, seems to be a prima facia ground for the relevance theories dismissal. Before present what I take to be this alternative, namely Perry's reference-reflexive account of language, various other points of contention in the relevance account are worth noting.

Concerns with Relevance

The strength of cognitively oriented approaches, such as Carston's, rests centrally on showing the explanatory role and functional significance of the freely enriched content in formulating an utterance-associated proposition. If one chooses to follow the truth conditional tradition in talking about the 'proposition expressed', as Carston does, this requires an explanation of how this content affects truth evaluation in some sort of predictable, predetermined fashion. Without showing this, at least minimally, I take Carston's talk of explicated propositional content to be rather arbitrary and theoretically unjustified. While Carston specifies the process (free enrichment via a mind-reading module) and the means by which individuals appeal to intentions, she fails to specify which intentional states the particular hearer during evaluation can draw on (to determine

the representation content associated with the proposition expressed) and doesn't explain the relation between these states and the proposition expressed. It is for this reason that I take Carston's treatment of context to be problematic and largely refutable. In order to make sense of these claims, some further expository work is required. While it does not substantially affect the critique that follows, for the sake of clarity I will reproduce both conditions Carston places on the content which she claims to explicate (expressed propositionally), and provide some examples she gives to illustrate the content she claims to be contributed to the logical form of an utterance via free enrichment. In *Thoughts and Utterances* (2002) Carston holds that an assumption (proposition) communicated by an utterance is an 'explicature' of the utterance if and only if it is a development of:

- (a) a linguistically encoded logical form of the utterance, or of
- (b) a sentential subpart of a logical form

Carston 2002, 124

She cites the following as potential cases where free enrichment would be required (due to linguistic underdeterminacy) to develop the explicated logical form (the bracketed component being the target of explicatures):

- a. Mary is too short. [for what?]
- b. We've finished. [what?]
- c. It's raining. [where?]
- And...
- a. No one [in my family] likes my spaghetti bolognese.
- b. She screamed at him and [as a result] he left the room.
- c. Mary and Sue climbed the mountain [together].
- d. He has [exactly] three cars.
- e. There are [approximately] 150 students in the class.
- f. I haven't [ever] eaten slugs.

(Carston 2002, 124)

While I take there to be problems inherent in all of the noted cases, in order to elucidate why I will return to the earlier noted paradigm example of the phenomena she has in mind. To recall, Carston provides us with the following situation and utterance:

Consider the following very ordinary situation: it's breakfast time and, coming into the kitchen, I see my companion searching around in the lower reaches of a cupboard; knowing his breakfast habits, I guess that he's looking for a jar of marmalade and I utter:

(4) On the top shelf.

Although the proposition I have expressed here is something like *The marmalade is on the top shelf*, the linguistic semantic input to the pragmatic processor is, arguably, just whatever meaning the language confers on that prepositional phrase, that is, a far from fully propositional logical form, one which consists of just a location constituent (which denotes a property).

Carston 2001, 3

In this example, while one is assured that the process of free enrichment is at work, one is left unsure of the exact nature of the processes or route that lead the hearer to believe that the proposition expressed is *The marmalade is on the top shelf*. For instance Carston's companion may have deciphered the meaning of the noted action by looking at her eye movements, tracing them back to their eventual end point, looking on the top shelf, finding the marmalade and then subsequently examining her utterance only to conclude that she had intended to express the proposition *The marmalade is on the top shelf*. Alternatively her partner may have simply inferred from beliefs that he had about her prior actions, and about their associated mental states, that she must have been seeking out the noted spread, given her breakfast patterns. The very possibility of divergent explanations of interpretive patterns seems to raise concerns about whether Carston has actually provided a genuine explanation of the phenomena in question.

The concern being raised here is that unguided appeals to free enrichment that allow for the adding on constituents to a logical form or replacing one of its elements for

others seem to justify any construction. This seems to oppose not only the widely accepted systematic means of evaluating meaning, but goes against all of our natural intuitions about language comprehension. Carston's method of dealing with this sort of concern is, predictably, to appeal to the underdeterminacy of syntactic and semantic structures, and the inadequacy of more formal syntactic and semantically driven approaches to reflect the 'data' (Carston 2002, 192).

The inherent problems in failing to provide a means by which to assess which of the possible interpretive routes should be taken is that there seem to be no grounds on which to determine which of the resulting beliefs should count as the correct one. If the audience mistakenly concludes that the speaker means that $p\#$ while the speaker meant that p^* , it does not follow that the speaker meant $p\#$, it simply means that the audience did not understand what the speaker meant. The primary concern for relevance theorists, as far as I can see, is not explaining how speakers in uttering sentence 'p' can intend to express the proposition p^* , but how their audience is supposed to figure out what p^* is? How much is the proposition p^* expressed by that utterance of 'p' determined semantically and how much pragmatically? Carston offloads a lot of this task to pragmatics. This may be justified, at least in theory, provided that her account can in practice provide a principled explanation of how one audience gets from 'p' to p^* . The problem, however, is that Carston, in the examples she provides, assumes privileged knowledge of the belief(s) the speaker intends to convey by 'p'. It is here that her account falls short. While she emphasizes the importance of accounting for the considerations that factor into the process of belief fixation, Carston does not provide a means to distinguish which beliefs matter. Without this, not only do Relevance theorists have little to say when

it comes to the truth functional approaches, but more importantly, they seem to be relying on a rather ad hoc notion of the “propositional expressed” (Carston 2004, 379).

To make this type of account operational²⁰, two things are needed: first, one needs some kind of limitations on which intentional states a particular hearer can draw on to determine the explicated content; second, some kind of justification needs to be given as to the nature of the relation that has to subsist between this class of relevant intentions and proposition expressed for such an appeal to be appropriate. To recall, Grice limits appeals to what he calls primary intentions, or the direct effect caused by the recognition of what is said and limits the kind of appeal to those considered to be part of the speaker’s M-intention. To recall, he notes “That is, if (say) I intend to get a man to do something by giving him some information, it cannot be regarded as relevant to the meaning_{nn} of my utterance to describe what I intend him to do.” (Grice 1957, 386) Given Carston’s aversion to both this limitation and Grice’s constraint on understanding, two responses seem possible. Either Carston allows an open appeal to any of the intentions that may have motivated a speaker to perform a particular speech act or she narrowly allows for appeals to the intentions manifestly reflected in the act itself. If Carston narrowly allows appeals to the intentions associated with the act of uttering the sentence itself, then her driving intuition in defending the need for processes like free enrichment to reach the ends narrowly associated with understanding the utterance is lost. Thus it seems likely that in fixing the proposition expressed, Carston would allow for an open appeal to both an agent’s prior intention (the intentions that motivated the act) along with those narrowly manifest in the linguistic act itself. To recall Carston does suggest that the

²⁰ By operational I mean be resolved enough to enable semantic theorising with a reasonable degree of predictability. Without specifying the details of such a process it is impossible to falsify claims as broad as those made by Carston about the dependence of language on the context of its utterance.

appeals are governed by the principle of maximum relevance. Without specifying what should factor into the class of possible considerations, this provides little in the way of a guiding framework.

3.2 Dissolving the Dilemma

At the heart of the debate between Contextualists and Minimalists over the nature of the semantic content in question is an apparent pull in opposite directions between holism and formalism. On the one hand, it seems undeniable that the successful employment of language relies on a speaker's prior knowledge of the empirically discoverable and established linguistic conventions that systematically relate parts of language with the meaning that we seem to uniformly associate with their use. The formal inclination is to preserve the correlation between a sentence's meaning and its truth-conditions prior to its use on a particular occasion. The problem with this view is that the meaning associated with a given utterance of a sentence is more fine grained than its linguistic meaning and, perhaps more pertinently, the result of both linguistic and non-linguistic processes. This inherent problem gives credence to the alternate intuition that semantics need to account for considerations associated with the utterance of a sentence. The challenge, as we have seen, is to preserve both intuitions without making the kind of concession that either undermines the ability of a theory to accord with the available data or predict with a reasonable accuracy the particular phenomenon in question.

In this thesis, we have encountered two rather radical responses to this challenge. Minimalists, sympathetic with Russell, attempt to preserve the formal inclination in full force by adopting a Kaplanian view of propositions (See section 2.3), whereas Contextualists, sympathetic with Frege, have attempted to preserve in full force the

holistic inclination that semantic processing results in the grasping of a fully formed thought. From the former formal perspective, Grice is appealing because his treatment partly preserves the privileged position allotted to a sentence's meaning over that which is subsequently ascribed to it when used on a particular occasion of use. From the alternate holistic perspective, Grice's characterization of speaker-meaning as a type of intentional behaviour, and treatment of linguistic acts as primarily psychological, rather than semantic, phenomena is appealing. Grice's framework, despite being rather moderate in its stated aims, is assumed to be well-suited for the task of preserving the perspectives of both sides of the debate without compromise. The problem is that the role assigned to propositions by the respective parties is rather incompatible. Minimalists sympathetic with Kaplan (Corazza 2004, Borg 2002) characterize propositions in a largely mind-independent fashion while Contextualists (Recanati 1994, Carston 2002) opt to imbue them with the kind of qualities typical of thought.

The inherent tension between the two notions has largely been ignored in the semantic-pragmatic debate. Despite the fact that it has been broadly overlooked, sympathy with one position or the other has heavily influenced the conclusions reached by the respective parties. Those sympathetic with extensionalist accounts have defended the priority of language in semantic processing, whereas those sympathetic with internalist view of semantic content have defended the priority of thought. Extensionalist accounts, those that defend some variation of semantic externalism, claim that parts of language independently relate to parts of the world in a meaningful way and thus hold sentences to be propositional. Such accounts claim that an adequate account of semantics can be formulated by explaining how parts of speech function to describe or refer to parts

of the world. Semantic accounts formulated in this fashion narrowly investigate the relationship between parts of speech and the parts of the world. In contrast, intentionalist accounts claim that sentences express propositions in virtue of being used by a particular person, and as such, the proposition expressed is dependent on the intentional states of the speaker. This perspective claims that an adequate account of semantics can be formulated by explaining how parts of speech function to express a speaker's thoughts which are either referential (refer to some particular part of the world) or descriptive (describe some part of the word). Semantic accounts formulated in this fashion narrowly investigate the relationship between parts of thought and parts of speech.

The two notions of content, while broadly informing the positions, are not explicitly endorsed by either minimalists or Contextualist. In large part this is because Grice's account is formulated in such a fashion that neither notion need be accepted in full force to be operational. To be operational, all Grice requires is that a speaker know 'what is said' which doesn't require knowledge of the circumstances of the utterance or particular knowledge about the speaker. He narrowly requires that the speaker speaks standard English and speaks literally (1989, 25). Narrowly from what is said, Grice suggests we can know a lot about what the sentence means. However, Grice contends that for the full identification of what the speaker had said, one would need to know the speaker's identity, the time of the utterance, and the conventional meaning of the particular expressions employed (1989, 25). Once these considerations have been accounted for one can evaluate the truth or falsity of 'what is said'. Sympathy with externalism wants us to get from what the sentences mean to what the speaker means narrowly by accounting for the conditions associated with the use of the particular

sentence. Intentionalist accounts, while broadly agreeing with this picture, advocate the need to factor into the equation, at the outset, a speaker's intentions (free enrichment) and during the process of meaning specification. The question is, if one endorses the latter view, when and how intentions should enter the picture?

To address this, one is faced with the kind of questions that divided early truth-conditional theorists: namely, what is the role of intension in determining the meaning of a linguistic expression and instance of its use, and what a person means in using them. Historically two perspectives dominated the issue. On the one hand, Donnellan (1966) drew a distinction between a linguistic expression and what a person means in using it. For Donnellan, the latter is the proper object of semantic scrutiny and is ultimately decided by intentions. Following Donnellan, it is the utterance of sentence that expresses a proposition. On the other hand, Strawson distinguished between the expressions used in the course of making an utterance and uses made of them. If we follow Strawson (1951), semantic analysis may be directed at the former, yet the semantic functions performed by expressions were decidedly related to their use. This is because according to Strawson, sentences express a proposition, and their truth or falsity is decidedly related to the conditions associated with their use. While privileging the meaning ascribed to sentences in semantic processing (and thus seemingly following Strawson) Grice explicitly constrains their evidentiary role in determining a speaker's meaning to a particular set of intentions, and thus seems to follow Donnellan. To recall, for Grice, only the narrow class of inferences drawn directly from 'what is said' should count as constituting what the speaker meant. Grice explicitly constrains this class to those intentions that satisfy the speaker's M-intention. While Grice's formulation of this constraint (1989) varied

throughout his work, his motivation has always been clear: one should always keep separate what the speaker meant in virtue of him using a particular sentence and what the speaker meant to achieve by his use of a particular sentence. From this, it is tempting to preserve both Donnellan's and Strawson's views independently: that is, to treat the input sentence meaning specification as expressions used, and its output as the uses made of them, and treat the input speaker meaning specification as the linguistic expression used, and its output as what a person means in using it.

The problem with superimposing Grice's distinction between sentence meaning and speaker meaning onto Strawson's distinction is that the input process for sentence meaning specification (if understood narrowly as the expression employed) is no longer on par with the kind of input that Grice requires for speaker meaning specification. The output of sentence meaning specification would deny the possibility that Donnellan hoped to preserve: namely, that one could succeed in referring to something by using a description that does not correctly describe the thing one is referring to. The problem raised relates primarily to an incongruity in theoretical commitments. Strawson distinction in "On Referring" (1950) is rooted in the rejection of a classification of words, e.g. "denoting expressions" in virtue of their form (as Russell does). Rather, he contends that we should classify the *uses* people make of words and other linguistic expressions, e.g. the "uniquely referring use." Despite disagreeing with Russell on this point, the pair nevertheless agrees that when nothing fits the state of affairs described by a sentence, then its truth value is affected. Here is where Donnellan importantly differs. He claims that a speaker may use a sentence to say something of truth even though nothing satisfies the description. That is, one may succeed in referring to something by using a description

that does not correctly describe the thing one is referring to. This possibility is, as noted, importantly denied if the respective view is overlaid in this fashion.

Grice provides little in the way of a direction as to which of the respective approaches one should adopt. The issue, insofar as it relates to Grice, is this: does the presumption of truth guides sentence meaning and/or speaker meaning specification or does sentence meaning and/or speaker meaning specification entail fixing its truth value? The classic picture appealed to by Carston assumes that a speaker, in order to determine ‘what is said’, need appeal to the speaker’s intentions. Carston (2002), along with Bach (1994), Recanati (2004), and Sperber and Wilson (1986) provide a variety of examples to support this claimed need. These examples rely on a view of language which both strips the output of semantic processing of its intentional aspects and equates ‘what is said’ to the content expressed by a sentence’s use on a particular occasion. This proves problematic if, following Donnellan, one distinguishes between the product of evaluation (the utterances associated representations) and both the prior processes relied on for its construction and subsequent processes and considerations involved in evaluation. Korta and John Perry have highlighted the inherent problem with “content” associated with the use of a sentence being conceived of along the lines that Strawson and Donnellan suggest. They claim that such a treatment importantly conflates two rather types of rather distinct communicative content. The pair terms the respective types the ‘locutionary content’ and its semantic contribution.

Locutionary content - also called referential content - is characterized as those “...conditions the truth of an utterance of a declarative sentence puts on the objects it is about”; while the semantic contribution is characterized as “...a property of simple and

complex expressions that is derived from conventions that pertain to the meaning of simple expressions, found in a lexicon, and conventions about modes of combination” (Perry and Korta 2007, 95). The latter set is normally the subject of semantic analysis when translation and combination rules are formulated for formal languages, while the former is more accurately rooted in our theoretical conception of the proposition expressed. This shift in focus onto what constraints must exist in the world for the proposition to express a truth value marks the passage, according to Perry, from indexical content to referential content. These two levels of content serve two distinct purposes: the indexical content, due to its reflexive character, is a candidate for assessing the cognitive significance of an utterance and is fundamentally characterized by its associated truth conditions; while the referential content is a candidate for determining ‘what is said’ and as such bears a definitive truth value (Perry 2009, 74). When discussion entertained about ‘what is said’ by an utterance on a particular occasion of use the locutionary content is generally the focus of debate. The pair takes the concerns relating to context sensitivity to be primarily addressing the sensitivity of the locutionary content, and not the semantics contributed truth conditions. Carston’s criticism, so construed, rests on a problematic equation of meaning (truth-conditions) with the truth-conditional content expressed by its use (or its structured semantic contribution).

While a welcome alternative to the traditional divide the problem with introducing a distinction between reflexive and incremental content is how to map it onto Grice’s proposed framework. Does the distinction relate to the semantic contribution of ‘what is said’ or in particular to either speaker meaning or sentence meaning? For those sympathetic with a Kaplanian view of context, who also accept a Gricean-inspired notion

of ‘what is said’, the distinction, between ‘what is said’ and ‘what is implied’ is typically reformulated as a distinction between “what a sentence (in context *c*) says concerns semantics, while what a speaker using a sentence (in context *c*) says concerns pragmatics.” (Corazza 2004, 9) To avoid the problematic abstraction of sentences, and account for the attributive forces which give them content (i.e. the speaker), Corazza re-characterizes this distinction as follows;

What is Said (Semantics) vs. What is Communicated (Pragmatics)

- (i) A speaker using a sentence (in context *c*) expresses proposition *p* and communicates proposition *q* and *p* may differ from *q*.
- (ii) The proposition expressed (*p*) concerns *semantics*, while the proposition communicated (*q*) concerns *pragmatics*. (Corazza 2004, 9)

Corazza also point out that this feature of language can also be stated in terms of utterances:

What is Conveyed (Semantics) vs. What is Imparted (Pragmatics)

- (i) With an utterance *u* one conveys proposition *p* and imparts proposition *q*.
- (ii) What is conveyed is what is said and concerns *semantics*, while what is imparted is what is communicated and concerns *pragmatics*. (Corazza 2004, 9)

The commitment entailed by the former division of labour is presumably that the output of sentence meaning specification is narrowly a sentence’s truth-conditional content. The latter by contrast commits to the view that what is said is propositional but leaves open whether what is conveyed by a sentence includes considerations typically associated with the use of the sentence. If one follows the former division the result is a distinction broadly amenable to Kaplan notion of content. In such an account a sentence expresses a proposition whose constituent referring expressions refer to parts of the world independently of the meaning the speaker associates with particular instances of their use. The driving intuition of such a view is that individuals individuate thoughts, not by their

sentence's associated sense, but by the objects and sequences of objects to which they correspond (Perry 1977, 496). To understand a sentence, it is neither necessary nor sufficient to have grasped and associated with it a complete sense (Perry 1977, 497). So understood, the utterance of a sentence in a context only yields an incomplete sense and an object. Propositions on such accounts are taken to be ordered pairs (more generally ordered n-tuples) of the object referred to and the property (or relation) predicated. This approach stands in sharp contrast to the Fregean model where a sentence's particular mode of presentation determines both its semantic contribution and underlying logical form.

The adoption of this alternative view of propositions does not entirely alleviate the need to appeal to intentions in determining the semantic contribution of sentences. In some instances, word types, while employing the same symbol, systematically vary in their contribution, and thus affect the meaning of the expressions which employ them. This can either result from a semantic ambiguity where, as a matter of convention, two words have come to use the symbol despite distinct and different meanings ("sand bank" versus "money bank") or because of the underdetermined semantic character of the term in question (indexicals). While accounting for intensions presemantically may be able to silence concerns of the former sort it still leaves the latter case open to question. To address this Corazza, like Kaplan, introduces into the process of sentence meaning specification considerations typically taken to relate to speaker meaning specification to deal with what he calls truly 'context sensitive' terms. Corazza divides context sensitive terms into two categories which he calls contextuials (e.g. "local", "foreigner", "imported" etc.) and indexicals. While the character of an indexical directs us toward a

particular aspect of context, the meaning of a contextual does not direct us toward a specific, determinate contextual feature. He notes that in the case of contextals, context does not affect the minimal proposition expressed. This, he takes to be evidenced by the fact that the context sensitive variable associated with certain contextals (if they are in fact present at the level of logical form) need not be satisfied when the (minimal) proposition is expressed, but rather only when it is associated with a given situation.

Highlighting two types of sensitivity typically associated with the use of particular lexical items or categories of expressions, Corazza claims that indexicals (broadly speaking) are the only terms that can be used either deictically or anaphorically. He notes that this distinction can be regarded as follows:

... in communication the speaker uses an expression in a deictic way in order to direct her audience's attention to an item to which no previous attention has been directed... [conversely]... anaphoric uses tend to draw the audience's attention to an item previously mentioned in the discourse or previously raised to salience by a stretch of discourse."
(Corazza 2004, 4)

Assuming this anaphoric/deictic distinction as means by which to characterize expressions, Corazza notes four possibilities for terms: they can either be used (i) both deictically and anaphorically, (ii) deictically but not anaphorically, (iii) not deictically but anaphorically, or (iv) neither deictically nor anaphorically (Corazza 2004, 7). Corazza employs this distinction to isolate indexicals as the only class of terms that function both anaphorically and deictically, but more importantly, the only class of terms which function deictically. Corazza and Kaplan seem to agree that the deictic employment of indexicals by nature of their character (linguistic meaning) always (not merely sometimes) results in both an association made between the utterance and a part of context, and that this association is fixed by the character of the term prior to use.

Narrowly holding indexicals to be context sensitive, Corazza nevertheless acknowledges that utterances can be underdetermined in two main ways. First, a given utterance can be underdetermined insofar as its truth-value may vary according to different discourse situations (*discourse situation underdeterminacy*). Second, an utterance can be underdetermined insofar as it is intrinsically incomplete and could be completed in infinitely many ways (*utterance underdeterminacy*) (Corazza 2004, 10). The presence of such cases present, according to Corazza, two options: either we reject the view that a sentence of the form ‘S’ is true *iff* S can represent the truth-condition of an underdetermined utterance like “Jane is Ready”, and opt for a theory of how the proposition is expanded to include it, *or* we accept the view that the truth-condition of an utterance is itself context-sensitive. Corazza adopts the latter as the better of the two alternatives, claiming that the former option leads to theories which either fail to specify how this information is included, or how much of it is included.

Against the commonly held view that suggests that what a speaker means must be a proposition and successful communication requires one's audience to entertain what one meant, Corazza argues that notions like speaker-meaning, saying, and so on, are not fundamentally related to propositions. Corazza's defence of what he termed ‘Situational Minimalism’ holds that the speaker, in uttering a given sentence, expresses a minimal proposition insofar the audience understands ‘what is said’, and that the speaker and audience understand each other (share their view of what is the appropriate interpretation) insofar as they can both correctly identify the relevant situation to which the utterance corresponds. In such an account, the proposition expressed is independent of the situation in which it is expressed and as such is not distinctly associated with one situation, but

rather is that which is uniformly expressed by a sentence across all possible situations (provided that it is devoid of indexical terms).

Accepting this treatment, context exploitation need not result in the formation and/or grasping of a specific proposition. We may understand each other insofar as we grasp similar propositions. The proposition that one's audience grasps may remain undetermined insofar as one can recognize the existence of *some* (enriched) proposition or other, which one need not be able to specify (Corazza 2002, 11). One grasps the message transmitted when one comes to entertain one of these propositions (of which there are, potentially, infinitely many). It goes without saying that all these potential enriched propositions have the same minimal proposition (if such a thing is expressed narrowly by a sentence) in common (Corazza 2002, 12). Treated as such, one need not defend the view that the understanding of an underdetermined utterance rests on the grasping of a specific proposition if one accepts that success in communication does not depend on the transmission of specific propositions and/or thoughts.

Corazza's solution, while it preserves the general structure of the Gricean framework, nevertheless represents a weakening of his constraint on semantics. To recall, the Gricean schema in its original form holds linguistic meaning to fully determine the appropriate interpretation of 'what is said', as the proposition expressed it taken to fully determine the epistemic routes exploited by the audience in determining both sentence and speaker's meaning. Corazza's solution by contrast takes a sentence's linguistic meaning to narrowly constrain the considerations relevant to evaluation of 'what is said', leaving open to determination the particular epistemic paths relative to situation that an audience uses to determine the speaker's associated thought.

Corazza's account provides a plausible means by which to address Carston's criticisms while still preserving the Gricean correlation principle by distinguishing the interpretive demands²¹ associated with situations of use from its evaluative demands associated with circumstances of evaluation. Setting aside considerations that narrowly relate to fixing the semantic contribution of individual expressions, the interpretive demands of a given sentence vary across situations but its evaluative demands remain the same irrespective of its associated circumstance. The welcome effect of this treatment is that it allows a means by which to distinguish the broader phenomena of situation sensitivity²² that relates to utterances as single entities from the more local phenomena of context sensitivity which relates to how individual constituent expressions contribute to the proposition expressed. The obvious appeal of this solution is that it preserves in full force the intuition that 'what is expressed' narrowly depends on 'what is said' and can differ from what is conveyed by the speaker. This is achieved by offloading various responsibilities that Carston places on language to the types of situations that both thought and language are directed to.²³ This approach balances the minimalist's intuition that the mental significance of language, including the role of sentences embedded in attitude reports, can be adequately explained by their external significance whilst preserving the internalist intuition that non-linguistic considerations play a role in

²¹ The considerations that factor into the interpretation of a sentence are distinct from those which factor into its evaluation as the former are needed to determine what is implied while the latter are needed to determine the truth of what is said. It is often the case that one can determine what is implied without knowing the truth or falsity of what is said and vice versa.

²² The semantic contribution of a sentence is "sensitive" to the situation if, keeping context fixed, varying what counts as the relevant situation effect what is deemed to be the utterance's appropriate interpretation.

²³ Corazza does this by adopting a broadened view of what it is Kaplan claimed a sentence to be relativized to. According to Kaplan, sentences only express propositions when relativized to a context. According to Corazza, sentences only express a proposition when relativized to a situation (or a partial possible world). In this respect the proposition expressed by sentence on Corazza account need not be as robust as on Kaplan's account and thus can (in theory) be far more underdetermined.

understanding. The consequence of this view is that it affords an alternative answer to the question of scope which departs from that typically attributed to minimalists (See Cappelan and Leopore 2004).

Assuming this framework, it is convenient to organize the kinds of resources relied on by speakers into two distinct categories. The linguistic resources of speakers are what is relied upon in attributing a particular meaning to a sentence prior to its use on a particular occasion. Our linguistic recourses furnish our knowledge about a particular sentences meaning when we abstract away from it any specific connections to the subject-matter of a conversation. The communicative resources of speakers capture how to connect these utterances appropriately to that subject-matter. Carston, as a consequence of her rejection of Grice's M-constraint on understanding, does not draw a distinction between the two. Because of this, in Carston's account it is impossible to disambiguate the notion of propositional content into linguistic content (*content expressed*, or the truth-conditional content conveyed with a statement) on the one hand and mental content (*content grasped*, or the complete content of a propositional attitude) on the other. The consequence of this is that in her account the individuation of propositional content cannot be broken down into distinct interpretive and evaluative demands.

Corazza's solution constrains the considerations that factor into the determination of the proposition expressed to the truth-conditional context expressed by the sentence employed. In this respect, Corazza's aims are very much in line with Grice's aims. To recall, Grice's M-constrain on understanding limits the class of intentions appealed too to those which are narrowly satisfied by a speaker grasping 'what is meant' by 'what is

said'. Beliefs formed about what the speaker meant by what he said (speaker meaning) are taken to be the subset of the sum beliefs (total signification of the utterance) formed about the utterance of the sentence on a particular occasion. What distinguishes belief about what the speaker meant from those about what the speaker meant to achieve is that the former are directly inferred from what is literally said. As such, the only prior intentions that are appealed to, according to Grice, are those which directly map onto, or are bound up in, the act of uttering the sentence. If a consideration is not manifestly reflected in the act itself (the sentence employed), or a part of its conventional meaning, then according to Grice it is not part of its conventional force.

3.3 Intentions and Actions

The two approaches are primarily divided on the role they ascribe to intentions. In Carston's account speaker intentions (broadly understood) play a primary role in determining the proposition expressed, while in Corazza's account, intention is only relevant to the extent that it is reflected in the particular sentence uttered. Before proceeding, it is worth quickly revisiting how Corazza evades the kind of problems that face the traditional model. To recall Grice's M-constraint on understanding limits the class of intentions appealed to those which are narrowly satisfied by a speaker grasping 'what is meant' by 'what is said'. Carston claims that 'what is said' if narrowly construed as sentence S does not provide a broad enough ground to determine P or infer either what the speaker meant by S or what the speaker meant to achieve by expressing P. Corazza addresses this concern by strictly distinguishing the considerations that factor in the evaluation of 'what is said' from those which factor into the appropriate interpretation of 'what is said'. Corazza is able to do this specifically because he factors into the

considerations related to evaluations only those which accounted for on the Russellian-Kaplanian view. This narrowed focus entails rejecting from the proposition expressed content which does not directly effect its evaluation.

While likewise motivated by the claimed indeterminacy of language Carston differs from Corazza in that she factors into evaluation the types of consideration that are relevant in determining a sentence's corresponding thought. The consequence of this is that she is forced to give up both Frege's isomorphism principle and Grice's semantic correlation constraint, opting instead to constrain the meaning associated with utterances via a relevance-based constraint. Despite rejecting both constraints Carston nevertheless assumes there to be some empirically discoverable relation between the prior intentions that motivate the act of uttering a sentence and the thought expressed by its use on a particular occasion. While language does not provide a direct guide to a speaker's thoughts, when combined with enough support from context (broadly construed) one can access them. To get at the speaker's thought, Carston suggests we should expand the class of considerations that factor into the determination of what is expressed both freely enriched content and pragmatically inferred content.

This sustained commitment to a view of understanding rooted in the grasping of thoughts is alone a ground for concern. Wettstein (1986, 2004), for instance, following Kripke and Donnellan, has claimed that accounts that advocate the need for an intermediate layer of content to mediate reference hold what he calls a Fregean "thought driven picture of language". Wettstein (1988) rejects this picture. He claims that irrespective of what we might know about the speaker and his or her intentions the utterance of a particular sentence has a particular meaning associated with it that is either

true or false irrespective of the agent's particular set of nested intentions. What matters are the intentions of the actor made manifest by the act of uttering the sentence, not those that motivated the act or that are associated with its success. Accordingly, the class of considerations relevant to truth-evaluation need not depend or defer to any particular set of interlocutors or their associated intentions or intentions.

Accepting this, accounts which explain semantic content in terms of the speakers thought problematically conflates the significance of the piece of language in virtue of its relation to thought with the significance of a piece of language in virtue of it being embedded in a social linguistic practices. Wettstein claims that linguistic competence involves a particular kind of (procedural) knowledge how rather than (propositional) knowledge that. Wettstein claims that the cognitive approach to semantics (which adopts a thought-driven picture of language) is narrowly construed in terms of the latter kind of knowledge and thus rests on a mistake. As such, he advocates what he calls an anthropological approach which explain the significance of a particular piece of language narrowly in terms of its external significance relative to a set of social linguistic practice

While problematic in this respect, externalist accounts of meaning and reference raise concerns worth investigating. Although it is fairly uncontroversial to observe that language use usually results from premeditation or deliberation, it is more difficult to specify what, if any, continuing relationship a speaker's prior intentions have with the actual act of uttering a sentence. For an account to claim that the end aim of language processing is the determination of the thought associated with a particular utterance, various points must be established. In the case of Carston, she needs to demonstrate two things: first, she needs to show that there is a discernable link between the narrow class of

intentions that are manifestly reflected in act of uttering a sentence and the broader class of prior intentions that motivated the act and second, she needs to show that the principle of relevance is a sufficient means by which to determine the class of speaker's beliefs which should be appealed to in determining the explicated content (or proposition expressed).

Corazza is able to sidestep such questions by committing himself to the view that 'what is said' is propositional but leaving open whether what is conveyed (the thought expressed) by a sentence includes considerations typically associated with the use of the sentence. This is achieved by limiting the role of a sentence's semantic contribution to the determination of what is evaluated. Part of the appeal of giving language a prioritized place in communication is that it allows for one to distance concerns relating to a speaker's actual occurrent states from those manifestly reflected in the particular act of uttering a sentence. Sympathy for such a view, espoused by thinkers such as Perry and Barwise (1983), is typically coupled with the idea that grasping the proposition expressed by the utterance of a particular sentence narrowly entails grasping the semantic contribution of its constituent terms and does not require knowledge of the speaker's associated thought. According to Perry (2000), to fix the semantic contribution of a particular expression one need only follow the rules or conventions that are associated by a language with the expressions in it. This view is particularly supported by the fact that speakers fix the reference of singular terms relative to a context of use irrespective of the speaker's corresponding mental state.²⁴

²⁴ Take, for instance, the sentence "I demand your attention" uttered by a crazed beggar who has come to believe himself to be the President of the United States. Irrespective of his beliefs, his audience would

Without this narrowed commitment, Carston is left with the unwelcome responsibility of explaining how intentions factor into the determination of the thought expressed by the utterance of a sentence, and deciding how to limit the kind of appeals afforded. The challenge for Carston is to come up with a way to factor in the type of non-linguistic considerations that she cares for while factoring the others out. While not explicitly acknowledging the latter need to factor out bad forms of inference, this seems to be necessary provided that the principle of relevance is taken to operate in a predictable fashion. In particular, this seems necessary if she hopes to exclude the following three types of cases: (1) cases where one's audience without understanding, or for that matter hearing, what is said infers various things about the meaning of the attempt; (2) cases where people infer things about 'what is said' which have nothing to do with the thought typically expressed by them; and (3) cases where people misinterpret what is said because, for instance, they have mistaken beliefs about referents of particular expressions but nevertheless draw the appropriate inferences. Achieving this, at least minimally, seems to require distinguishing which, if any, of the various occurrent beliefs entertained by the speaker should count. Failure to do so is to fall folly to, what Ryle calls, the 'intellectualist legend' or to assume that an individual actions (in this case his utterance of a particular sentence) at a particular point in time manifestly reflect, or constrains, the class of propositional beliefs he is entertaining.

There are two ways to avoid introducing into an account of linguistic meaning unwanted concerns broadly related to communication. Following Grice, one can hold that a speaker cannot have unintentionally uttered a particular sentence. So long as this is the

nevertheless take his statement to, in effect, be stating that he (the beggar) rather than the President demands your attention.

case, the intentional state that corresponds to the utterance of a particular sentence will always in some way reflect it. The advantage of this is that what matters, in so far as a speaker's intentions are concerned, are manifestly reflected in 'what is said'. The advantage of this is that 'what is said' and 'what is meant' are rendered broadly analogous. This view, while serving our current purposes, has various problems inherent in it. For one, speakers often accidentally say one thing while meaning to say another. At other times, what speakers say has a particular meaning which is unreflective of what they mean by what they say. To avoid dealing with the complexities created by such cases, one can opt instead to talk about the meaning which natural language speakers would, provided they are competent with the employed terms, associate with 'what is said'. The advantage of this methodological manoeuvre is that it appeals to what speakers mean by sentences while still avoiding the need to appeal to the actual intentions of ordinary language speakers on particular occasion of use. Characterized in this fashion, the kinds of considerations relevant to our current investigation narrowly relate to the kind of knowledge that we attribute to a speaker's use of a sentence on particular occasion rather the belief that motivate its utterance. To be sure, this is a qualified notion of mean, one closely associated with the normative conditions that inform our expectations as natural language users. Carston is precluded from this qualified notion of mean in virtue of her commitment to a semantics that accounts for a speaker's intentions (by way of free enrichment) in a way which relies directly on the speaker.

There are various ways to put into question a kind of assumption underpinning this treatment. The first problem relates to establishing which of the agent's prior intentions are relevant. This is presumably a matter decided normatively. That is, if the

relevant intentions to be accounted for are not manifestly reflected in the act itself then they are presumably those which are typically associated with the utterance of a particular sentence. Following Carston, these associations cannot be made with the employment of particular expressions or sentence types as it is their utterance which is responsible for the formulation of such associations. The problem here, however, is that there is no way to determine whether a prior intention typically associated with the utterance of a sentence has any bearing on its utterance on another occasion without first establishing that the two are somehow related. This seems to require, at least minimally, that one recognize the two as both being utterances of the same sentence type. Context invariant sentence types however don't get us very far. Two occurrences of the same sentence type can be motivated by very different kinds of prior intentions. Consider for instance the following scenario. With two cars racing around a track John, the driver of the lead car exclaims "I'm winning" believing (accurately) that he is in the lead. Simultaneously his opponent Pablo while lagging behind likewise exclaims "I'm winning", believing (accurately) that he has enough gas to finish the race while John does not. In Corazza's account, both Pablo and John by saying "I'm winning" express the same proposition but entertain different thoughts. This is because while both Pablo and John's statements are about winning the race, Pablo's thought concerns his current place while John's thought concerns his supply of fuel. Despite distinguishing the thought, Corazza (at least in *Reflecting the Mind*) nevertheless privileges the relationship that independently subsists between the sentence employed and state of affairs to which it corresponds. As a consequence of this, what is literally said by Pablo is false. In Carston's account, this distinction between the proposition expressed and thought

conveyed is not afforded. The welcome effect of this is that speaker intentions are accommodated in the evaluation of 'what is said'. Either the conventions dictate that Pablo's assertion is true and John's is false or they dictate that John's is true while Pablo's is false. The inherent concern, however, is that this consequence of this accommodation is that at least one reading does not reflect the speaker's motivating intentions.

One way to address this concern is to simply reject the assumption that the matter of which intentions count is one decidedly normatively and instead opt for an approach which decides the matter on a case by case basis. The problem, however, in doing so is that one is faced with the problem of deciding which of a speaker's prior intentions should factor into the determination of the truth or falsity of 'what is said'. The problem is that without some sort of specification of what should count as semantically relevant and what should be included in a sentence's underlying logical form is that there are almost an innumerable number of viable considerations that are assumed but not made explicit. These considerations are assumed both in the determination of the truth or falsity of a particular sentence and in limiting the class of possible interpretations. Along with the meaning of word, and a sentence's internal logic, one could loosely enumerate a list of non-linguistic considerations accounted for: metaphysical considerations (considerations relating to the nature and identity conditions of things), nomological considerations (considerations relating to the laws of nature), epistemic considerations (considerations relating to what is known), doxastic considerations (considerations relating to what is believed) and deontic considerations (considerations relating to the what satisfies a certain rule or norm). The absolute abundance of possible considerations

seems to present two possibilities. Either one develops a means by which to account for such content or one explains why it is not part of 'what is said'. Minimalists, opting for the latter method, have argued that such a consideration, while relevant to the evaluation of 'what is said', does not affect the proposition expressed by sentences.

The challenge for those who reject a constraint on semantics to narrow linguistic considerations is separating out the important, but nevertheless assumed, background assumptions from the more local demands associated with the interpretation and evaluation of the particular sentences employed. To recall, the reason that Carston (2002), along with Sperber and Wilson (1995), rejects the minimalist view is that she claims it is problematically committed to a view that one can communicate thoughts linguistically without any appeal to inference or context (except for purposes of disambiguation, reference fixing and so on). Likewise, the more moderate Indexicalist position is also rejected on account of a similar assumption about language. According to this view, a sentence whose semantic content is less than fully propositional is claimed to contain hidden indexicals (or implicit, bindable variables). The assumption here is one that is shared by the minimalists: the thought expressed by an underdetermined sentence can be made explicit by appropriate kind of linguistically mandated context supplementing. Both are rejected on the same ground: linguistic processing, if constrained to sentences, does not cumulate in the grasping of a fully formed thought expressed by them.

To address this, Carston allows typically pragmatic processes to enter into the class of considerations accounted for by interlocutors in their aim to understand one another. There are two problems with this. First, while Carston may be correct in her

claim that a speaker's associated intention might be relevant in the establishment of what a speaker is trying to communicate, and likely, relies on the host of non-linguistic inferential processes, this does not amount to the stronger claim that the determination of what is said likewise relies on inferred content. Second, despite the rejection of the notion that sentences can express thoughts independently of context, she nevertheless assumes that the aim of communication is the fixation of a speaker and his or her audience on the same thought. From both points of view the aim of communication is assumed to be the expression through language of a clear unambiguous thought. This policy, while reflected in the Neo-Gricean accounts as the assumption of monopropositionalism, pervades Carston's work subtly as the belief that to understand another action's one must, in some sense, identify with the particular belief state that motivates the communicative act in question (Carston 2002, 6). This belief rests on various problematic assumptions as to the relation between intentions and actions. Last, even if a hearer could establish the set of the prior intention which motivated a particular act there is no way to establish whether the success was instrumental to their success. While the information afforded by appealing to a speaker's prior intention and associated situation of use may be relevant to evaluation of what is said in a given situation, it neither functions in the same way as the semantically contributed content nor does it enter into the propositional content.

While Carston's account faces the challenge of determining which non-linguistic considerations should count towards what is explicated, Corazza's account likewise faces the challenge of determine which situation should count as the relevant one. Corazza characterizes the problem his account faces as follows:

As I understand it, the difficulty I face can be summarized as follows. While the obese propositions view faces the problem of explaining how one grasps/selects

an obese proposition, situational contextualism faces the problem of explaining how one grasps/selects a given situation. To be honest, I do not have a clear-cut answer to this question. All I can suggest is that the grasping of a situation seems to be a less cognitive activity than the grasping of an obese proposition.

(Corraza 2004, 20)

While I agree that this is a concern, I think the more serious challenge his account faces is how to separate, both principally and practically, the considerations that factor into context from those that factor into the determination of the appropriate situation. In particular, I think Corazza faces the challenge in responding to the kind of criticism waged by Schlenker against approaches such as Kaplan's which treat the context parameter as being on par with the circumstance parameter. Since the theory of indexicality adopted by Corraza treats contexts as ontologically on par the situation parameter, then any discussion of context dependency must provide an independent criterion for determining which set of parameters should 'count' as the context. This proves problematic, as Schlenker highlights, if such a definition result in the existence of 'monstrous' operators. While Schlenker concurs with Kaplan on the need for independent context parameters (indices) in addition to other circumstantial parameters (indices) for the analysis of non-indexical expressions, he rejects what he claims to be an ontological distinction drawn by Kaplan between contexts and other parameters.

Corazza fails to provide a principled explaining for how to draw such a distinction. Without this his account likewise faces the problem of explaining in practice how speakers determine which of the possibly relevant situations associated with the utterance of a sentence should "count" as the appropriate situation, and why the factors which play into this decision differ from those which speaker rely on in determining context. The advantage of Perry's account is that this problem, insofar as it relates to the

specification of the sentence's meaning, is avoided as the content expressed is reflexive and thus relies narrowly on the sentence rather than some aspect of the world. This is welcome, as we are no longer faced with the task of having to decide what kind of contextual consideration should count as part of the situation and which should count as part of the context.

(IV) Perry's Reflexive-Referential Theory

The last three chapters have addresses several closely related issues in the philosophy of language. I have traced the rather linear development of a set of ideas about language beginning with Frege, continuing through Austin and Grice, and culminating in Situated Contextualism, which while defending the truth-conditional theory of meaning addresses the concerns related to it by adopting a rather radical view of the role of propositions. This reduced role while departing from many of the traditional views still in many ways reflects a fundamental belief in propositions, and their central place in communication. Commitment to a particular view of proposition and their role in communication lies at the heart of the debate over the success of Grice's notion of 'what is said' in meeting both the demands placed on it by him and those associated with the proposition expressed by sentence's more generally. Historically, the focus of the debate has been whether or not Grice's notion of 'what is said' is a sufficiently broad enough to determine both what is to be evaluated (the object of the audience's propositional attitudes) and which of the possible implicatures should be drawn. This thesis has encountered two rather radical responses. On the one hand, we have encountered Relevance Theorists including Robyn Carston. She (2002) advocates disbanding talk of propositions on account of their inability to capture the kind of intentionalists consideration she claims to be central to communication. On the other hand, we have encountered externalist accounts such those proposed by Wettstein (1986) and Putnam (1973) who, for differing reasons, would likewise reject the privileged place that propositions have been allotted. Both rejections are rooted in the presumption we have termed 'monopropositionalism': the idea that the utterance of a sentence expresses a

single truth-evaluable proposition which corresponds to a single unambiguous thought that is reflected in, and reducible to a sentence's truth conditions.

As we have seen, many of the problems associated with Grice's treatment are rooted in a fundamental belief in propositions and their relationship to sentences and their role in communication. Belief in propositions has had a distinguished history in analytic philosophy. As noted in the early portion of this essay, three of the founding fathers of analytic philosophy, Frege, Russell, and Moore, believed in propositions. Against a background of disagreement about what linguistic contents are, and the increasingly common rejection of propositions as viable candidates for explaining understanding, many philosophers of language continue to share the assumption that a sentence's linguistic content is singularly constituted, and that it is only as fine grained as the conditions under which it is taken to be true. This assumption has, and continues to, fuel debates over the nature of the semantic content expressed by sentences.

Historically, as a consequence of the commitment to this policy, approaches to meaning have either focused on the first or second relationship; that is, they have either explained meaning in terms of its external significance, or in terms of the derivative result of the mind's classification of such events (Perry and Barwise 2007, 4). As a result of this, the theories of reference developed by Kripke and Putnam have been unable to explain various aspects of natural language. These include, but are not limited to, language's ability to classify states of affairs that have no associated reality and the variances in interpretations which can be associated with a given sentence. While sympathetic to the criticisms of such approaches, Kaplan likewise takes Frege's inclusion of an intermediate layer of content to mediate the mind's interaction with words and

objects to be problematic. This is because his approach inevitably postulates the existence of a type of meaning that lacks both a formal structure and any empirical means of assessment (Perry and Barwise 2007, 5). Following Perry and Barwise, I claimed that language's distinct classification of speakers, compared with things external to them, affords two sets of distinct facts related to a given utterance: those that are relevant for the interpretation of what the speaker has said, and those the hearer takes to be relevant to the determination of truth or falsity.

These two levels of content serve two distinct purposes: the semantic content, due to its reflexive character, is a candidate for assessing the significance of uniformities and differences in language use and is fundamentally characterized by its associated truth conditions; the speech act content is a candidate for determining how the speech situation or a speaker's associated cognitive states interact with 'what is said', in order to determine an utterance's associated truth value (Perry 2009, 74). Failure to distinguish kinds of content, as we have seen, results in the minimalist's tendency to associate a fully determined logical form with a given utterance; and likewise, the Contextualist's association of a fully enriched thought with a given utterance. While the framing of both positions is centrally tied to the requirement that semantic processing results in a fully formed proposition or thought, the former approach is caused by the Literalists' understanding of semantic contribution via the resulting patterns of inference, whereas the latter seems to be caused by the presupposition that the semantic content of an expression includes the cognitive constraints it puts on its subject matter (Perry and Barwise 2007, 44).

Failure to achieve a distinction of this sort has resulted in two key assumptions that underpin the current semantic-pragmatic debate. The first is that what is expressed narrowly by the use of a sentence is inherently underdetermined, and that what is grasped when someone understands what is said is fully determined (or corresponds to) fully formed thought. The second is that context is what should get us from the former to the latter. Combined, theoretical success is marked by an account's ability to provide a broad enough notion of context to get one's audience from the expressions employed to the thought expressed without losing Grice's distinction between 'what is said' and 'what is implied'. Carston claims this to be impossible and so rejects Grice. For those sympathetic to Grice, the mark of success, so construed, is an account's ability to predict correctly the truth-value that natural language speakers would assign to any given sentences when uttered on a particular occasion narrowly with reference to their preferred notion of context.

Naturally, all parties claim to get it right. Each claims that their notion of context correctly predicts the content expressed and the truth-value assigned. Whether or not this is the case is a matter entirely aside, as the problem so construed rests on two troublesome assumptions: that sentences are themselves inherently underdetermined and that the intentions manifestly reflected in the act of uttering a sentence reflect the beliefs formed by one's audience about it or the thoughts they associate with it. The welcome result of rejecting a mono-propositionalist account is that one can re-conceive of David Kaplan's distinction between the character and content of a term as a more general distinction between the linguistic content of a statement (content expressed, or the truth-conditional content conveyed narrowly by its use) and the mental content of a statement

(content grasped, or the complete content of a propositional attitude). With this distinction, supplemented by an explanation by John Perry of how we get from the former to the latter, one can avoid the Contextualist critique while still preserving the insights underpinning it.

The elements of such a solution while novel in their application to the current semantic pragmatic debate bear various views espoused by Perry and Barwise in “Situations and Attitudes”. In it, the pair put forward a ‘relational theory of meaning’. It holds that the linguistic meaning of an expression, in general, greatly undermines its interpretation on a particular occasion of use, or for short meaning underdetermines interpretation (1981, 37). With this in hand, Perry and Barwise formulated a distinct notion that meaning is fixed while interpretation is not. Of course, the details have since differed, but at the heart of Perry’s work remains a recognition that there subsists a difference between content expressed and content grasped. Perry’s latter work, and in particular, *Reference and Reflexivity*, boldly reflects this view (Perry 2004, 50).

To avoid succumbing to the noted dilemma Perry distinguishes between two types of content. The first corresponds to the now common semantic concept of content that pertains to the meaning attributed to individual and complex expressions and the conventions that govern assignment of content to them; Perry (2007) calls this the ‘reflexive content’, or otherwise put content that is propositional about the utterance itself. The second form of content Perry calls the ‘informational’ or ‘official’ content of a given utterance. It reflects the constraints on the occurrence of an utterance, that is, it reflects what the world must be like in order for the utterances associated success-conditions to take form. In order to properly characterize this ‘reflexive content’ one

must, as Perry does, distinguish between the concepts of meaning and content. According to Perry 'content' belong to particular utterance; while 'meaning' belong to types of expressions, in that it is characterized by the rules which assign contents to the particular uses of expressions. Using this distinction, Perry suggests that reflexive content arises when the meaning of an expression has as its constituent the expression itself. Despite their similarities Perry's account, unlike Corazza's, only recognizes the sensitivity of the content expressed: the sensitivity of the sentence when treated as a single entity rather than a composite of meaningful constituents.

The distinction earlier raised by Kaplan between indexicals and other terms, specifically proper names, relates to the process of designation. The associated distinctions, set out by Kaplan, are broadly adopted by Perry, with some important differences in terms of process. These difference and similarities can be drawn out from how Perry and Kaplan address the question; 'Why does term *t* designate object *a*'. According to Perry if *t* is an indexical it denotes according to the convention of language an identifying condition, and thus designates whatever object meets that condition; while if *t* is a proper name it merely refers to a particular object. The latter process of naming for Perry involves only one step (term *t* designates object *a* because the meaning of *t* assigns *a* to *t*); while the process of denotation requires two steps, (the term *t* designates object *a* because (i) the meaning of *t* assigns an identifying condition *C* to *t* and (ii) *a* is the object that satisfies the identifying condition *C*) (Perry 2002, 31). In Kaplan's account, the process of naming differs from the denotation only insofar as the function associated with the process of denotation is fixed by the utterance's contextual indices. That is, rather than there being associated with an indexical term a reflexive identifying

condition, qua Perry, there is an associated character which fixes the object which satisfies the identifying condition in a given context. Nonetheless, both authors concur that for proper names and indexicals the object which satisfies the identifying condition or is the *designatum* of the character is referred to directly, not described. As a result of this, both authors advocate the claim that sentences which only contain singular terms have singular propositions associated with them. The attribution of general propositions to sentences is thus reserved for those which contain descriptions. The expressions associated general propositional content can be satisfied by any object which meets the condition of the utterance.

With these distinctions noted, between Kaplan's direct reference theory of proper names and indexicals and Perry's reference-reflexivity theory we can turn now to the broader question of meaning in Perry's account, and examine how indexical terms affect utterance meanings. Meaning, as Perry defines it, is the sets of rules which language associates with simple and complex expressions (Perry 2002, 70). Meaning is thus broadly associated with what we have been calling character under Kaplan's account. The distinction between the two rests on the fact that meaning for Perry is associated with utterances, while character for Kaplan is associated with sentence in a context. Perry's expansion of his account past sentences in context has various important implications, most centrally in relation to the nature of the propositional content semantically expressed. In Kaplan's account sentences containing only singular terms as constituents in a context express a singular proposition, with a fixed truth value. In contrast, in Perry's account all utterances express a plurality of contents which may or may not fix the truth conditions.

This rejection of monopropositionalism allows for the account to reconcile the various intuitions which inform the Referentialist and Descriptivist accounts of language. To highlight the need for a plurapropositional input into pragmatics, Perry formulates a standard Referentialist semantic model of language which only contains equisignificant expressions. In equisignificant expressions, the rules associated with meaning are fixed, and thus assign the same content to each utterance of the same expression. According to Perry, an account of natural language directed as such a language would not be able to accommodate utterances containing indexical expressions or other associated constituents that express general propositions. This issue, associated with monopropositional views of content, arises not only in relation to indexical constituents, but rather more broadly is present in utterances and the relationships presented between their constituent parts. This is because the associated conditions of designation in an indexical expression are impacted by the utterance itself, the denoted conditions, and the propositional content of the utterance (Perry 2004, 72). The effect of each of these three on the content expressed by an utterance, according to Perry, can and must be distinguished.

In order to raise this need to salience, Perry formulates a ‘vanilla’ semantics model for simple atomic sentences in an equisignificant language. This model is characterized by three levels, that of meaning, content (singularly constituted) and designation. In the model meaning is the linguistically constituted rules of association that correspond to expression types, while content reflects the existential or contextual features which fix the designation of utterance. The four expression types incorporated into the vanilla semantics model are names, descriptions, predicates and sentences.

These expression types, in such a model, would associate their meaning, content and designation in the following way:

- (1) If an utterance u is a name then its meaning is a rule associating u with an individual, and its content is an individual. When meaning is loaded with content the u designates an individual. As is obvious, here the content and designation of a name coincide.
- (2) If an utterance u is a description then its meaning is a rule associating u with an identifying condition, whose content is that identifying condition. When the content of u is loaded with its meaning it designates an individual.
- (3) If an utterance u is a predicate (a declarative sentence with the terms replaced by variables) then its meaning is a rule associating u with an n -ary condition on individuals, and its content an n -ary condition on individuals. When the content of u is loaded with its meaning it designates a set of n -tuples (a set of objects that meet that condition). By way of example it may serve well to consider a one place predicate such as 'smokes' or a two place predicate such as 'is larger than'. The content associated with the one place predicate is every object that could meet its conditions, while the content associated with the two place predicate is every set of objects that could meet its conditions. The designations of these objects are thus the objects included in the set or sets of possible objects (in all possible worlds) that could meet the predicates conditions.
- (4) If u is a sentence then its meaning is a rule associating u with a proposition, and its content is a proposition. When the meaning of u is loaded with the content it yields a truth value.

If one ignores context sensitive expressions the model provided seem to capture adequately the process of ascribing meaning, accounting for context and determining truth-values. However effective this model is in terms of explaining atomic equisignificant expressions, it fails, as will be shown, to adequately account for both the process of designation and content expressed in content sensitive expressions. This is because it fails to account for what Perry calls the indexical content, referential content, and designational content, which all effect and contribute to the proposition expressed in a unique and complimentary fashion. Gaining the latter two forms of content means at first understanding what the former indexical content is. Before addressing this, and its

referential role in Perry's reflexive-referential account, we must first explore the reflexive aspect referred in the accounts title.

Reflexivity, as Perry notes, has been previously addressed in accounts of indexicals and dealt with explicitly by Reichenbach in his token reflexive theory of indexicals. Reichenbach suggested that the meaning of an indexical term is the indexical term itself, which explains why different utterances of the same terms can stand for different things. While not accepting this claim of literal synonymy between a term and an utterance of it Perry does recognize an intimate connection between them (Perry 2004, 76). Perry highlights this reflexive property in the utterance of 'I':

If u is an utterance of 'I', the condition of designation for u is being the speaker of u .

Perry, however, notes that this connection between meaning and content can be accounted for to some degree within a model that only recognizes one fixed content in the manner Kaplan does in 'Demonstratives'. This is done by allowing the meaning associated with indexicals to be rules that assign content relative to context. If this system is adopted the character of a constituent such as 'I' is a fixed function relating context to content, to what is said. Here the designation is an automatic function and does not rely on the intention of the speakers at all. While this characterization of content is capable of yielding a proposition, and accordingly a truth-value, it seems to leave dormant some of the reflexive content which is semantically triggered independent of the singular proposition expressed by a sentence in a context.²⁵ This reflexive content Perry refers to as the indexical content of the expression which are the conditions and

²⁵ The term 'reflexive' here is used in reference to the content of an utterance that is about the utterance itself. This can be distinguished from the referential content which incorporates the objects referred to by the referring expression.

constraints associated with indexicals independent of context. While the noted distinction between sentences in context and utterances has been noted a more fundamental distinction between what Perry refers to as tokens and utterances is of central importance in this respect. Following Reichenbach, Perry notes that associated with each type of expression is a token content which can be exploited independently of context. A competent speaker of a language would be able to determine this meaning associated with an expression without any knowledge of the context in which it was used. As these conditions and constraints associated with types of expressions exist independently of context they are propositional about the utterance itself, or using Perry's terms the proposition expressed by them is utterance reflexive. This distinct content is reflexive due to the associated conditions of designation having as their constituents the condition themselves and not the object which satisfies them (Perry 2004, 74).

While the concept of a distinct 'indexical content' may seem hard to conceptually clarify various examples provided in *Reference and Reflexivity* reflect the distinction Perry is concerned with. Throughout his work, Perry asks the reader to consider instances where the token produced by an utterance is separated from the original utterance itself. Examples which serve to show this may include the use of 'post it' notes, answering machines messages or writing's on a "Facebook" wall (a digital form of a common board). In all three of these situations the token is separated from the original context of use. Drawing on such examples it seems rather conceivable to imagine a situation in which we are aware of a token but unable to ascribe to it the contextual limitations needed to ascribe a proposition. Let's take, as Perry does, a situation in which one comes across a note that reads "I plan to kill him tomorrow". While we cannot determine the

particular proposition expressed by the utterance, as we know neither the utterance's agent nor time, we are able to formulate a general proposition about the note itself. We can assert:

That the author of this note did kill or will kill the person to whom the token of 'him' refers on the day following the day when it was written. (Perry 2004, 70)

Here the indexical content incorporates the objects associated by the rules of language with an expression. (Perry 2004, 74) While none the less reflexive the content here can be expressed is in the form of a general proposition. This is because given the utterance one can infer various conditions and constraints which would have to be satisfied in order to ascribe to the utterance a truth value. Thus this meaning is constituted by the reflexive identifying condition with the utterance itself as its constituent. Perry presents the following as plausible indexical meanings for some common indexicals, with the indexical meaning italicized;

If u is an utterance of 'I', the indexical content of u is the identifying condition, *being the speaker of $\mathbf{u}$* .

If u is an utterance of 'you', the indexical content of u is the identifying condition, *being the addressee of $\mathbf{u}$* .

If u is an utterance of 'now', the indexical content of u is the identifying condition, *being the relevant time of $\mathbf{u}$* .

If u is an utterance of 'that ϕ ', the indexical content of u is the identifying condition, *being the salient ϕ to which the speaker of $\mathbf{u}$ directs attention*.

With these two reflexive aspects of utterances identified, meaning and indexical content, we can now using them formulate a third type of content which Perry calls the 'referential content'. This content is yielded when the indexical meaning of a given utterance is loaded with its contextual facts which fix the indexicals. The resulting content expressed is no longer propositional about the utterance itself, but rather now

refers to what else has to be true about the world given the facts of the utterance (Perry 2004, 78). This shift in focus regarding what constraints must exist in the world for the proposition to express a truth value marks the passage, according to Perry, from reflexive to incremental content. These two levels of content serve two distinct purposes: the indexical content, due to its reflexive character, is a candidate for assessing the cognitive significance of an utterance, while the referential content is a candidate for determining 'what is said' or the official content of an utterance (Perry 2004, 74). While the referential content yielded does express a general proposition, it still falls short of providing a truth evaluable singular proposition. This is because, despite fixing the indexicals, and thus removing the reflexive nature of the proposition expressed, the descriptions associated identifying conditions have yet to be loaded by the facts about the designata of those descriptions. It should be noted however that this process of fixing the designata of descriptions only becomes available to speakers once they have fixed the referent of indexicals. However, once fixed, and the description likewise can be loaded with contextual facts, and a singular proposition yielded. This propositional content Perry refers to as the designational content of the utterance. From it, the proposition can be extended and a truth value assigned. This in the last of the cascading or successive set of stages in the account, who result, is derived by the cumulative effect of the preceding stages.

By way of example we can consider the following utterance's application

(1) That man is a philosopher.

At the level of indexical content the utterance of (1) is associated with the condition

(Cx1): the salient man to which the speaker of (1) directs our attention is a philosopher

This condition (Cx1) which is triggered by the use of the demonstrative “that man” within utterance (1) is reflexive because the utterance has as a constituent the constituent of the identifying conditions associated with “that man” (Perry 2004, 78). Due to this reflexive nature of the identifying condition, at the level of indexical content (1) is propositional about itself. If the description’s associated condition (Cx1) is loaded with the fact that say John Perry is the salient man to which the speaker of (1) directs our attention then the following referential content is expressed;

(Cr1) being **John Perry** is a philosopher

Here, (Cr1) is manifestly about the referent of “that man” rather than being covertly about the reference directed at him, as was the case in (Cx1). However, while the contextual facts fix the referent of the designation a singular proposition is still not yielded as the facts associated with the designate have yet to be loaded. That is to say, we may referentially know that the agent referred to is John Perry by the demonstrative ‘that man’, however, we still do not know any other facts associated with him, including whether or not he is a philosopher. Thus having loaded the identifying conditions associated with the indexical term “that man” with the fact that John Perry is the constituent of (Cx1), we are now able to fix the indentifying conditions associated with the description “that man” and yield the designational content:

(Px1) “The salient man to whom the speaker of (1) directs our attention is a philosopher”.

This designational singular proposition (Px1), when loaded with (Cr1) results in the;

(P1) That **John Perry** is a philosopher

From the extension of (P1) into the world we can now accordingly ascribe a truth value to the utterance; (1) That man is a philosopher.

Grice Revisited:

The result rejecting monopropositionalism is in part reflected in the revised class of considerations that can be factored into the determination of what is said. Generally it is accepted that what is said incorporates both content contributed by sentence meaning specification and some of the content contributed in specifying speaker meaning. This view has been upheld by most if not all commentators in the debate. To this effect one could point to claims of the following sort:

Grice uses the phrase *what is said* as a technical term for the truth conditional content of an expression, which may in fact be somewhat less than the full conventional content. (Steve Levinson 1983: 97 *n.*).

What is said (in Grice's special sense) is what speakers mean mostly through the conventional content of the sentences they utter— indeed, through only that part that affects the truth of their utterances. (Herb Clark 1996: 141).

Although Grice is not as explicit as he might have been, it is clear upon reflection (and from scattered remarks) that *what is said* is to do duty (with a proviso I will get to in a moment⁸) for *the statement made* or *the proposition expressed* by *U*.

Where the sentence uttered is of the type conventionally associated with the speech act of asserting (i.e. when it is in the indicative mood) what is said will be straightforwardly *truthconditional*. (Stephen Neale 1992: 520-521).

Following Perry, such formulations problematically fail to distinguish a sentence's semantic contribution from their locutionary content. The problem with failing to draw such a distinction is that what is expressed narrowly by a sentence (if interpreted narrowly as its truth-conditions) is too underdetermined to count as the input for speaker meaning specification. This, as we have seen, proves problematic if one holds the output

of sentence meaning specification to be the sole input into speaker meaning specification and requires the output of both to be a truth-evaluable proposition which is grasped by a hearer. The problem is however accepting such a distinction how to divide the following four varieties of non-natural meaning. I will for the moment examine Grice's suggestion and then re-examine the division in light of Perry's suggestions.

Grice in dividing the respective types of meaning introduces the following example.

(4) “ If I shall then be helping the grass to grow, I shall have no time for reading”

In determining what the speaker means (or “meansX”) Grice claims that interlocutors specify both a sentence timeless meaning and its applied timeless meaning. This entails recognizing both what the sentence means in general (or its timeless meaning) and what the sentence means on the particular occasion of its use (or its applied timeless meaning). In determining sentence meaning, Grice claims that speakers specify which of the particular reading of the sentence(a) should be connected with its utterance and which of the particular action should be connected with a particular expression employed. This required determining in the noted example whether the term “grass” was used to mean either “lawn material” or “marijuana”, and whether by “ If I shall then be helping the

grass to grow, I shall have no time for reading” the sentence meant “If I shall then be assisting the kind of thing of which lawns are composed to mature, I shall have no time for reading” or “If I shall then be assisting the marijuana to mature, I shall have no time for reading”. Once the sentence meaning is specified Grice suggests that one is then in the place to specify what the speaker means and in particular both the occasion-meaning of an utterance-type²⁶ and the utterers occasion meaning.²⁷

As the previous quotes highlight, most commentators exclude considerations that factor into the determination of utterers occasion meaning from what is said unless it is part of what is literally said. This creates a problem (as we have seen) as what is literally said is often too undetermined for a speakers audience to determine what the speaker meant by it use. To avoid the noted dilemma, most commentators have rejected Grice’s suggestion that the considerations that factor into the determination of what is said must be constrained to the conventional meaning of the words used, together with the identity of any references that may be involved. This constraint is suggested to be problematic as the content expressed by most sentences fails to be truth-evaluable without rather extensive appeals to context (broadly construed). Contextualists, to varying degrees, take this to be justification for including into the proposition expressed contextual considerations that are not grammatically triggered. If one opts out of a Contextualist like solution one is faced with the problem of addressing the concerns raised by such cases. So far I have favoured the Situated solution proposed by Corraza and Dokic. The problem, however, is how to determine what should factor into which and what is part of the situation which the proposition is relativized to. This as we have seen proves

²⁶ This is what Grice’s claims is meant when a speaker commits themselves to what is said

²⁷ This is what Grice’s claims is meant when a speaker commits themselves to the ends or consequences of what is said

problematic if the distinction draw is rooted in the kind or considerations rather than their relation to language.

If we follow Perry the problem of determining what counts as part of the relevant situation can be sidestepped as the output of a sentence meaning specification need be propositional in the traditional sense. This is because an utterance locutionary content need only be derived from a sentence's semantic contribution rather than be specified relative to it. This is because the Perry's three layers of content are available and a source from which one's audience can infer either the i) occasion-meaning of an utterance-type or (ii) the utterer's occasion meaning prior to having determined the extension of the expression employed or the sentence's truth-value. In this respect\$, the dilemma, insofar as is it is propagated by the demand that what is said need be truth evaluable proposition which corresponds to fully formed thought, is resolved.

This reading not only preserves Grice's M-constraint in its full force but accords well with his driving cause for its formulation. To recall, this aim was to restrict sentential analysis (or sentence meaning specific specification) to the effect directly induced by the speaker's utterance of the sentence (Grice 1957, 386). The welcome effect of restricting the consideration that factor into sentence meaning specification to those which Perry considers as part of a sentence's semantic contribution is that one is no longer required to adopt the revised notion of what is said which includes as part of it considerations that typically are taken to factor into the utterance type occasion meaning. This is because what is said need not be propositional in the traditional sense. That said, one can include as part of what is said the indexical content of the utterance without

undermining the equation of sentence meaning with what is said as the content expressed at this stage is reflexive: or as Perry puts it propositional about the utterance itself.

The question stands as to the nature of the relation between the intended effect or response of specifying the semantic contribution and indexical content and the effect the utterer meant to achieve by uttering the sentence. Following Perry, this effect insofar as its effect it relates to the sentence rather than the things it concerns can plausibly be taken as part of what Grice calls its conventional meaning. My suggestion: if the effect induced relates to the particular things in the world which the sentence concerns then it cannot count as part of its conventional meaning, however, if it is created because of what the sentence is about then it should. Accepting this, then considering that specifying what the sentence particularly concerns can either be part of the utterance's locutionary content (if it is calculated narrowly from what is said) or part of what is conversationally implicated (if it is calculated relative to the conversational maxims). If it fits into the former category then it counts as a proper concern of semantics, if not it is the appropriate concern of pragmatics.

Conclusion

This rejection of Grice is rooted primarily in a belief that the success or failure of his broader program rests on a high degree of congruity between the belief expressed narrowly by 'what is said' and the subsequent belief induced in one's audience about 'what is said'. As Carston so diligently shows, given the underdetermined nature of language, one cannot get narrowly from what is said (understood to be a sentence's truth-conditions) to what a speaker meant by it if the latter is taken to be propositional in the traditional sense. Faced with this dilemma, Carston suggests that we should collapse the

distinction and opt instead for a model of communication that constrains the object of the audience's communicative attitude to considerations which are maximally relevant to the determination of what is explicated. While I broadly agree with her motivating concerns the conclusion she reaches is one which I argue should be rejected.

Carston conclusions are rooted in what Wettstein and others have termed a thought driven view of communication. On such a view both language production and comprehension is primarily driven by the end aim of attributing a single unambiguous thought to speaker which correspond to the sentence which he or she has employed. The problem with subscribing to a thought driven picture of language, and in particular one which treats the output of semantic processing as a single truth-evaluable proposition and thought, is that it either results in noted dilemma (if accepts Grice's M-constraint on understanding) or a problem of scope (if one rejects it). To address these cases I have argue that we must reject the implicit assumption that appeals to communicative considerations must proceed until the proposition expressed is fully determined and is reflective of the speaker's corresponding thought. In particular I argue, in line with John Perry and number of other contemporary theorists, that we must reject mono-propositionalism: of the the assumption that the utterance of a declarative sentence expresses a proposition, and that the proposition expressed is (i) the bearer of truth value, (ii) the bearer of cognitive value, and (iii) what is (literally) said and communicated. (Corazza and Korta 2009, 2) Despite playing a central role in the conditioning of the debate, I argue for the rejection of this view in favour of the alternative 'plurapropositionalist' model proposed by John Perry (2004) in *Reference and Reflexivity*. The of a rejection a mono-propositionalist framework allows for both a

situated view of language, such as that defended by Corazza and Dokic, and a welcome solution to various claimed cases of semantic underdeterminacy which are caused by subscribing to a such a view of propositions.

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