

## ***Kripke: Lecture II of Naming and Necessity***

Kripke starts with a criticism of Searle's cluster theory. He summarizes this theory in 6 theses (p.609):

- 1) to every name or designation expression 'X', there corresponds a cluster of properties, namely the family of those properties  $\phi$  such that A believes ' $\phi X$ '.  
→ no objections
- 2) One of the properties, or some conjointly, are believed by A to pick out some individual uniquely.  
→ Objection:
  - a. not necessarily unique, especially when the description contains another name
  - b. can lead to circularity
- 3) If most, or a weighted most, of the  $\phi$ 's are satisfied by one unique object y, then y is the referent of 'X'.  
→ Objection: how to vote/weigh, circularity, can pick out the wrong object (e.g. Gödel copied the incompleteness theorem → reference to Schmidt)
- 4) If the vote yields no unique object, 'X' does not refer.  
→ Objection: Gödel example 2 or Jonah
- 5) The statement, "If X exists, then X has most of the  $\phi$ 's" is known *a priori* by the speaker.  
→ Objection: probably the speaker didn't know *a priori* that the true  $\phi$ 's were true
- 6) The statement, "If X exists, then X has most of the  $\phi$ 's" expresses a necessary truth (in the idiolect of the speaker).  
→ Incorrect, see below

Condition C: for any successful theory, the account must not be circular. The properties which are used in the vote must not themselves involve the notion of reference in such a way that it is ultimately impossible to eliminate.

To eliminate descriptions like "Socrates is the man we call 'Socrates'". Or the 'Glunk' example.

### **Rigid designators and possible worlds**

→ Objection to 6): cluster theory claims the *necessary truth*

Rigid designator:

a subject term designating the same object in all different possible situations (or possible worlds) in which the object exists, so long as the meaning of the term is held constant. A non-rigid designator with constant meaning can designate different objects in different possible situations (or possible worlds).

Possible world:

the analysis of statements in terms of 'possible worlds' comes from the semantic treatment of modal logic - the logic of possibility and necessity. A possible world is a way the world might have been. A necessary statement is one that is true in all possible worlds; a contingent statement is one that is true in at least one possible world.

Examples to show why a name is a *rigid designator*: Aristotle might not have done any of the things attributed to him without ceasing to be Aristotle. If Hitler had been accepted in Art school he probably wouldn't have been responsible for genocide, we would just know him, if we did, as one of 20<sup>th</sup> century's worst artists. But he would still have been Hitler.

Lorina Naçi's question:

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Q2: Concerning rigid designators... A designator is rigid when it designates the same thing in all possible worlds. For example, the name 'Hitler,' Kripke explains, stands for the name of "that man" even in other possible worlds. 'Which man' is my question? Can we say that we can redefine all the properties/attributes that we associate with a referent and still have the same object/entity? I question whether Hitler is that man that we in our present world know as 'Hitler,' in a world where he may have stayed quit in Linz. How can a changeable object be designated rigidly? This seems to bring us back to intuitive connection between proper names and descriptions at least when designating famous individuals.  
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The meter stick is another example. Even though the meter stick might not have been exactly one meter in every possible world, the length 'one meter' is always the same in every possible world. We can feel free to apply our categories also to what might have been. That's also the reason why Moses is Moses everywhere he existed, even if his name wasn't "Moses".

Basically the actual world is the one that "rules". We use descriptions or whatever is needed to point out something or someone. Once this referent is fixed, the essence takes over, the descriptions become obsolete, because every single description we pick might not be a necessary property of the referent.

That means the rigid designator uniquely refers to one thing and its referent is this one thing in every possible, no matter what it would be called there, depending on language, culture or convention.

Kripke even argues that the term designates in worlds where there is no referent for it. There it would rigidly refer "to something that would not exist in the counterfactual situation described"(p.614)

Lloyd Martin's question

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2. I may be obsessing a little with these "possible worlds" questions, but I would really like to understand just how seriously these philosophers take their possible existence. Couldn't there be possible worlds to refute every assertion made?  
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Amy Heaton's question

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How do remarks about fixing a reference to something that holds in all possible worlds show the "intuitive bizarreness of a good deal of literature on 'transworld identification' and 'counterpart theory'? (p.613)  
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### Rough statement of a theory:

1. initial baptism, by ostension or description
2. causal chain, name is passed from link to link  
→ here a failure in keeping the reference fixed can break the chain, but Kripke is too lazy to elaborate on a rigorous theory of reference.

The difference here to Strawson's suggestion is that it is not important who the links in the chain were and if maybe one or more of the links were mistaken in their beliefs about the referent's properties.

### George Dyer's question:

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2. Is it possible that proper names simply do not refer to physical entities at all? When a speaker is introduced to a proper name for the first time, unless she is introduced physically to its \*referent\*, she might create a "make-shift," blank mental referent (much like Searle's peg on which he says we hang descriptions). Even when a speaker is introduced physically to the \*referent\* of a proper name, you might say that the proper name still actually refers to the speaker's mental image or perception of the physical object, and not the object itself.

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### Lorina Naçi's question:

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Q1: How is the reference preserved on the causal link? Not only may a speaker not succeed in transmitting the reference, as in the 'neighbor' example given by Kripke, but also a speaker may not be aware of precisely what the reference is, in order to pass on. One example of this would be the case of misreferencing to Madagascar as the island instead of mainland. Surely, this frailty of the causal chain accounts for misdenotation, and transformation of reference, but further it seems that in itself the chain is unable to ensure that the reference is transmitted unchanged through time. Does Kripke say more about the causal chain preserving of the reference elsewhere?

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### Lloyd Martin's question

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1. From footnote 12 of Kripke's reading (p.634). I would like a little clarification about why description theory cannot correctly explain our use of the names of famous people who are long dead.

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### Derek Bowman's question

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1. How are we supposed to evaluate Kripke's 'picture of the world' if he refuses to put it in the form of a clearly stated theory? He addresses this on p. 624, but I'm not clear on his answer. Just before that (p.632) he alludes to something from a previous lecture, that he wasn't going to present a theory because "philosophical theories are in danger of being false." Theories of physics are also in danger of being false - that doesn't relieve physicists of the responsibility to develop them. Surely he doesn't mean to suggest that it might be impossible to form an accurate philosophical theory of names - if that's it, why would he bother to do philosophy of language?

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## Comparison

Kripke doesn't claim that the outline of his theory gives a set of necessary and sufficient conditions to determine a unique reference. But he suggests that he accounts better for it than the Cluster Theory, even though he admits that there "may be some cases where the description picture is true"(p. 624). Examples are "Jack the Ripper" and "Hesperus". His point is that in general, the description theory fails.

## Statements of identity:

Kinds of identity statements:

1. identity statements using descriptions:  
e.g. "The man who invented bifocals was the first Postmaster General of the USA"  
→ contingent, it could have been otherwise
2. identity statements between names  
e.g. "Hesperus = Phosphorus" or "Cicero = Tully"  
→ if two rigid designators have the same referent, their identity is a necessary one.
3. physical identity statements  
e.g. heat = motion of molecules  
→ necessary, not just physically, but "in the highest degree - whatever that means."(p.627). (Physical necessities are always necessary).

### Cati Brown's question

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I am confused about the necessity of truth and the contingency of truth as discussed by Kripke. I think Kripke's beef with necessity and contingency has to do with something Kripke mentions at the tail end of his paper, namely that we have a present state of ignorance, or uncertainty about some (or most) things. Using this idea that necessity and contingency have to do with ignorance, and looking at identity statements, I notice that we're not really expressing anything meaningful unless we are ignorant to the statement's meaningfulness. In other words, 'The morning star is the evening star' is simply a contingent fact and therefore not meaningful if we have already been exposed to its meaning. By contrast, the same sentence is meaningful precisely in the situation where we don't already know that the components of it ('the morning star,' 'the evening star,' and the connection of identity) is meaningful. Could we please discuss this?

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### Richard Highsmith's question

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If a statement such as "Hesperus = Phosphorus" involves contingent truths and the names are merely contingent marks, does this mean that all identity statements depend on empirical knowledge? Could we argue that in some possible world, there are two twins, both Roman senators, named "Tully" and "Cicero" such that Tully denounced Catiline but Cicero was the famous orator? Would this mean that the statement "Tully = Cicero" is dependent on our knowledge that these two names didn't refer to twins?

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### Tzuchien Tho's question

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2. Following Kripke, should we now suggest that necessary statements can be discovered through the use of empirical methods? Through empirical methods, Kingston is the capital of Jamaica is a necessary truth (ie. True in every possible world). What does this do to traditional metaphysics? Or, is this a rather harmless notion?

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