Names are Words

A Ph.D. thesis by:
Nikhil Mahant

Submitted to:
Central European University
Department of Philosophy

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Supervisor: Tim Crane

Vienna, Austria
2022

Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation contains no material accepted for the completion of any other degrees in any other institutions. I also declare that this dissertation contains no material previously written and/or published by another person unless appropriate acknowledgement is made in the form of biographical reference.

Nikhil Mahant
Vienna, 27th July 2022

Abstract

This dissertation is an investigation of names *qua* words of ordinary language with wide ranging morphological, phonetic, and semantic properties. The four chapters following the introductory first chapter—each written as a standalone article arguing for a distinct conclusion—contribute to one or another aspect of a philosophical treatment of names that places central importance to their status as words. The second chapter argues that the dominant construal of names as simple *tags* makes them exceptional within the class of words—a consequence that must be avoided on grounds of uniformity and parsimony. The third chapter proposes a general way of distinguishing between literal and non-literal uses of names and argues that an important class of uses of names i.e., 'predicative' uses (e.g., the use of 'Alfred' in 'there are no Alfreds in my cohort') are literal. The last two chapters contain arguments for *metalinguistic* views of names i.e., views that specify the meaning of a name by mentioning the name. The fourth chapter defends metalinguistic views against the charge of circularity. The final chapter provides a new argument for metalinguistic views of names by focusing attention to a distinctive yet largely overlooked linguistic feature of names (i.e., unlike other words, the cross-linguistic uses of names are unproblematic and prevalent).

Acknowledgements

The idea of writing a dissertation on names originated one afternoon in Fall 2019 in a chance meeting with Tim Crane in the corridors of our department (then located in the beautiful Budapest campus). After toying with some issues surrounding cognitive propositions and the metaphysics of identity in my first year, I was searching for a philosophical topic to commit to as the topic of my dissertation. In the few minutes that it took for the printer to spew out his prints, Tim talked about an article on names that he had written in the nineties, one 'which took seriously the fact that there can be many nikhils'. This short, tantalizing introduction was followed by an advice to not read the article and to not make much of such facts about names. I did not, of course, take the advice.

I would first like to thank Tim for his momentous role in this dissertation. Discussing the key works within my field with him in the initial years of my PhD provided a solid foundation for the rest of my graduate studies. In the later years, I benefitted from his exceptional ability to spot promising lines of thought in the (needlessly) complex and often confused prose that I submitted to him. His contributions in this dissertation are too many to list, but I must make a special note of one. Chapter 3 develops a 'subtle and complex' issue that Tim flags in his article from the nineties with a promissory note to develop it later (Crane, 1992, pp 19-20). I owe the central thesis of this chapter to this earlier work (although I do not claim to have motivated or defended it in the way that Tim would have). I do not know how many conclusions about names from this dissertation I will keep for life, but I know that I will always keep the philosophical values that I gained from Tim in the process of writing it: write clearly, focus on points of agreement rather than disagreement, and do not begin with the assumption that your interlocutors must be wrong or mistaken.

Three exchange/research visits had a tremendous role in bringing this dissertation to its present form. I visited the University of Texas at Austin in summer 2021 to work under the supervision of Mark Sainsbury. All articles included in this dissertation have benefitted from Mark's honest and kind feedback. He also patiently listened to many of my ill formed ideas, helping me develop some and dump others. Josh Dever and David Sosa very generously gave their time to read parts of this dissertation and suggested ways to better say what I wanted to say. Austin was an intense experience—busy, challenging, and full of activity. Almost

v

Table of Contents

viii

1. Introduction

To someone who does not already belong to the clique of philosophers working on the philosophy of names, the title of this dissertation may come as a surprise—of course names are words, what else could they be?

And there is good reason why such surprise should be justified. Many, or rather most, linguistic properties of names parallel such properties of words more generally. Like words, names are constructed using the phonemes of a language and can be written using its script, they can be part of sentences and other expressions, they often have translations (e.g., "Vienna" is the English translation of "Wien"), they can be inflected for number, case, etc. (e.g., in English, the suffix "-s" can be attached to names to form plural forms like "Alfreds"), and like words, names allow conversion into other grammatical categories (e.g., conversion of the names "Google" into the verb 'to google' etc.)

And yet, for much of the history of analytic philosophy the rich syntactic, morphological, and semantic properties of names *qua* words have remained largely ignored. The classical philosophical views of names—i.e., Descriptivism and Millianism—treated names less as words with wide-ranging linguistic properties and more as devices of reference. And for good part of the last century, the philosophical debate remained focused almost exclusively on questions concerning *how* names refer. §1.1 reviews the history of the debate and highlights some motivations that drove the enquiry into the nature of names. It also makes a case that, given those motivations, the classical theorists—e.g., Frege, Russell, and Kripke—were more interested in certain specific features of names that were relevant to their larger philosophical concerns and less interested in investigating the rich linguistic features of names as *words*

1

belonging to an ordinary language. The relevance of the work of these theorists about ordinary language names is—to that extent—circumscribed.

The past two decades, however, have witnessed nothing short of a revolution in the philosophical thinking about names—one that has resulted partly from an increased recognition within philosophy that like any other natural phenomena, ordinary language is a proper subject of an empirical investigation, and partly from the greater interaction of philosophy with theoretical linguistics. It would not be wrong to say that the philosophical discussion on names has woken up to the fact that names are words with rich linguistic properties. The turn of the century has seen the focus of philosophical work on names widen from a limited enquiry into their use as referential expressions to a broader investigation which takes note of the large array of linguistic properties of names—including their non-referential uses and their many interesting morphological and lexical-semantic properties. §1.2 reviews these developments and provides a very brief summary of some new philosophical proposals concerning names.

This dissertation is a part of the new revolution. The four chapters following this introduction—each written as a standalone article arguing for a distinct conclusion—contribute to one or other aspect of a philosophical treatment of names that places central importance to their status as words. The final two chapters also argue for the position that names are words that have a *metalinguistic* meaning—i.e., the meaning of a name N is (roughly) 'bearer of "N"'. §1.3 lays down how the individual chapters fit within the landscape of the larger contemporary debate on names. It also gives a brief summary of the arguments of the chapters and their significance for the broader view that names are words.

2

1.1 The debate on names in the last century

An investigation into the nature of ordinary language names can take either of two different approaches. One approach is to investigate names for their own sake—i.e., as words belonging to a natural language—with an aim of learning more about their linguistic behaviour. Another approach is to investigate names with an aim to gain insights into some further epistemological, logical, or metaphysical phenomena of interest.

The methodology appropriate for an investigation that takes the first approach is the one adopted by a scientist studying a natural phenomenon like tides or pollination. It involves carefully detailing the complex features of the phenomenon as it occurs in nature and proposing hypotheses about the general rules that govern it. It would be methodologically problematic for such an investigation to limit itself to some aspects of the phenomenon while excluding others. Just as an investigation of tides would fail if it restricted itself only to a particular location or a particular time of the day, an investigation that takes the first approach would fail if it limited itself to a subset of name uses or their linguistic properties. In contrast, for an investigation that takes the second approach, it would neither be necessary nor fruitful to focus on *all* aspects of the linguistic practice of using names. Such an investigation must limit itself to features of names that are relevant to its aims.

The broader objective of this section is to highlight the fact that the two classical views of names that dominated the philosophical debate in the last century—i.e., Descriptivism and Millianism about names—did not do justice to the status of names as words of ordinary language. In alignment with this broader objective, the following subsections (§1.1.1 and §1.1.2) make two claims—one uncontroversial and the other not-so-uncontroversial. The uncontroversial claim is that the two classical views were result of an enquiry that adopted

3

the latter of the two approaches. The motivations behind these views were not to gain a greater insight into the linguistic nature of ordinary language names, but to serve a further philosophical aim pursued by their proponents. (Because the claim is rather uncontroversial, the discussion here is limited to the motivations of Frege, Russell, and Kripke.) The not-so-uncontroversial claim is that the work of the classical theorists cannot, and should not, be taken to throw light on the linguistic nature of ordinary language names: Descriptivism and Millianism are not theories about a kind of *word*, but theories concerning a special type of tag, or an artificial class of expressions defined based on a specific logical role.

1.1.1 The uncontroversial claim

Gottlob Frege is widely credited to be among the first proponents of Descriptivism about names: broadly, the view that the referent of a name is determined by a descriptive condition, or sense, associated with the name. There is some reason to believe that the workings of ordinary language were not among Frege's central concerns: Although Frege discusses some issues concerning meaning, compositionality, and reference in a few of his works (now classics in the philosophy of language), his remarks on language were motivated by issues arising from the logicist project i.e., the project of showing that all of Mathematics is an extension of logic (for a historical account of Frege's motivations, see Weiner (1996, 1997).)

But there is stronger reason to believe that Frege was not concerned about the linguistic nature of ordinary language names. Frege does make some remarks about a category of expressions that he calls '*Eigennamen*', but he notoriously did not provide a definition for how he intended to use the term (Dummett, 1973, pp. 55–56). Apart from ordinary language names, Frege uses the term for mathematical constants (e.g., 'a', 'b', 'c' etc. used for points, lines, etc. in geometry), descriptions (e.g., 'point of intersection of *a* and *b*') and even

4

indicative sentences (Frege, 1892b/1997). (Even if it is assumed that the notion of *Eigenname* approximates to ordinary language names, it is doubtful—as Dummett (1973, pp. 110-111) and Evans (1982, Chap. 1) have argued—that Frege is committed to the sort of descriptivist thesis about ordinary language names as is described at the beginning of this subsection.)

What then is Frege's motivation behind his discussion of *Eigennamen*? Arguably, Frege's usage of the word '*Eigenname'* was intended at characterizing the ontological category of 'object' and to show its distinctness from another ontological category within Frege's philosophical framework i.e., the category of 'concept'. (The ontological distinction between concept and object serves an important purpose in Frege's development of predicate logic in opposition to the logic of Aristotle.) For Frege, all that there is to being an object/concept is being the *Bedeutung* of an *Eigenname*/predicate-expression. Frege held that it is only in the context of a sentence that words have any meaning and the question of whether an expression is an *Eigenname* is to be answered by attending to the logical role of the expression within in a sentence. (Frege 1884/1997, p. 108)

Consider, for instance, the use of 'Elisabeth' and 'The Queen of the UK' in the sentences 'Elisabeth is grey-haired' and 'The Queen of the UK is long-haired'. Substituting 'Elisabeth' with 'The Queen of the UK' does not result in an ungrammatical sentence, but substituting it with 'is long haired'—a predicate-expression—does. Frege took such data to show that expressions like that 'Elisabeth' and 'The Queen of the UK' have the same logical role, one that is different from the role of expressions like 'is long haired', 'is grey-haired', and expressions like 'man' in 'many men are mortal'. The former class of expressions are *Eigennamen*, and the latter predicate-expressions. (Frege thought the logical form of 'many men are mortal' was something like: many x are such that x is a man and x is mortal.)

5

Frege thus took logical categories to be prior to ontological ones—the thesis of 'syntactic priority' as Crispin Wright (1983, p. 24) puts it—and sought to define ontological categories in terms of logical categories. This is not to say that the syntactic basis that Frege relied upon was sound or that his conception of logical form was correct. For instance, it is not clear that *Eigennamen* can always be substituted for each other e.g., 'The author of *Truth and Other Enigmas*' cannot be substituted for 'Dummett' in 'Professor Dummett and his wife were pioneering anti-racist activists' (see Oliver (2005, p. 183) and Szabó (2008) for more discussion and examples.) Further, there is some debate concerning Frege's categorization of expressions like 'man' in 'many men are mortal' as a predicate expression (see Ben-Yami (2004, 2006) for more discussion.)

Irrespective of the question of whether Frege was right about these matters or whether 'syntactic priority' is a sound approach for drawing a metaphysical distinction, one thing is clear: Frege's usage of *Eigenname* is not intended to individuate a kind of expression i.e., a word used in ordinary language. Rather, for Frege, *Eigennamen* were expressions that performed a specific logical role in the context of a sentence—i.e., the role of referring to an object or having an object as its *Bedeutung*.

This is most evident in Frege's discussion of cases where an expression does not refer to an object but performs the role typically performed by a common-noun, although the use of that expression would ordinarily be categorized as the use of a name, for instance, the use of "Vienna" in the sentences "there is only one Vienna" and "Trieste is no Vienna". Of such cases, Frege writes:

> We must not let ourselves be deceived because language often uses the same word now as a proper name, now as a concept-word; in our example, the numeral [i.e. the numeral "one" in

6

"there is only one Vienna"] indicates that we have the latter; 'Vienna' is here a concept-word, like 'metropolis'. (Frege, 1892a/1997, p. 189)

Frege is clearly not interested in the use of the name "Vienna" as a common noun—for all of Frege's interest in language, such occurrences of "Vienna" are not *Eigennamen*.

Besides Frege, Bertrand Russell is widely credited as a proponent of Descriptivism about names. However, Russell's interest in names—particularly in his writings from the second decade of twentieth century—originated from his interest in some wider philosophical concerns: e.g., the question of how can we talk about non-existent objects? How can we have knowledge of objects with which we bear no direct experiential relation, etc. I will now briefly discuss some *epistemological* motivations that Russell has in discussing names.

Russell made a distinction between 'Knowledge by description' and 'Knowledge by acquaintance', such that the latter kind of knowledge can be gained only if there is a direct experiential relation of between the knower and the object. (Note that Russell's notion of 'acquaintance' is a technical one and must be distinguished from the ordinary notion of 'acquaintance'. One difference is that the ordinary notion admits of degrees but the technical one does not (for further discussion, see Crane, 2012, pp. 192-194).) One can, of course, come to know something by reading or hearing a sentence that contains a name, say, the sentence 'Otto von Bismarck was 6 feet tall'. And although there can be cases in which while communicating information about an object using a name one *also* stands in the relation of acquaintance with that object, in an overwhelming majority of cases we communicate knowledge using sentences that contain names for objects with which we do not bear such a relation.

7

Thus, on Russell's view it cannot be knowledge by acquaintance, but rather knowledge by description that we communicate using sentences containing ordinary language names. The most straightforward way to account for this is to say that in the limited context of using a name within a sentence to transfer knowledge, the contribution of a name to the communicated knowledge is not an object, but a description. Russell expresses this in the below passage, which is often cited to support the ascription of Descriptivism to him:

> Common words, even proper names, are usually really descriptions. That is to say, the thought in the mind of a person using a proper name correctly can generally only be expressed explicitly if we replace the proper name by a description. (Russell, 1911, p. 114)

Russell discuss ordinary language names not for the sake of illuminating their linguistic nature, but to make a point in the context of his larger epistemological aims. (This is also evident from the fact that Russell does not have qualms about characterizing a linguistic category using an epistemological basis: For Russell, 'logically proper names' are expressions that can be used only when one is directly acquainted with the object referred to using the expression. Some examples include 'this', 'that' etc.) Further, what Russell says about names in the quote above is far cry from the ascription of Descriptivism—i.e., a general thesis about the meaning or reference of ordinary language names—to him. (See Sainsbury (1993/2002) for further discussion)

Showing that the alleged proponents of Descriptivism did not actually hold the descriptive view of names does not, of course, amount to showing that there have been *no* defenders of the view. Descriptivism has been defended by philosophers other than Russell and Frege and some such views were the target of the 'direct reference' theories proposed in the 1970s. However, the agenda for much of the debate on names was already set by the discussion

8

initiated by Frege and Russell: both were interested almost exclusively in the referential uses of names and ignored the rest of their features/uses that did not serve their larger philosophical interests. The deficiency of Descriptivist views is not so much in what they say about names, but in what they ignore about them.

Further, saying that the philosophical motivations of Frege and Russell lie somewhere else does not mean that there were no philosophers who were interested in investigating the nature of names of ordinary language. In fact, ordinary language was quite explicitly the focus of the work of atleast Ludwig Wittgenstein and Peter Strawson, both of whom had views that have been taken to be broadly sympathetic to a Descriptivist treatment of names. (Strawson, 1959, p. 180; Wittgenstein, 1953/2009, §79). However, neither descriptivists nor the 'ordinary language philosophers' took any serious note of the name uses that are now the centrepiece of the debate on names (e.g., the use of names as common nouns or as anaphoric expressions that are discussed in §1.2.)

Saul Kripke is the foremost defender of the Millian view of names—i.e., the view that like a paper or plastic *tag*, a name refers to an object 'directly' and not by virtue of some mediating description (see §2.1.1 for a more detailed discussion of the Millian view). It is not surprising that Kripke's work on names followed his ground-breaking work on the semantics of modal logic, which investigated modality using the vocabulary of possible worlds instead of analyticity or aprioricity. One of Kripke's philosophical motivations—esp. in his works from the 1970s, including *Naming and Necessity*—was to work out the consequences of the possible worlds framework of thinking about modality in broader epistemological and metaphysical discussions within philosophy.

Kripke's interest in ordinary language names was motivated by those broader philosophical objectives. In the 1940s, Quine had raised some influential worries against Quantified Modal Logic ("QML"), chief among which was the objection that quantifying into modal contexts violated some fundamental logical laws (Quine, 1943). One way for a defender of QML to overcome Quine's objections was to adopt an objectual interpretation of quantification in QML and disallow non-rigid terms from the formal system (for a historical overview of these developments, see Stanley (1997)). This was the approach adopted by Ruth Barcan Marcus and Kripke to defend QML from Quine's objections.

However, for the notion of necessity (or possibility) developed for QML to be extendible to the ordinary language notion of necessity, it is important that QML be an accurate enough model of at least a fragment of ordinary language. If there are terms in QML whose only function is to stand for objects (i.e., individual constants), then there must be such terms in natural language—and names are the most obvious candidates for this role. Further, if for the defender of QML to overcome Quine's objections it is important that terms in QML must be rigid designators, then names of ordinary language must be rigid designators as well. Kripke's investigation into names was motivated by the importance of some conclusions for his larger philosophical objectives—particularly the view that a name 'simply refers to its bearer and has no other linguistic function' (Kripke, 1979, pp. 239–240) and the related but distinct idea that 'names are rigid designators' (Kripke, 1980, p. 48). (Kripke, of course, recognized that there can be expressions e.g., 'the smallest prime' that are rigid designators that do not refer 'simply' or 'directly'.)

1.1.2 The not-so-uncontroversial claim

The not-so-uncontroversial claim is that although it represents some significant advances within philosophy, the work of the classical theorists cannot, and should not, be considered illuminative of the linguistic nature of ordinary language names. It may seem that the discussion of the last section will be irrelevant for an argument of this claim: the motivation that a theorist has for investigating a phenomenon speaks neither for nor against the truth or falsity of what the theorist says about the phenomenon. To think otherwise is to muddy Hans Reichenbach's distinction between the 'context of discovery' and the 'context of justification', or to use Karl Popper's words, the distinction between 'how it happens that a new idea occurs to a man' versus whether the idea is justified (Reichenbach, 1938, p.6-7; Popper, 1959/2002, p. 7).

But it is not the *truth*, but the *relevance* of the work of the classical theorists in an investigation of ordinary language names that the claim disputes and looking at their motivations can tell us a lot about what they aimed to achieve from their investigations. Given their greater philosophical objectives, the classical theorists limited their attention to some aspects of the practice of using names in natural language while ignoring and side-lining others. For instance, the fact that a name can be used to *refer* to an individual received a lot of attention. Theorists from both Descriptive and Millian camps began with the assumption that names refer and their debate was focused on the question of *how* they refer. Relations between names and individuals other than reference (e.g., the relation of *name-bearing*) and other non-referential uses of names (e.g., vocative uses i.e., uses in which names are used not to refer, but to draw the attention of someone) received little or no attention from them. Further, some facts about names were simply ignored as irrelevant. For example, in

11

responding to the objection that the rigidity thesis is rendered questionable by the linguistic fact that two individuals can share the *same* name, Kripke remarks:

> I believe that many important theoretical issues about the semantics of names (probably not all) would be largely unaffected had our conventions required that no two things shall be given the same name. Kripke (1980, p. 7)

These remarks bring into relief the fact that Kripke's treatment of names already relies upon a prior judgement concerning which theoretical issues count as important in an investigation of ordinary language names.

This narrow focus of the classical theorists is not necessarily a criticism. Given that their interests lie elsewhere, a selective focus on certain aspects of natural language names was the correct methodological stance for the classical theorists to take. However, this approach would be methodologically problematic for an investigation of names that seeks to investigate them for their own sake i.e., as words belonging to ordinary language. Someone interested in this sort of investigation ought to be cautious in accepting the results of the classical theorists. Not much of the classical debate between Descriptivism and Millianism would be lost if one were to assume that ordinary language names were merely devices of reference whose only purpose was to refer to individuals and nothing more. This however, is clearly not true for ordinary language names: like words more generally, names in ordinary language have a rich variety of linguistic properties. The relevance of the classical views is restricted to the extent that the assumptions about names that drove the classical investigation into names cannot be shared by an enquiry whose purpose is to investigate ordinary language names.

An analogy might help bring the point in sharper focus. Consider a neuroscientist interested in discovering a treatment of a mental disorder (say, panic attacks.) The purposes of the neuroscientist may get fulfilled even if they were to limit themselves to studying the role of the *brain* in the causation and treatment of the disorder. They may, for example, discover parts of the brain and neural pathways that are responsible for panic attacks and may also find out some ways to alleviate the disorder by means of physical or pharmacological interventions in the brain. While the purposes of the neuroscientist may be well served even if she assumed that *mental* disorders are nothing but disorders of the *brain*—or even that the mind *is* the brain—someone investigating the nature of the mind would do well to not accept such assumptions (even if they accept, and benefit from, the neuroscientist's work on panic attacks.) An investigation whose purpose is to study the mind must acknowledge and account for aspects of the mental—e.g., intentionality, consciousness, the phenomenal character of experience etc.—that may be wholly irrelevant to the purposes of the neuroscientist.

I have tried to highlight that the classical theorists are like the neuroscientist in the analogy and ordinary language names are like the mind. A philosophical treatment of names that takes their status as words of ordinary language must not uncritically accept the assumptions of the classical theorists and attend to a wider range of phenomenon concerning the uses and linguistic properties of names than the classical theorists did.

1.2 The new philosophical discussion of names.

Perhaps the first serious note of the wider syntactic properties of ordinary language names was made by Clarence Sloat, who argued for the view that 'the syntactic proper nouns are a subclass of the countable nouns of English' (Sloat, 1969). Sloat's proposal was based on the syntactic observation that the distribution of determiners with names closely parallels the

13

distribution of determiners with common nouns e.g., determiners like 'a', 'some' etc. can be used with both names as well as common nouns. Consistent with Sloat's proposal, Tyler Burge argued for the thesis that names are predicates—or to put it more carefully, *general terms* (Burge, 1973, fn. 7)—that are accompanied by an unarticulated determiner when a name is used in a sentence to refer to an individual.

(Worth noting here is the fact that in many languages—e.g., Modern Greek, Icelandic, Northern Norwegian and Northern Swedish, European Portuguese, some dialects of German, etc.—names are always accompanied with a determiner when used to refer to an individual (Matushansky, 2006, p. 228).)

Although Hornsby (1976), Bach (1987), Crane (1992), Larson & Segal (1995), and Geurts (1997) contain discussion in support of views similar to Burge's, such views about names were—to use the words Kent Bach (2002) used for the reception of his own view—'met with something closer to resounding silence than hushed rapture'. It was not until well into the second decade of the present century that philosophical views like 'Predicativism' and 'Indexicalism' gathered greater attention within philosophical discussions. (Some of the works that contain this new philosophical discussion on names is cited in the next paragraph and these positions are discussed in greater detail in §2.3.2) This section identifies three broad dimensions across which it will be evident that the new philosophical work takes note of—and also accounts for—the linguistic features of names *qua* words.

Firstly, in the new discussion there is near universal recognition of name uses that were overlooked by the classical views. Some such uses include the use of names as common nouns (e.g., in 'There are relatively few *Alfreds* in Princeton'(Burge, 1973)), mass nouns (e.g., 'Lenny reads too much *Heidegger* and not enough *Frege*' (Jeshion, 2015c)), verbs (e.g.,

'We'll need to *google* directions to the university' (Jeshion, 2015c)), measure terms (e.g., 'I am rich, but not *Bill Gates* rich' (Lee 2020)), and even anaphoric expressions (e.g., in 'If a child is christened "Bambi", then Disney will sue *Bambi's* parents' (Geurts, 1997); 'Every woman who has a husband called John and a lover called Gerontius takes only *Gerontius* to the Rare Names Convention' (Elbourne, 2005)).

Some such uses—particularly the use of names as common nouns and anaphoric uses—have motivated positions that seek to assimilate names within the linguistic category of common nouns (e.g., Elbourne (2005), Gray (2012), Fara (2015b), Bach (2015)), indexicals (e.g., Rami (2014)), and pronouns (e.g., Schoubye (2017, 2020a)). The fact that many of these new proposals take the form of a wholesale assimilation of the class of names into some class of words (e.g., Bach's (2015) proposal that "names are fundamentally no different in kind from common nouns") is perhaps the most direct endorsement of the view that names are words. This is, of course, not the only way to endorse the view: one may hold, for instance, that names are a very distinctive category of word.

However, to say that the contemporary discussion takes note of these uses of names is not to say that everyone in the discussion *accepts* that such uses are relevant for a philosophical debate focused on issues concerning the meaning and reference of names (call such a debate a "semantic" debate). Some uses of names are clearly irrelevant for semantic debates. For instance, the linguistic features of names in their figurative uses—e.g., the metaphorical use of 'Jack Kennedy' in 'Dan Quayle is no Jack Kennedy' (Bach, 2006)—are not for a theory of names to account for, as much as they are for a theory of metaphor or figurative uses to account for. There is a lively debate about which of the variety of name-uses constitutes relevant phenomenon for a semantic theory of names. The important point in the present

15

context, however, is the fact that irrespective of one's location in the debate, the contemporary discussion of names takes serious note of the various ways in which names can be used and such uses are not brushed asides as resulting from the imprecise nature of ordinary language.

Secondly, the wider linguistic properties that names have *qua* words have been widely recognized in the contemporary semantic debate on names. For instance, the morpho-syntactic observation that like other words, names can be pluralized—e.g., by addition of the suffix '-s' or '-es' in English—is acknowledged by all theorists cited above. Further, like words, names can also be part of various word formation processes—e.g., morphological derivation, conversion etc. Facts about formation of new words from names are regularly employed in contemporary semantic debate, both to support a semantic proposal or to criticize it.

For instance, Schoubye (2017)—who holds the view that the linguistic behaviour of names is like that of pronouns—makes use of the fact that some pronouns in English can be converted into a common noun (e.g., the use of 'she' in 'my kitten is a she') in his explanation of 'predicative uses' of names—i.e., uses where a name ('N') appears as a general term true of a 'bearer of "N"' (e.g., 'Some *Alfreds* are crazy.'). Jeshion (2015c) uses the fact that adjectives can be morphologically derived from names in an argument for her favoured semantic thesis: Jeshion argues that it would be puzzling how "Kafkaesque" could have the meaning that it does (i.e., characteristic of the nightmarish qualities of the fictional worlds created by a *particular* Bohemian author) unless one subscribes to the semantic view that the meaning of a name is just its referent.

Third and finally, the contemporary debate amply deploys conclusions about the general

linguistic features of *words* in the semantic debate concerning *names*. I will now discuss one

example from the contemporary debate in which a general linguistic property of words—i.e.,

the property of polysemy—is deployed to explain the linguistic properties of names.

The polysemous nature of words is well recognized and within linguistics there is now a

thriving body of work on polysemy within the linguistics literature (for an overview, see

Vicente & Falkum (2017)). Gail Leckie (2013) argues that some "deviant" uses of names can

be understood as resulting from the general polysemous character of words. Leckie points out

that some departures of the meaning of words from their conventional meaning (that cannot

obviously be thought of as figurative) can be explained as being governed by certain

"metonymic generalizations". For instance, the generalization "Instrument-for-Action" can be

used to explain some cases of denominalized verbs—e.g., the use of the nouns "shampoo"

and "spreadsheet" as verbs in in (1) & (2) below:

> **"Instrument-for-Action:** When the common noun or mass term for an instrument appears
> with the syntax of a verb, it may be interpreted as a verb for the most salient action performed
> with that instrument" (Leckie, 2013, p. 1143)

1. Jeannie shampooed the dog.

2. John spreadsheeted his expenses claim.

Leckie argues that the general account of polysemy can be easily extended to explain some

uses of names that have been especially controversial in recent years, e.g., the predicative

uses discussed earlier. She argues that the metonymic generalization "Name-for-Predicate"—

which she takes to be a lexical rule of the lexicon of most languages—explains the

predicative uses of "Alfred" and "Donald Trump" in (3) and (4).

17

Name-for-Predicate: Predicative uses of "N" mean "bearer of 'N'" where the second occurrence of "N" is a referential use of N.

3. No Alfred has ever walked on the moon.

4. There are twenty Donald Trumps in the United States alone.

There can of course be debate about whether the polysemy account offered by Leckie can be a correct explanation of the predicative uses of names (for some criticisms, see Rami (2022, p. 168) and Jeshion (2015c, fn. 30)). The point to note here is that the argumentative manoeuvres involved in such an argument makes essential use of the consideration that names are words.

The new philosophical discussion on names gives central importance to the status of names as words of ordinary language: it recognises the wide variety of different uses of names and acknowledges the role of such uses in the semantic debate, it acknowledges the various morpho-syntactic properties that names have as words, and it makes use of what we know about the properties of words more generally within the semantic debate about names.

1.3 The organization and significance of this dissertation

This dissertation is part of the new philosophical discussion on names. Many of the problems traditionally discussed by philosophers (particularly concerning reference, the role of names in intensional contexts, and empty names) take a backseat in this dissertation. And from the standpoint of the traditional debate, it may even seem that the content of the next four chapters is unconventional—or worse, irrelevant—to the debate on names.

But this is a feature, not a bug. Part of my objective here has been to highlight aspects of the practice of using names that have so far been ignored. It is therefore natural that the

18

importance of some of the topics (e.g., the issue of literality of name-uses and the distinctive phonetic features of names) may not be immediately apparent. The objective of this section, which summarizes the argument and aims of the following four chapters and highlights their significance, is to address such worries to some extent.

On the basis of some methodological considerations, I pointed out in §1.1 that the philosophical treatment accorded to names by the classical views does not do justice to the status of names as words of ordinary language. Chapter 2 is written as a critical piece against the dominant classical semantic view of names—i.e. the Millian view—and highlights some metaphysical considerations that support this conclusion. (*Metaphysical* in the sense of being concerned with an answer to the question of *what words are*.) The chapter, however, goes even further—it argues that some unpalatable metaphysical consequences of the Millian semantic view make it less attractive vis-à-vis its rivals.

To add a little more detail to this skeletal picture: the Millian view relies on a metaphysical view of names—often given the label 'common currency conception'—on which the names of distinct individuals count as distinct names. This chapter argues that the common currency conception makes names exceptional within the class of linguistic expressions: if the common currency conception is correct, then names must have a sui-generis metaphysical nature, distinct from the metaphysics of every other kind of linguistic expression.

On grounds of uniformity and ontological parsimony, the exceptionalism for names within the class of names is undesirable. Still, such exceptionalism might have been justified if the Millian view had a clear, uncontested theoretical advantage over its competitors. In the context of a semantic debate about names, however, if the closest competitors of the Millian view do not result in such exceptionalism, then it counts as a strike against the Millian view.

This chapter points out that some new semantic views of names—particularly ones that assimilate the class of names within the class of common nouns or pronouns—do not require such exceptionalism. The sui-generis metaphysical nature of names required by the Millian view, therefore, works as an argument against the view.

In §1.2, I briefly remarked that not all uses of names in ordinary language will be relevant for a philosophical investigation into names. A distinction can be drawn between uses of names that are relevant for semantic theorizing about names (call them "literal" uses of names) and other uses—e.g., metaphorical or figurative uses—that are not directly relevant for such purposes (call them "non-literal" uses of names). Indeed, the distinction between literal and non-literal uses is one that all parties in the philosophical debate on names rely upon and endorse. However, the lack of a principled basis for drawing this distinction represents an important deficiency in the debate.

One philosophical problem that has arisen from this deficiency concerns the "extended-uses of names", which have figured prominently in the contemporary debate concerning names. Some such uses include: the use of "Romanov" to stand for "member of the Romanov Dynasty" in "Joe Romanov is not a Romanov", the use of "Stella" to stand for "an artwork produced by Frank Stella" in "Two Stellas are inside the museum" etc. Extended uses are generally taken to be non-literal: it is for linguistic mechanisms that explain cases of metaphor, metonymy etc. more generally (but not for a semantic theory of names) to explain the properties of names in such uses. In recent years, many theorists have argued that extended uses raise a serious objection against some new views that take the linguistic properties of names in their predicative uses to be semantically relevant. Central to the

20

objection is a challenge—which I call the "Sceptic's Challenge"—to justify the assumption that despite their similarities, predicative uses of names are literal but extended uses.

Chapter 3 of this dissertation motivates a general way of drawing the line between literal and non-literal uses of names, and in doing so, also provides a response to Sceptic's Challenge. Based on an essential, non-semantic feature of our name using practice—i.e., a name can be used by participants in a linguistic exchange without possessing substantial information about its bearer(s)—this chapter motivates a 'criterion of literality' for names and uses it to argue that predicative uses of names are literal, but extended uses are not. The classical views of names had assumed that it is only the referential uses that are relevant for a philosophical investigation into names. The argument of this chapter shows not only that names can be used non-literally in some of their referential uses, but also that the range of literal uses of names is broader and includes the predicative uses of names.

Chapters 4 and 5 provide arguments in support of *metalinguistic* views of names: views that treat names as words that have a metalinguistic meaning. The first of these two chapters defends metalinguistic views against Kripke's rejection of metalinguistic views on the ground that such views are 'blatantly circular' (Kripke, 1980, p. 72). It begins by distinguishing a word from its associated form: while words have semantic properties, forms—which are types of sounds, inscriptions, or signs—do not. It also highlights the fact that quotation marks can be used to form a quote-name of either a word or its associated form. The chapter then uses these two considerations to argue that the impression of circularity in metalinguistic views results from the decision to resolve the ambiguity of quotation in the metalinguistic specification of meaning (and the property of name-bearing) in one way rather than the

21

other—i.e., by taking quotation as forming quote-names of words. Metalinguistic views, however, are not committed to this understanding of quotation.

While much of the linguistic properties of names parallel such properties of words more generally, they also have a set of distinctive properties that distinguish them from other categories of words. Chapter 5, highlights a distinctive phonetic property of names and works out its implications in the semantic debate on names. It does so by focusing attention of what may be called the 'cross-linguistic uses' of names. A cross-linguistic use of a name is the use of a name constructed using the phonemes of one language within the sentences of another language. For example, Gandhi was given a name—pronounced [ˈgaːndʱi]—constructed using the phonemes of Gujarati, a language spoken in the western part of India. The use of Gandhi's given name in an utterance of an English sentence is then an instance of a cross-linguistic use of a name.

Names are distinctive in the class of words in that their cross-linguistic uses of names are unproblematic and widespread. Such uses of names however, raise an interesting philosophical puzzle: they violate the general requirement that although an expression can be *mentioned* within any language, it can be *used* within a language only if it is articulable using the phonemes of that language. Chapter 5 argues that the puzzling nature of the cross-linguistic uses results from the broadly Millian assumption that names lack any semantically relevant syntactic structure. Cross-linguistic uses, however, are not puzzling at all on a metalinguistic semantics which treats the phonological articulation of a name as being mentioned (instead of used) in the syntax of the sentence in which the name is used. By drawing attention to a distinctive aspect of our name-using practice, Chapter 5 provides a new argument for metalinguistic semantic views of names.

22

2. The Metaphysical Burden of Millianism

> Morgiana chalked all the other houses in a similar manner, and defeated the scheme: how? simply by obliterating the difference of appearance between that house and the others. The chalk was still there, but it no longer served the purpose of a distinctive mark. (J.S. Mill, 'Of Names', 1843, p. 37)

In the Arabian Nights, the robber puts a chalk mark on the house containing booty with an intention to identify it later. In his classic discussion of proper names, Mill contends that such a scheme of putting a chalk mark on a house is analogous to the practice of giving a name to an individual—a proper name is 'an unmeaning mark' that simply stands for an object without connoting anything about it. Mill's eponymous view has become the present-day orthodoxy on the semantics of names. In his discussion, however, Mill takes the analogy further—Mill notes that Morgiana successfully defeated the robber's scheme by putting the same[1] chalk mark on all the other houses. If names are unmeaning marks, then giving the same name to two or more individuals should have the same defeating effect on the scheme of naming that Morgiana's ingenious duplication of chalk marks had on the robber's scheme.

Yet, names are recklessly multiplied—or atleast so it seems at first glance. David Hume, David Lewis, and David Kaplan (apart from some 10 million other individuals) share the same first name, and it is not uncommon for more than one person to have the same full name (e.g., 'David Kaplan' and 'Lucy O'Brien'.) Why doesn't the institution of naming come

---

[1] The plot of the story from the Arabian nights requires Morgiana's mark to be *indiscriminable* from the robber's mark (instead of *identical*). The distinction between the (metaphysical) notion of identity and the (epistemic) notion of discrimination raises important issues and has received detailed treatment at other places— e.g., Williamson (2013). The distinction, however, does not affect the argument of this chapter, which concerns the metaphysical issue of name-individuation and not the epistemic issue of name-discrimination. Throughout this chapter, therefore, I will make the simplifying (but nontrivial) assumption that two objects (names, tags, etc.) are discriminable iff they are not identical.

crumbling down due to the existence of namesakes? This question is well acknowledged by defenders of the Millian view, and there is a surprising unanimity in the answer they provide for it: despite their orthographic or phonetic identity, names of distinct individuals count as distinct names. This response relies on a pre-semantic or 'metaphysical' account of names—often given the label 'common currency conception' or 'specific' names—on which the identity and individuation conditions of names conform to the Millian semantics.

This chapter argues that the common currency conception ('CCC') of names comes with a heavy price that undermines the very view that motivates it. While even defenders of the Millian view admit that the CCC 'does not agree with the most common usage' (Kripke, 1980, p. 8), I will argue further that the CCC makes names exceptional amongst the class of linguistic expressions—if the CCC is correct, then names must have a sui-generis metaphysical nature distinct from every other type of linguistic expression. Such metaphysical exceptionalism would be justified if the Millian view had a clear, uncontested theoretical advantage over its rivals. However, in the context of a semantic debate about names in which the closest competitors of the Millian view—i.e., the Predicate view and Indexicalism—do not result in such exceptionalism, it counts as a strike against the Millian view.

Looking ahead: §2.1 begins by identifying some semantic commitments of the Millian view. It also points out that these commitments place a constraint on name-individuation—call it the 'Millian individuation constraint'—that any metaphysical account of names must satisfy to be compatible with the Millian view. §2.2 gives an outline of two broad frameworks for thinking about the metaphysical nature of words and argues that the Millian individuation constraint forces one to accept a particular metaphysical picture of names—the common

currency conception. §2.3 provides arguments for why accepting the common currency conception makes the Millian view less attractive than its rivals.

2.1 Names and Tags

> Suppose we randomized as many whole numbers as we needed for a one-to-one correspondence, and thereby tagged each thing. This identifying tag is a proper name of the thing. […] This tag, a proper name, has no meaning. It simply tags. (Ruth Barcan Marcus, 1961, pp. 309–310)

2.1.1 Millian commitments

One central concern of the philosophy of language can be broadly framed as the following question: How do expressions of language relate to objects in the world? The Millian view (or 'Millianism') represents one manner of answering this question for one class of linguistic expressions—proper names. The linguistic nature of proper names according to Millianism is neatly captured by the image of a *tag* employed by Marcus in the passage quoted above and can be summarized in terms of the following three commitments[2,3]:

---

[2] My success in convincing the reader crucially depends on the absence of a verbal disagreement about what is meant by 'Millian' views. My argumentative target in this chapter is the classical semantic view of names—endorsed by JS Mill (1843), Ruth Barcan Marcus (1961), and Saul Kripke (1980)—which makes each of the commitment 1-3.
The term 'Millian view', however, has been used for semantic views that do not make one or more of these commitments. One recent example of this is Dolf Rami (2022, pp. 6–9) who calls the position outlined here 'Strong' Millianism and defends a weak, 'Millian' view of names that is not committed to *any* of the following three points.
I have no bone to pick with a broad, revisionist usage of the word 'Millian', but the reader should keep in mind that the argument of this chapter does not extend to views which are substantial modifications of the (classical) Millian view as presented here. (See also fn. 4)
[3] Given the commitments (1) and (2), empty names are known to raise problems for the Millian view. Most Millians offer some sort of a caveat to account for empty names (e.g., names do not refer but purport to refer, empty names refer to exotic/non-existent objects etc.) The problem of metaphysical exceptionalism of names and the problem of empty names, however, represent two *different* sources of pressure on the Millian account. For the sake of simplicity, I ignore empty names (and the modifications required in the Millian view of names to accommodate them.)

1. *Proper names are exclusively devices of reference*: There is a class of expressions in natural language—i.e., proper names—which function like tags (think valet parking tickets). It is in the very nature of the use of an object as a tag that it stands for another object. Similarly, a proper name 'simply refers to its bearer and has no other linguistic function.' (Kripke, 1979, pp. 239–240).

2. *Proper names have unique bearers*: It would defeat the very purpose of a tag—which is to stand for a particular object—if the same tag is assigned to more than one object. (A parking ticket should allow the valet to identify the unique car that needs to be brought instead of a bunch of cars.) Analogously, a proper name has a unique bearer.

3. *Proper names are directly referential*: A tag can be simply assigned to an object and may not contain any information about the object to which it is assigned (valet parking tickets often contain just a number and no information about the parked car.) Analogously, proper names are 'directly referential'—they are not associated with any referent-determining or reference constraining information.[4]

The Millian view is often contrasted with classical descriptivism—the view of names generally ascribed to Gottlob Frege (1892b) and Bertrand Russell (1911, p. 114). However, the Millian view and classical Descriptivism do not disagree about each of the above three commitments. (For instance, both views agree that when used referentially, a proper name refers to a *unique* object.) My aim in this chapter is to examine the very way the relation

---

[4] The phrase 'directly referential' may be used in two very different ways (Martí, 2003). Kaplan (1989) calls a singular term 'directly referential' if its contribution to a proposition (or truth-conditions) is an individual. On this 'propositional' conception of direct reference, indexicals are directly referential. But the notion of 'direct reference' relevant here is what—in conformity with the history of the debate—Genoveva Martí (2003, pp. 163–165) calls the 'Millian' conception of direct reference, according to which a term is directly referential if its referent is not constrained/determined by any mediating description/condition. As the character of indexicals play a part in determining their referent, on the Millian conception of direct reference, indexicals are *not* directly referential. Thus, Indexicalist views (references in fn. 18) are not Millian, nor are views like the Mill-Frege Theory proposed by Manuel García-Carpintero (2018)—neither of these views are committed to 3.

between language and the world is construed on the Millian account, and this aim is better served by focusing on the contrast of the Millian view with two of its most prominent contemporary competitors—the Predicate view and Indexicalism. These views reject the Millian equation of a name with a tag and disagree with the Millian view on each of the above three commitments. I will discuss these views and how they fare vis-à-vis the Millian view in §2.3; but before that, I will highlight an important consequence of construing the linguistic function of a name on the model of a tag. This is the agenda for the rest of this section and the next section.

2.1.2 The Individuation of Tags

The successful use of a tag presupposes some prior understanding of the constitution of the tag and the criterion of its identity and individuation. In Marcus's example, a tag is a whole number such that distinct numbers count as distinct tags. Valet parking tickets are often paper or plastic objects bearing a number—a physical embodiment of Marcus's number tags. Two physically distinct parking tickets with different numbers count as distinct tickets, and despite being garbled or damaged by a user, a ticket still counts as the same ticket insofar as it retains the number that it is individuated by. Furthermore, if two copies of the same ticket need to be issued—say, because either of two different people would like to collect a car—it can be done by issuing two distinct physical paper or plastic objects bearing the same number.[5]

---

[5] The reader will be tempted to consider the case in which two distinct businesses use the same parking ticket series (without proprietary branding, typography, etc. to physically distinguish the tickets from one series from those of another.) It may seem that in this case the same number on two tickets issued by the two businesses would not guarantee sameness of the ticket. However, this is not correct. The tickets (bearing the same number) issued by the two businesses will count as the same—it will be possible, for instance, to collect the car parked by one business using the ticket issued by another. (This is also an example of a case in which the system of tagging has broken down because of the assignment of the same ticket to two objects.)

Such complex tagging manoeuvres are possible because we have an intuitive grasp of what constitutes a tag and the conditions under which two tags count as the same or distinct. A reader's acceptance of Morgiana's success crucially depends on the (natural) assumption that the tag used by the robber is a chalk mark individuated by its shape and colour—only then it makes sense to accept that Morgiana succeeded in putting the same tag on the other houses by drawing a chalk mark with the same shape and colour. Morgiana's success would not make sense to an eccentric or unsympathetic reader who takes the robber's tag to be individuated by the exact chemical composition of the robber's chalk apart from its shape and colour (unless, of course, the proviso that Morgiana used a chalk made of the same material as the robber's own is made part of the story.)

Tags are physical or abstract objects, and names are *words*[6]—also a kind of object. Therefore, it is not surprising that the same issues concerning constitution, identity, and individuation that arise for tags arise for names as well. Analogous to the unsympathetic reader of the Arabian Nights, one can imagine a critic who objects to commitment (1) above by pointing out that proper names are not exclusively devices of reference (e.g., 'Alfred' in 'No Alfred has ever walked on the Moon' is a name but does not refer to any individual) or objects to (2) by pointing out that more than one individual can bear the same name. The Millian response to such criticism has been on the same lines as how one would respond to the unsympathetic reader of the Arabian Nights—the critic individuates names in a manner different from how the Millians individuate names. In defence of the Millian view, for instance, it has been argued that 'Alfred' in 'No Alfred lives in Princeton' is not a name but a homonymous

---

[6] I follow the literature on the metaphysics of names in assuming that names—both proper and common names—are words. Dropping this assumption raises many complications. I discuss these complications in §2.3.3.

28

common noun true of a 'bearer of "Alfred"' (e.g., Jeshion, 2017, p. 234) and names of distinct individuals are, properly speaking, distinct words (Kaplan, 1989, p. 562, 1990; Kripke, 1980, pp. 7–8; Sainsbury, 2005, p. 121; Soames, 2002; Stojnić, 2021, p. 54).

2.1.3 From Semantics to Metaphysics

Note, however, that unlike the reader of Arabian Nights it is less clear (certainly not intuitively clear) that the critic of the Millian view is eccentric or unsympathetic—'Alfred' is easily recognized as a name in 'No Alfred lives in Princeton', and the phenomenon of namesakes is a linguistic fact. It is therefore reasonable to ask: why should the manner of name-individuation favoured by the Millian view be adopted in the first place?

Before venturing further, however, it will be useful to distinguish two tasks—one semantic and the other non-semantic. The task of semantics is, broadly speaking, to assign meanings to words and expressions. However—as Kaplan notes— 'given an utterance, semantics cannot tell us what expression was uttered, and what language it was uttered in. This is a pre-semantic task' (Kaplan, 1989, p. 559). The Millian (or any other) semantic view is not under an obligation to provide or defend an account of the constitution of names or their criterion of identity/individuation. This pre-semantic task belongs to a different project that, following Kaplan (1990), I will call a 'metaphysics' of words. In principle, a semantic theory can be consistent with different ways of thinking about the metaphysical nature of words.

The question posed at the end of the first paragraph of this subsection is then a question concerning the metaphysics of names and not their semantics. Categorizing it as metaphysical, however, does not lessen its significance for the Millian view. Corresponding

29

to commitments (1) and (2) above, the Millian view presupposes a metaphysics of words on which names are individuated such that[7]:

a) a name is a word that stands for an individual, and

b) a name is a word that stands for at most one individual.

Call the conditions specified by (a) and (b) the 'Millian Individuation Constraint' or 'MIC'. If the Millian view is correct, then the only plausible metaphysical views of names must be those that satisfy MIC. If so, then the plausibility of the Millian view cannot be considered independent of the plausibility of the metaphysical accounts that satisfy MIC. It would speak against the Millian view if—as I will argue in this chapter—the metaphysical accounts that satisfy MIC do not fit within a general metaphysical picture for words.

2.2. The Common Currency Conception

> …for serious semantics, I think that it is my common currency conception that would be important. (David Kaplan, 'Words', 1990, p. 111)

2.2.1 Two Frameworks

Philosophical views concerning the metaphysics of words typically develop within one of two broad metaphysical frameworks of thinking about words. The first framework—associated with the work of C.S. Peirce (1906), W.V. Quine (1987), and Linda Wetzel (2002, 2009)—treats words as abstract types that are tokened in their various occurrences, i.e.,

---

[7] Why should a Millian view be taken to presuppose a metaphysics of names that satisfies conditions (a) and (b)? The answer follows directly from the definition of Millian view in §2.1.1: it would defeat the very purpose of a tag (i.e., to identify a unique object) if it does not stand for an individual, or if the same tag is assigned to two objects. Therefore, if the Millian view is correct, then the claims (a) and (b) about the metaphysics of names must be true. One cause of scepticism here may be to consider 'Millian' view a semantic view of names other than the one laid down in §2.1.1 (see also fn. 2 and 4.) To avoid verbal disagreement, I would like to caution the reader about the nuanced argumentative target of this chapter.

inscriptions, utterances, etc. The second framework—associated with the work of David Kaplan (1990, 2011) and Mark Sainsbury (2015)—treats a word as a *continuant*[8]: a four-dimensional object like a person or an artefact. Within this second framework, words (like persons) are thought to be objects created at a point in time that may cease to exist at another point. Furthermore, the relation between a word and its occurrences is thought to be analogous to the relation between a person and the stages of that person's life—the various inscriptions or utterances of a word are not instances but rather stages in the life of a word. Following Kaplan (1990), call the first framework the 'type-token' model and the second the 'stage-continuant' model.

Within these two broad frameworks, different commitments concerning the ontology of types and continuants will result in different metaphysical pictures of a word. For instance, within the first framework, if types are individuated orthographically (such that all tokens of a type have an orthographic resemblance), then 'bow' would instantiate a single word associated with two distinct meanings, but 'connection' (as it is written today) and 'connexion' (as written by Hume in the manuscript of the Treatise three hundred years ago) would count as instances of distinct words. Within the second framework, if continuants are individuated by their historical origin, then 'bow' could be an inscription of either of two distinct words— 'One word […that…] comes from the Old English *bugan* (inclination of the body in greeting), another from the Old Norse *bogr* (front end of a ship).' (Sainsbury, 2015, p. 198) Furthermore, if it is assumed—as Kaplan (1990, p. 104, 2011, p. 518) does—that the parts of a word continuant are bound together into a single word-continuant not by resemblance

---

[8] I use of the word 'continuant' here in the way that it is used by Kaplan (1990, p. 98), Hawthorne and Lepore (2011, p. 451), and by others within the debate on the metaphysics of names. This use does not follow the usage of the word 'continuant' within larger metaphysical discussions concerning identity and persistence.

between the parts but by the intention of language users to repeat an inscription or utterance, then 'connection' and 'connexion' can be distinct stages in the life of the same word.

It may seem that the type-token model corresponds to the manner of thinking about words on which tokens of the same word are thought to have similar shapes or forms. However, a metaphysics of words within the type-token model need not be committed to a shape- or form-theoretic conception of words. It is possible to think of types such that the tokens 'Tim' (written sign) and /*tim*/ (spoken sound) belong to the same type—the notion of types allows for tokens with radically different shapes/forms to belong to the same type (Hawthorne & Lepore, 2011, pp. 452–453; Szabó, 1999; Wetzel, 2002). On the other hand, a shape- or form-theoretic conception of words can be accommodated within the stage-continuant model—for instance, by thinking of continuants as composed of stages (or parts) that have the same shape or form (e.g., Kaplan's notion of a 'generic' name, discussed below). A metaphysics of words within either framework can take a shape- or form- theoretic view of words on board, but neither framework imposes it.

The choice between the type-token and the stage-continuant model is essentially the choice between thinking of words as Universals—instantiated as written signs, spoken sounds, etc.—versus thinking of them as Particulars—with the various inscriptions, utterances as their parts or stages.[9] In sharp contrast to Universals, a word on the stage-continuant model—to use Kaplan's words—is an 'earthly, created thing' that lives 'in the world, not in Plato's heaven' (Kaplan, 1990, p. 111, 2011, p. 509). In this model, unlike Universals, a word simply

---

[9] Like most participants in the debate on names, the argument presented here is committed to a realism about words. (See Miller (2020) for a survey of other positions. Note, however, that Miller's way of carving the debate on the metaphysics of words is different from mine, which would explain why Miller can classify Kaplan as a 'type-realist' but not me.) Further, in the present discussion, I ignore Bare Particulars and assume that the distinction between Universals and Particulars is exclusive and exhaustive.

does not exist if it does not have any utterances/inscriptions. In the type-token model, however, words are Universals, some of which may be instantiated, but not others. Theorists of this persuasion take it to be an advantage because, atleast on some dominant philosophical accounts of Universals, it provides a neat explanation of how morphemes may combine to form new words, some of which may not have actual instances—e.g., 'anti-anti-Missile' (Hawthorne & Lepore, 2011, p. 455).

The question of the relative merits of the two metaphysical frameworks is a substantial question, but I will not take sides on this issue here. My concern here is the question of whether the Millian Individuation Constraint forces one to accept one way of thinking about the metaphysics of words. In what follows, I will argue that it does.

2.2.2 Incompatibility of Millianism with the Type-token Model

A metaphysical account of names on the type-token model cannot satisfy the Millian Individuation Constraint. To see this, it will be helpful to begin by drawing a distinction between what may be called 'Pure Universals' and 'Impure Universals'. Pure Universals are Universals that do not make any reference to any Particular. Some examples include the Universals described by the predicates 'is white', is a unicorn, 'is a bag' etc., which do not require the specification of a Particular (their instance or otherwise) for their full characterization. Impure Universals, on the other hand, make an essential reference to a particular—e.g., the universals described by the predicates 'is a neighbour of Socrates', 'is a neighbour of Plato', 'is sitting between Aristotle and Alexander' etc. As these examples demonstrate, Impure Universals are essentially partially saturated *Relations* that have one or more Particulars as their relata.

The distinctness between Impure Universals can be grounded in the distinctness between Particulars. The Relation described by 'x is the teacher of y' can be saturated by two distinct Particulars to yield the Impure Universals described by 'x is the teacher of Plato' and 'x is the teacher of Aristotle'. Further, the Impure Universal described by 'x is the teacher of Plato' is distinct from the one described by 'x is the teacher of Aristotle' by virtue of the distinctness of Plato from Aristotle. It is evident that the reason why the distinctness of Impure Universals can be grounded in the distinctness between Particulars is because the full specification of Impure Universals requires a reference to Particulars (as partially saturated Relations, Impure Universals contain Particulars as constituents.)

Pure Universals, however, cannot be individuated by appealing to the distinctness of Particulars.[10] Pure Universals, by definition, do not make reference to any Particular, so they cannot be individuated by appeal to the distinctness of Particulars. Considerations of asymmetry of the grounding relation provide a further reason for why Pure Universals cannot be individuated by appeal to the distinctness of Particulars. Assuming that the distinctness of Particulars is eventually grounded in the distinctness of Pure Universals, to ground the distinctness of Pure Universals on the distinctness of Particulars amounts to violating the asymmetry of the grounding relation.[11]

---

[10] Note that the claim considered here is not the claim that two Pure Universals (say U1 and U2) cannot be individuated by appealing to the distinctness of Particulars *that instantiate U1 and U2*. It is that U1 and U2 cannot be individuated by appealing to the distinctness of some or other Particulars. (The Particulars need not be instances of U1 and U2). It is the latter claim that is relevant to the case of names and not the former.

[11] One may propose that the distinctness of the Particulars that ground the distinctness of *Pure Universals that are names* ('name-Universals') is grounded not in the distinctness of other name-Universals but in the distinctness of *Pure Universals that are not names* ('non-name Universals'). This would save the Millian from violating the asymmetry of the grounding relation. But the need to treat names as exceptional in the class of Pure Universals (when words generally do not need to be thus treated) more directly demonstrates the sui-generis metaphysics for names required by the Millian view.

But why can't a Millian (convinced of the type-token model) treat names as Impure Universals and maintain that names can be individuated by appealing to the distinctness of their referents? Doing so would force the Millian to treat a name as a Relation, with tokens such as 'Tim', /*tim*/, etc. as one of its relata and a (Particular) individual as the other. While such two-place relations may be the right way of construing the metaphysics of a relation described by the phrases '*x* is the name of *y*', '*x* refers to *y*', '*x* is borne by *y*' etc., the notion of 'name' that is our concern here is complete by itself and does not also require any further specification of an individual. For instance, irrespective of whom 'Tim' (in say, an inscription of the sentence, 'Tim is a philosopher') refers to, it is readily recognized as a token of a name. A particular inscription of 'Tim' may, of course, be used to refer to Tim Maudlin, Tim Crane, or Tim Williamson, but it is the property of *being a name* and not the relation of *being the name of a certain individual* that is the object of the metaphysical enquiry pursued here.[12],[13]

---

[12] One may, of course, propose that a name is a Relation not between tokens (such as 'Tim', /*tim*/, etc.) and individuals, but between tokens and a name-originating event or a naming-practice (Sainsbury, 2015; Sainsbury & Tye, 2012; Stojnić, 2021).
However, an originating event (or naming-practice) is a *Particular* and to satisfy MIC names of distinct individuals cannot have the same originating event. '*x* is a name originating at event₁' is therefore not a Pure Universal. The rest of the argument of this paragraph also goes through—the object of enquiry here is not the property of *being a name-originating at a particular event* (or of *being a name belonging to a particular practice*) but of *being a name*.

[13] An anonymous critic had pointed out that to deny that the question 'What is a name?' cannot be answered partially in terms of an answer to the question 'What is the name of X?' is to beg the question against the Millian. Arguably, given the type-token model, a natural understanding of the Millian *semantic* claim would involve taking the Millian as also making the claim that names are Impure Universals.
This is a fair point. Nevertheless, in the context of the greater dialectic of this chapter, the treatment of names as Impure Universals by the Millian would still seem problematic. On the type-token model, it is true of words more generally (e.g., for pronouns like 'she', common nouns like 'car', adjectives like 'witty' etc.) that they do not require specification of an individual for their full characterization (and thus need not be thought of as an Impure Universal.) If the Millian view requires that (unlike other categories of words) names must be treated as Impure Universals, then (vis-à-vis semantic alternatives that do not require such treatment) it would count as a strike against the Millian view. (§2.3.1 discusses some related issues in greater detail.)

2.2.3 The Common Currency Conception

With the type-token model ruled out, the stage-continuant model would seem the natural choice for a metaphysics of words compatible with Millianism. However, not all ways of construing the constitution of name-continuants will satisfy the Millian Individuation Constraint. Consider, for instance, what Kaplan calls 'generic names'—name-continuants that have as their stages inscriptions (or utterances) that resemble orthographically (or phonetically) such that two generic names differ if their stages do not resemble each other[14] Kaplan gives the example of the generic name 'David' (Kaplan, 1990, p. 111)—a name that was first inscribed/uttered in biblical times, has (roughly) retained its orthographic/phonetic form, and is constituted of the utterances/inscriptions of the first names of David Hume, David Lewis, and David Kaplan, and some 10 million other individuals currently alive. Because generic names can be shared by many individuals, they do not satisfy the MIC. (On the model of a generic name, a generic *word* can also be defined as follows: a generic word is a word-continuant that has inscriptions or utterances that resemble each other orthographically or phonetically as its stages. As some words are names, generic names are a subset of generic words.)

There may be other ways in which word-continuants may be thought of as constituted, some of which may be compatible with MIC but not others. My criticisms in the next section are directed against all metaphysical accounts of names that are compatible with MIC; and as there can be more than one such account, it will be convenient to call them by a name. Call such account(s) 'Common Currency Conception(s)' of names or 'CCC'. On a CCC, (by

---

[14] On Kaplan's account, word-continuants also consist of—apart from *inter*personal stages, i.e., utterances and inscriptions—*intra*personal stages which may be thought of as the storage (or processing) of a word in a person's cognitive apparatus, e.g., memory, daydreaming etc. (Kaplan, 1990, p. 101) I ignore these 'mysterious' intrapersonal stages for they do not affect the argument of this chapter.

36

definition) a name is individuated such that the following condition is always satisfied: only a word that refers to an individual counts as a name, and a name does not refer to more than one individual. A CCC would also provide a suitable story that explains why individuating a common currency name (i.e., a particular name-continuant on the CCC) in the way that it does should lead to the name standing for exactly one individual and no more.

One sketch of a CCC is provided by Kaplan in his 1990 'Words'. *Sketch,* because although Kaplan does make it clear through examples that names of different individuals (e.g., his name and the name of David Israel) are different common currency names 'which were created at different points, and which have had distinct life-histories', he does not provide the details of how common currency names must be individuated on his view. This is understandable because Kaplan's central focus in 'Words' is not to propose a detailed metaphysical account of the CCC but to pitch the stage-continuant model as a viable alternative to the type-token model.

A more fully developed CCC is proposed by Mark Sainsbury, who contends that a name-continuant is individuated by an originating baptismal act such that 'for every name, N, there is a unique act in which N and N alone is originated' (Sainsbury, 2015, p. 201).[15] On Sainsbury's account, not only does a baptismal act single out a unique name-continuant, each baptismal act is also associated with at most one thing that gets named in that act, if anything gets named in the act at all. (Therefore, a single act of baptising 100 objects must resolve into 100 distinct sub-acts of baptising each of the hundred objects.) Therefore, corresponding to

---

[15] Sainsbury's discussion in an earlier work—i.e. Sainsbury (2005)—is focused on the notion of a 'name-using practice' constituted of the various *uses* of a name. Thinking of a name in terms of a name-using practice or in terms of an object/artifact does not make much of a difference in the present discussion. As practices are events, a name-using practice is a *particular*, with the various uses as its stages.

every common currency name there is at most one named individual—i.e., the individual baptized in the act that individuates the name. Coupled with the choice to consider only those uses of an expression in which it refers to an individual as a name, Sainsbury's account provides a clear and fully worked out picture of how a CCC of names is supposed to work within the stage-continuant model.

Taking stock, the Millian Individuation Constraint forces one to not only abandon the type-token model as a suitable framework for a metaphysical account of names but also forces one to accept a specific metaphysics of names even within the stage-continuant model—i.e., the common currency conception of names. In the next section, I evaluate the suitability of the CCC as a metaphysical account of words more generally.

2.3. The Metaphysical Burden.

> I believe that many important theoretical issues about the semantics of names (probably not all) would be largely unaffected had our conventions required that no two things shall be given the same name. (Saul Kripke, Naming and Necessity, 1980, p. 7)

2.3.1 The Sui-generis Metaphysics of Names

In responding to the debate between the two metaphysical frameworks outlined above, Sylvain Bromberger complained that the question 'what are words?' is 'woefully underspecified' and that the parties in the debate 'approach the question and its requirements with very different concerns in mind and end up often at cross purposes' (Bromberger, 2011, pp. 486–487). Bromberger's point is that how one answers to the question of which metaphysical picture should be adopted for an investigation into the linguistic nature of words depends on the purposes of such an investigation: a phonological study of stress and tone assignment may individuate words as sound types (thereby completely ignoring their

38

orthography), while a study of word etymology will take into account the history and the origin of a word. Given the multiplicity of such purposes, it may even be necessary to 'break up the notion of word into a number of more precise and theoretically manageable ones', leaving us with not one but many notions of a word, and consequently many ways of thinking about the metaphysics of words (Bromberger, 2011, p. 503)

If Bromberger's diagnosis is correct, then the search for the final metaphysical account of words is a misdirected endeavour. Any metaphysics of words must be relativised: for some purposes, a shape- or form- theoretic conception of words within the type-token model may be fruitful (say, when defining notions like 'ambiguity', 'polysemy', etc.) and for others, conceiving of words within the stage-continuant model may be more useful (e.g., in an etymological study of words.) Nevertheless, a particular sort of investigation into the linguistic nature of words (say, phonological, morphological, or semantic) must adopt a single metaphysical picture of words. This requirement is no more than the requirement that the participants in a particular sort of investigation (say, a semantic investigation) must converge on one answer to the question of *what words are*. Without this common metaphysical ground, one cannot be sure whether the participants in a semantic debate agree (or disagree) about the semantic properties of the *same* thing, nor can the possibility of their simply talking past each other be definitively ruled out.

A single, uniform metaphysical account of words is needed across one more dimension—the correct account should not give a different metaphysical picture of words depending on how a word is classified within a scheme of classification. In other words, within a particular sort of linguistic investigation—say, semantic, morphological, or phonological—the correct answer to the question 'what is a word?' should not change based on how a word is classified

39

semantically (e.g., as a noun, verb, preposition, etc.), morphologically (derivational morpheme, inflectional morpheme, free morpheme), phonetically (e.g., as monosyllabic, bisyllabic, or polysyllabic), etc. This requirement is supported not only by considerations of theoretical elegance and ontological parsimony but also, more importantly, by the fact that any scheme of classification must presuppose that the entities being classified are unified on some ground. For instance, only because there is a prior sense in which a noun and a preposition share something in common—i.e., by both being *words*—that it makes sense to classify them on a semantic basis as a noun or a preposition. The notion of a word is a fundamental notion that provides the ground for any further classification based on semantic, phonological, or morphological properties and therefore cannot itself be split up based on such properties.

If names are words and if the Millian view is the right semantic account of names, then given the above considerations of uniformity, one would expect that the metaphysical picture of a word that comes along with the Millian view (i.e., CCC) should also be the right metaphysics to adopt for a semantic investigation into words more generally. It is difficult, however, to see how this can be so. Words belonging to many—or rather most—semantic categories (e.g., prepositions like 'of', 'below', conjunctions like 'or', verbs like 'reading', etc.) do not refer and therefore it is not clear how the manner of name individuation proposed by the CCC should apply to these words.[16] (Unlike a name, there is no clear baptismal act that associates the preposition 'of' with an object.) Even if attention is restricted to singular terms that do

---

[16] Note that my claim here is *not* that there cannot be a plausible metaphysics of words within the stage-continuant framework. (I am indifferent to the question of which is the best framework for a general metaphysics of words.) The claim here is that a *common currency conception*—which, as I have argued in 2.2, must be a conception within the stage-continuant framework—cannot be a metaphysical picture that may be adopted for words more generally.

refer—e.g., pronouns, indexicals, some definite descriptions, etc.—it is clear that these words are not individuated in the manner that names are individuated according to the CCC. It will not only be odd to say that the pronoun 'she' must be a different pronoun when it is used to refer to different individuals; such a proposal would also make nonsense of the idea that pronouns have characters (or φ-features) that constrain their reference. (Which of the many pronouns is the character of 'she' the character of? Is it associated with the word *type* 'she'? If so, then what remains of the CCC of pronouns?)

It may be objected that the above construal of words on the CCC unsympathetically assumes that such construal must require words with different referents to be considered different words. It may be said that a more sympathetic construal of words (in accordance with the CCC) would only require words with different *meanings* to be different words. The objector could say, for example, that the verb 'reading' and the noun 'reading' (e.g., as it appears in the 'University of Reading') are different words because they have different meanings and that the pronoun 'she' can be the very same pronoun across its various uses because it retains the same character (which is understood as the meaning of pronouns.)

However, in the context of proposing a metaphysics of words for a semantic investigation into words, such a proposal would have a serious methodological flaw. One objective behind a metaphysics of words is to provide a common ground for semantic disagreements concerning words. A minimal condition for a genuine disagreement concerning the properties of a thing is that the dissenting parties disagree about the properties of the very same thing. However, if the answer to the questions 'what are words?' and 'how are words individuated?' itself depends on the meaning (or some other semantic property) that one takes the word to have, then two people who think that they disagree about the meaning of a certain word

cannot really be disagreeing—given that the meanings are different, they must have distinct words in mind. For genuine disagreement, however, the two parties must differ with respect to the meanings that they assign to the same word.[17]

The CCC, therefore, is not a suitable metaphysical picture for words other than proper names. Kaplan concedes this point when he writes that common nouns must be construed as generic names and not as common currency names. Kaplan also suggests that the CCC is not the right metaphysical account for indexicals and demonstratives (Kaplan, 2011, p. 524). If so, then some account other than the CCC must be the appropriate metaphysical account for a semantic investigation into words more generally—i.e., for all words other than names. For instance, it may so turn out that for semantic purposes a metaphysics of words within the type-token model is the best way to answer the general question of what words (other than names) are.

The category of names is a semantic category; thus, the classification of words into words that are names and words that are not names is also a semantic classification. If the Millian semantics of names is correct and if for semantic purposes the CCC cannot be the right metaphysical account for words that are not names, then proper names must be construed as common currency names but not words other than proper names. This goes against the considerations of metaphysical uniformity outlined earlier—i.e., the answer to the question 'what are words' cannot be sensitive to how a word gets classified within a scheme of

---

[17] An anonymous critic had raised the following counterexample against this argument: no two people share a fingerprint, but it doesn't follow that the two competing guesses as to which fingerprint belongs to a particular person cannot lead to a disagreement about a single person's fingerprints. The counterexample is, however, disanalogous with the case considered here in an important respect: fingerprints are not part of the criterion of identity/individuation of people—we can even imagine a situation in which two people have the same fingerprints. The question of whether two fingerprints belong to the same individual would not arise for creatures that are identified/individuated by their fingerprints.

classification. More importantly, the Millian view sets names apart as words with a *sui-generis* metaphysical nature, disconnected from the metaphysics of other categories of words. Such exceptionalism for names would be justified if the very semantic nature of names necessitated it. The metaphysical uniqueness of names, however, is not a condition for a plausible semantic account of proper names—or so I will argue in the next section.

At this point, the Millian may raise the following objection: the semantic merits of the Millian View (which, for the committed Millian, there are many) justify the metaphysical exceptionalism of names, but the chapter puts the cart before the horse by making the exceptionalism a ground for attacking the Millian view of names. This might have been a valid objection against the argument of this chapter had it been true that the Millian view is the correct (or at least the most plausible) semantic account of proper names. However, in the context of a semantic debate concerning proper names, to assume the truth or plausibility of the Millian view is to beg the question against its competitors and is therefore methodologically problematic.

2.3.2 Alternative Semantic Views

The most prominent contemporary competitors of the Millian account are semantic views labelled in contemporary debates as the 'Predicate View' and 'Indexicalism'.[18] According to the predicate view of names, proper names are (syntactically) common nouns and (semantically) expressions with a predicate-type semantic value (i.e., type <e,t>). According to Indexicalism, a proper name is essentially a pronoun or an indexical—i.e., an expression

---

[18] The Predicate View is the semantic view of names held by Tyler Burge (1973), Kent Bach (1987), JJ Katz (2001), Paul Elbourne (2005), Sarah Sawyer (2010), Aidan Gray (2012), and Delia Graf Fara (2015). Indexicalism includes the views of Arthur Burks (1951), François Recanati (1993), Pelczar & Rainsbury (1998), Anders Schoubye (2017, 2020a), among others.

whose reference is constrained by a condition (i.e., its 'character' or 'φ-feature') but whose referent can be different in different contexts. As I noted earlier, the disagreement of these two views with the Millian view is deeper than the disagreement between the Millian view and classical descriptivism—unlike classical descriptivism, the Predicate View and Indexicalism disagree with the Millian View on all three of its commitments (1)-(3) discussed above. To get a better grip on what lies at the root of the disagreement, I will consider each commitment of the Millian view in turn and highlight the contrast of the Millian view with these two views.

1. *Names are not exclusively devices of reference:* According to both Predicate view and Indexicalism, while proper names are most frequently used to refer to individuals, they can have other, nonreferential uses as well. On the Predicate view, proper names are literally common nouns, and common nouns can be used both to refer to an individual as well as to predicate something of an individual. For instance, as part of a larger noun phrase, the common noun 'cat' in 'the cat wants out' is used to refer to a cat, but the same common noun has a nonreferential, predicative use in 'Sir Harrington is a cat' or 'I have two cats—Sir Harrington and Commodore Norrington'. Similarly, apart from referential uses, a proper name can also have nonreferential, predicative uses. For instance, 'Alfred' in 'No Alfred has ever walked on the Moon' or 'All Alfreds study in Princeton' appears as a common noun applying to all bearers of "Alfred", not to refer to an individual. Similarly, according to Indexicalism, proper names can not only be used to refer to individuals, but (like pronouns and indexicals more generally) proper names can also have anaphoric readings—e.g., the name 'Bambi' in the consequent of 'If a child is christened "Bambi", Disney will sue

Bambi's parents' is anaphoric to the indefinite in the antecedent (Geurts, 1997; Schoubye, 2020a, pp. 62–64).

2. *Multiple bearer-hood of names:* Both the Predicate view and Indexicalism account for the phenomenon that more than one individual can bear the same name; on these views (when used to refer) the same proper name can refer to one or another individual depending on the features of context. This is rather straightforward on the Indexicalist view, which treats proper names as pronouns. Just as a pronoun 'she' can be used to refer to different individuals who satisfy the φ-feature of the pronoun 'she' (depending on the context of its use), a proper name such as 'David' can also be used to refer to different individuals who satisfy the φ-feature of the name 'David'.

   On the Predicate view, (when used to refer) proper names are thought to be part of either an incomplete definite description or a complex demonstrative with a covert determiner element (such that the logical form of 'David is a philosopher' is either '(the) David is a philosopher' or '(that) David is a philosopher' where the determiner is not overt in the syntax of some languages, like English). Despite their internal differences concerning how to account for the semantics of the referential uses of names, defenders of the predicate view unanimously maintain that just like ordinary common nouns, as part of indefinite descriptions or complex demonstratives, proper names can also be used to refer to one or another individual at different occasions of their use.

3. *Direct Reference:* The predicate view borrows the standard semantics of incomplete descriptions or complex demonstratives to explain the reference of proper names, and the standard semantics of both incomplete descriptions and complex demonstratives involve the commitment that their referent is an object that falls within the extension

45

of their respective nominal components (for instance, the referent of 'this maroon table' must be a member of the extension of the nominal 'maroon table'.) Therefore, names are not directly referential on the predicative view. The same is true for the semantics of names on Indexicalism: the referent of pronouns is constrained by their φ-feature (e.g., the pronoun 'she' can only be used to refer to an individual who identifies themselves as belonging to the female gender); and because names are pronouns on the Indexicalist account, the referent of a name is constrained by the φ-feature associated with the name.

At the root of these differences between the Millian view on the one hand and the Predicate view and Indexicalism on the other is the fact that the former view takes seriously the idea that a name is a tag, but the latter views take seriously the idea that a name is a kind of word. This is, of course, not to say that the Millians *deny* that names are words—on the contrary, I have been assuming an understanding of the Millian view on which names are thought of as words. However, taking names to be words while keeping the Millian account forces a special, limited understanding of the notion of a 'word'. In treating names as tags, the Millian view ignores the role of words as an interesting linguistic item with wide-ranging semantic, phonetic, and morphological properties. Furthermore, unlike the notion of a word, the notion of a tag is a strictly functional notion—an object is a tag insofar as it performs the function of standing for something else. Thus, the Millian construal of names on the model of tags forces the treatment of literal, nonreferential use of a name as somehow deviant uses of a name, or not a use of a name at all. The Millian view begins with the assumption that names are tags and then accommodates the assumption that names are words by proposing a conception of words that is most conducive to their treatment as a tag.

The Predicate view and Indexicalism, however, begin with the assumption that a name is a kind of word; therefore, the semantic, phonetic, and morphological properties of names must be understood in accordance with the ways in which words are thought to possess those properties more generally. No class of words in natural language has an *exclusive* semantic function, and on these views, the same is true of names. Furthermore, like words generally, names can be part of various word formation processes such as inflection (e.g., names get inflected for number, case, etc.) and allow for morphological derivation or conversion into other semantic/syntactic categories (e.g., the verbs 'to google' and 'to chisholm').[19] On the Predicate view and Indexicalism, names are expected to exhibit the full range of linguistic behaviour that one would expect from a word more generally.

The Predicate view and Indexicalism therefore explain the semantic properties of proper names by appealing to the standard semantics of the word categories that they take names to belong—i.e., indexicals and common terms. Irrespective of the semantic dividends of such a move, it certainly has a metaphysical dividend: because on these views, names *are* common nouns (or pronouns), whatever metaphysical account turns out to be the best account for common nouns (or pronouns) will also suffice as the best metaphysical account of proper names. Unlike the Millian view, therefore, these accounts do not require a sui-generis metaphysics for names.

---

[19] Some Indexicalists make an ingenious use of the fact that some pronouns can be used as a predicate (e.g., the use of 'she' in 'my kitten is a she') to explain the predicative uses of names. One such explanation is provided by Schoubye (2017). Such attempts provide a glimpse into the sort of strategy available to a view that takes seriously the proposal that a name is a type of word.

2.3.3 Names, Words, and Tags

Therefore, in a balance of considerations vis-à-vis its competitors, the sui-generis metaphysics of proper names that the Millian view requires counts as a strike against it. However, the argument of this chapter has thus far relied on the assumption that names are *words*. After all, if names are not words, then their exceptionalism among the class of words would not be so unpalatable. Although most philosophers concerned with the metaphysics of names have assumed that names are units of language, in wider debates concerning names, it is sometimes held that names are not words and that they do not belong to a language (e.g., Paul Ziff, 1960, p. 86). Although this move would save the Millian view from the objections raised in this chapter, the proposal that names are not words raises many serious problems of its own. I now review some such problems.

Proper names exhibit much of the same linguistic behaviour that words belonging to a language generally exhibit. For instance, proper names follow the same rules for inflection which apply to other words of a language, e.g., in English nouns are inflected into their plural forms by adding the suffix '-s' (e.g., 'languages' from 'language') and so are proper names (e.g., 'Alfreds' from 'Alfred'). Furthermore, proper names are governed by the same rules for word formation (e.g., morphological derivation) that govern other words of a language. In American English, for example, new verbs can be formed from nouns or adjectives using the suffixes '-ize' or '-ify'. Which words form verbs by taking the suffix '-ify' (e.g., classify, mummify, etc.) and which take '-ize' (e.g., hospitalize, tranquilise) is governed by a morphological rule. Consider, for example, the following rule for forming a new word using the suffix '-ize':

48

> -ize attaches to adjectives or nouns of two or more syllables where the final syllable does not bear primary stress. (Lieber, 2009)

Thus, 'Stalin'—which is a proper name with more than two syllables in which the final syllable does not bear primary stress—takes the suffix '-ize' (and not '-ify') to form the verb 'Stalinize'. Additionally, it is not uncommon for linguists and philosophers to simply extend to proper names a general account developed for words belonging to a language. For instance, Clark & Clark and Carston do not distinguish between the English word 'porch' and the proper name 'Houdini' when discussing the phenomenon of lexical innovation and polysemy (Carston, 2019; Clark & Clark, 1979). Finally, proper names, like words generally, often get translated across languages. One example is that of Vienna, which is called 'Wien' in German and 'Bécs' in Hungarian; another example is that of Jesus, whose name is spelled 'Jesus' in German but 'Jézus' in Hungarian.

If proper names are not words, then it would be surprising why there should be such similarities in their behaviour. A bigger problem with taking proper names as not words is that it makes it puzzling why an investigation into the nature of proper names must be a part of a *semantic* investigation. Semantics is concerned with the properties of words and expressions; if proper names are not words but are, say, tags, then an investigation of proper names must properly be a part of a more general project concerning the investigation into the use of objects as tags. The Millian view would then not be a semantic view but rather a theory of a special kind of tag. This is not a petty argument concerning disciplinary boundaries but rather a broad-minded invitation to try and understand the linguistic nature of proper names as they appear as part of language. The use of tags is an undeniably important part of human behaviour, and while most tags are concrete objects, it is also possible that

49

some tags are constructed using the orthographic and phonetic resources of a language (i.e., its letters and phonemes). However, names are an equally important component of human linguistic behaviour, and insofar as human linguistic competence involves a competent use of names, there is a scope (and need) for an investigation into the nature of names while treating them as words belonging to a language.

A semantic study of names must therefore treat proper names as words. If so, then I have argued that the Millian view of names requires a metaphysical account that makes names exceptional within the class of words. Given the considerations of uniformity and parsimony, such exceptionalism speaks against the Millian view but provides support to competing semantic accounts that do not require such exceptionalism.

3. A Criterion of Literality for Names

Proper names (henceforth 'names') are most frequently used to refer to individuals. For instance, the names 'Alfred' in (1) and 'Donald Trump' in (2) are respectively used to refer to the inventor of dynamite and an ex-president of the United States:

1. Thanks to Alfred's beneficence, scientists today get global recognition.

2. Donald Trump is not a tax evader; he simply does not earn that much.

Call such uses of names—i.e., the uses of names as singular terms—their 'referential uses'. Apart from referential uses, names can have other uses as well. Consider:

3. No Alfred has ever walked on the moon.

4. There are twenty Donald Trumps in the United States alone.

The names 'Alfred' in (3) and 'Donald Trump' in (4) do not refer to individuals; instead, they function as a general term (say) 'N' that is true of a *bearer of "N"*. Call such uses of names their 'predicative uses'.

Some 'extended' uses of names have also been widely discussed. Such uses can be characterized by means of examples. Consider:

5. Joe Romanov is not a *Romanov*.   (Boër, 1975)

6. Two *Stellas* are inside the museum.   (Jeshion, 2015b)

7. Two *Osama bin Ladens* came to the Halloween party.   (Jeshion, 2015b)

8. Lenny reads too much *Heidegger* and not enough *Frege*.   (Jeshion, 2015c)

9. We'll need to *google* directions to the university   (Jeshion, 2015c)

10. I am rich, but not *Bill Gates* rich.   (Lee, 2020)

The names 'Romanov', 'Stella', and 'Osama bin Laden' in (5), (6), and (7) are like predicative uses in that they function as a general term. But they are unlike predicative uses in that the correct truth conditions for sentences (5)-(7) are obtained by taking these names as truly applying not to their bearers, but respectively to a 'biological descendent of the Russian Romanov dynasty', an 'artwork made by the artist Frank Stella', and a 'person resembling Osama bin Laden'.[20] Call such extended uses of names 'extended-predicative uses'. Other extended uses of names include their use as mass terms e.g., 'Heidegger' and 'Frege' in (8), verbs e.g., 'google' in (9), and as measure-phrases e.g., 'Bill Gates' in (10). Call such extended uses respectively the 'mass-term', 'verb', and 'measure-phrase' uses of names.

The philosophical debate on names has historically focused almost exclusively on their referential uses. For instance, although the classical Millian and the Descriptivist camps disagree on the question of *how* names refer, both treat only the referential uses as relevant for semantic theorizing.[21] In recent years however, the focus of philosophical theorizing about names has shifted from a limited enquiry into their most frequent use as singular terms to a wider investigation that pays attention to non-referential uses of names. Particularly, predicative uses have attracted a lot of attention. Such uses are a large part of the motivation behind (atleast) two new and prominent semantic views of names—the Predicate View and Variabilism—both of which take predicative uses to reveal a deeper semantic feature of names that the referential uses conceal.[22]

---

[20] These sentences may, of course, have other readings: e.g., (5) can also be read as—Joe Romanov is not a *bearer of "Romanov"* (and (6) can also be read—as two *bearers of "Stella"* are inside the museum.) In characterizing 'extended uses' I am concerned with the readings specified in this paragraph.
[21] The classical Millian view has been defended by RB Marcus (1961), Saul Kripke (1980), and Scott Soames (2002) among others. Descriptivism is the semantic view ascribed to Frege (1982) and Russell (1911).
[22] Some defenders of the predicate view include Tyler Burge (1973), Paul Elbourne (2005), Kent Bach (2015), Delia Fara (2015b), and Aidan Gray (2018). Variabilism is the view defended by Anders Schoubye (2017, 2020a).

But not everyone is amused. Some theorists—including most prominently Robin Jeshion (2015a, 2015b, 2015c) and Gail Leckie (2013)—have given arguments that raise an important challenge against the treatment of predicative uses of names as semantically relevant. The challenge, call it 'Sceptic's Challenge', rests on two observations: First, it is widely agreed that extended uses of names are not semantically relevant i.e., it is not for a semantic theory of names but for general linguistic mechanisms (that explain cases of metaphor/metonymy etc. more generally) to explain the extended uses of names. Second, the same linguistic mechanisms that must be used to explain extended-predicative uses can also be used to explain predicative uses. Sceptic's Challenge is then the challenge to provide a rationale for treating the predicative uses and the extended-predicative uses differently—the former as semantically relevant but not the latter.

This chapter responds to Sceptic's Challenge, and it does so by motivating a general way of drawing the line between semantically relevant (*'literal'*) and non-relevant (*'non-literal'*) uses of names. I argue that it is an essential and distinctive feature of our practice of using names that a name can be used by participants in a linguistic exchange without possessing substantial information about the bearer(s) of the name. Based on this essential, distinctive, and non-semantic feature of our name using practice, I motivate what I will call a 'criterion for literality' of names and use it to show that the linguistic properties of the predicative uses of names are relevant in semantic theorizing, but the linguistic properties of names in their extended-predicative uses are not.

But why should one care about the literality of names in the first place? Defenders of the Predicate View and Variabilism obviously need to care: their view directly relies on the semantic relevance of predicative uses of names. But there is a broader reason for why

everyone interested in the semantic debate on names must care. The choice of the best semantic theory is partly determined by which theory provides the most satisfactory account of the literal uses of names. Determining the corpus of such uses is therefore part of what is needed to settle the semantic debate on names: the decision concerning which semantic theory of names is the best depends on a theory's capacity to satisfactorily account for all literal uses of names.

Looking ahead: §3.1 sets out precisely the challenge adumbrated above. §3.2 examines some unsuccessful strategies for addressing Sceptic's Challenge and outlines what is needed to address it. §3.3 presents the criterion of literality and provides arguments in its favour.

3.1 The significance of Sceptic's Challenge

It is a well-known fact about language that words can often be used *figuratively*. Metaphorical uses of words are a case in point. Consider:

> 11. My children are still rug rats.

The expression 'rug rat' in (11) is used metaphorically for toddlers old enough only to move around on all fours. Such metaphorical use of 'rug rats' does not force us into revising our understanding of the meaning of the word 'rats'. Instead, the meanings of words in metaphorical uses are better thought of as different—but somehow derived—from their conventional meanings. (One desideratum for a theory of metaphor is to provide a systematic account of how the metaphorical meanings of words are derived from their conventional, usual meanings.)

The same can be true of some other types of uses which are not obviously figurative. Consider the following:

54

12. Most of the west coast still believes in the Millian orthodoxy.

13. I am going to have to science the s**t out of this.(from the movie 'The Martian')

The expression 'west coast' in (12) is a metonym for 'philosophers working in departments located in the vicinity of the west coast of the United States' and (13) demonstrates a creative use of the noun 'science' as a verb. The metonymic use of 'west coast' does not pose any threat to the usual understanding of the expression 'west coast', nor does the use of 'science' as a verb in (13) make us doubt its classification as a noun of English. Instead, the meanings of words in such uses are also naturally seen as derived from their conventional meanings. The upshot is that certain special uses of words call for a separate explanation using independent linguistic mechanisms pertaining to those uses. And a semantic theory for a class of words cannot be expected to predict or explain the linguistic features of *all* uses of words belonging to that class.

Without deferring to how these terms are used elsewhere in the literature, I now introduce a distinction between 'literal' and 'non-literal' uses of words. The literal uses of words, by definition, are uses in which their linguistic properties are semantically relevant. In other words, a semantic theory of expressions is under an obligation to provide a direct explanation of expressions belonging to that class. It would speak against a semantic theory for say, adjectives, if the literal uses of adjectives do not conform to the account of adjectives provided by the theory. On the other hand, the linguistic properties of words in their non-literal uses, again by definition, are irrelevant in a debate concerning the semantic properties of words belonging to that class. A semantic theory is not under an obligation to explain the non-literal uses and such uses must be explained using independent mechanisms that explain special kinds of linguistic phenomena—e.g., metaphor, metonymy etc.—more generally.

Names are words. Therefore, like words more generally, names can have both literal and non-literal uses. Consider, for instance:

14. George Wallace is a *Napoleon* (Burge, 1973)

It is widely acknowledged that the name 'Napoleon' in (14) is used metaphorically and this use of name is therefore non-literal (Burge, 1973, p. 434; Fara, 2015a, p. 254; Jeshion, 2015b, p. 230). It is also obvious that some other types of uses of names—e.g., cases of metonymy, synecdoche, and one-off creative uses etc.—are also non-literal.

Such judgement, however, may not always be obvious. Note that in labelling the corpus of name-uses that fall outside the explanatory scope of a semantic theory 'non-literal', I have not yet said anything about which types of uses—e.g., referential, predicative—must be included in it. An important step in the argument of this chapter is a proposal concerning which uses of names must be considered literal and which others non-literal. This, however, must wait until §3.3. For now, I shall go along with an assumption—described in the next paragraph—that most participants in the debate concerning the semantics of names have implicitly or explicitly endorsed.

Referential uses are the most prevalent uses of names and are thought to be the paradigmatic literal uses of names. Every semantic theory of names seeks to explain the properties of names in their referential uses and is judged better or worse based on its success in doing so. An analogous consensus exists concerning the use of names in (5)-(10) that have been labelled extended uses. Theorists across the ideological divide treat extended uses as non-literal and hold that the linguistic properties of names in such uses ought to be explained not by a semantic theory of names but by various pragmatic or semantic mechanisms—e.g., deferred interpretation, metonymic generalizations, lexical rules etc.—that explain the shift in

56

the meaning of an expression from its conventional meaning more generally (Fara, 2015a; Jeshion, 2015a; Leckie, 2013; Rami, 2015).

Things are, however, not so straightforward with the predicative uses. Defenders of the Predicate View and Variabilism (call them *both* 'Predicativists') treat predicative uses as literal. However, Robin Jeshion (2015a; 2015b; 2015c) and Gail Leckie (2013) have highlighted some relevant similarities between predicative and extended-predicative uses that put pressure on the Predicativist's position. To begin with, notice that barring the difference in application conditions, the linguistic properties of names in predicative uses are the same as their properties in extended-predicative uses—e.g., names in both uses occupy the same syntactic position and have the same semantic type i.e., <e,t>.

More importantly, however, these theorists point out that the same semantic/pragmatic mechanisms that explain the extended-predicative uses can also be used to explain the predicative uses. Jeshion (2015b, 283–289; 2015c, pp. 381–383) argues that the phenomenon of *deferred interpretation*—introduced by Geoffrey Nunberg (1995) to explain the metonymic uses of expressions that are not obviously figurative—can be used to explain predicative uses of names just as it can be used to explain the extended-predicative uses. What adds bite to Jeshion's argument is that a prominent defender of the Predicate view, Delia Graff Fara, invokes the very same phenomenon of deferred interpretation to explain extended-predicative uses of names (Fara, 2015a, pp. 257–262). Leckie argues that the same account that can be used to account for the polysemous nature of words more generally can be employed to explain how *both* the predicative and extended-predicative uses of names are derived from their primary referential uses. Leaving aside the exact details, the essential force of these arguments can be summarized in the form of the following challenge:

> **Sceptic's Challenge**: Given that the linguistic properties of names in their predicative and extended-predicative uses are remarkably similar, why should the predicative uses not be treated as non-literal uses of names?

The significance of the challenge in contemporary semantic debate hardly be understated. If Sceptic's Challenge cannot be met, then semantic theorizing can continue as before: the newer semantic theories on the block have mistaken a semantically insignificant phenomenon as significant. But if it can be met—as I will argue in this chapter—it would not only bolster the position of the Predicate View and Variabilism as bona-fide contenders against the classical Millian view, but also cement the idea that the corpus of name-uses that *any* semantic theory is expected to explain must include predicative uses.

Further, although posed as a challenge against the Predicativists, Sceptic's Challenge highlights a general lacuna in the semantic debate about names: the lack of a criterion to distinguish the literal uses of names from their non-literal uses. The most straightforward way to meet the challenge—one that I adopt in this chapter—is to provide a criterion of literality for names motivated independently of semantic considerations. Before coming to my positive proposal in §3.3, I discuss some ineffective strategies to address Sceptic's Challenge in the next section. Doing so will highlight some foundational issues pertaining to how the question of the literality should be approached and provide a desideratum for a satisfactory criterion of literality. The positive proposal of §3.3 can then be evaluated against this desideratum.

3.2 Some ineffective responses

One may think that Sceptic's Challenge can be met by saying that which uses of names one takes to be literal is relative to the semantic theory of names that one takes to be true. (In other words, it is a semantic theory that determines which types of name-uses count as

58

literal.) Such proposal, however, would be viciously regressive. The decision concerning which semantic account of names is the best depends in large part on which account best explains the literal uses of names. If, however, the corpus of literal uses of names is itself determined by the theory of names one subscribes to, then such 'theory-ladenness' of the corpus would seriously undermine the possibility of evaluating semantic theories based on their relative explanatory potential.

There is a general methodological lesson here for all parties in the debate: the reasons for thinking that a particular use of a name is literal must not already assume the truth of a semantic account of names. The correct account is, of course, expected to provide a direct and satisfactory explanation of all the literal uses of names, but there must be an independent basis for determining which uses it is supposed to explain. Call this the 'independence-principle'. The independence principle mandates that the question of which uses of names must be considered literal must be sharply distinguished from the question of which uses a particular semantic theory of names actually takes to be literal. In other words, the criterion for distinguishing literal uses of names from non-literal must not already assume the truth of—or beg the question against—a semantic theory of names.

Another strategy to justify the literality of predicative uses has been to give an argument of the following general form:

Premise A: Referring uses are literal uses of names.

Premise B: Uses that have a close affinity with referential uses are literal.

Premise C: Predicative uses have a close affinity with referential uses.[23]

Therefore, Predicative uses are literal uses.

There is something to be said against both the premises A and B of the above argument. If premise A is true, then a semantic theory of names must be under an obligation to explain all uses of a name as a singular term. This, however, is not true. Names can be used figuratively to refer to individuals, and figurative uses of names are clearly non-literal. Consider e.g., the metaphorical use of the name 'Freud' in (15) to refer to a (contextually salient) individual known to psychoanalyse speakers during talks and the metonymic use of 'Washington' in (16) to refer to the US government:

15. She agreed to speak when I told her that Freud would not be attending.

16. Washington is increasingly wary of the developments in Taiwan Strait.

It is for a theory of metaphor or metonym (and not for a semantic theory of names) to explain how the names 'Freud' and 'Washington' can be used to refer to individuals who do not have 'Freud' and 'Washington' as their names. What these examples show is that just as there can be literal referential uses of names, there can be non-literal referential uses.

Further, even if Premise A were true, there are good reasons to be sceptical of premise B. Even if one has independent grounds for treating referential uses as literal (say, someone who takes referential uses to be literal on the ground that they are the most *frequent* uses of names), mere affinity with the referential uses cannot be a justification for some other type of name-use to be considered literal. It is more reasonable to assume that the affinity between

---

[23] In different formulations of this argument, the "close affinity" (between predicative and referential uses) has been spelled out in different ways: e.g., the consideration that sentences like "Jones is a Jones" are trivially true (Burge, 1973), that "Hornsby" Inferences (i.e., inferences of the form "N is F, therefore, at least one N is F") are indexically valid (Hornsby, 1976; Schoubye, 2017) etc.

the literal name-uses must be *explained* by the ground(s) of their literality instead of *constituting* it. A justification for treating some other kind of name-use as literal must include either demonstrating that the other type of name-use is literal on the same ground that referential uses are, or providing some independent ground to justify the literality of that other type of name-use.

The above discussion shows first, that it would be a mistake to draw conclusions about the literality of a name-use on the basis of one's prior commitment to a semantic view, and second, that the basis of the distinction between literal and non-literal uses of names is something other than the semantic role or the syntactic position of a name within a sentence: just as there can be literal referential uses of names, there can be non-literal referential uses (likewise, when a name appears as general term within a sentence, its appearance can be either literal or non-literal.) In the next section, I propose a criterion of literality that is based not on the semantic role (or syntactic position) of a name within a sentence, but on considerations concerning our general *practice* of using names.

3.3 Responding to the challenge

This section has three parts. §3.3.1 motivates and presents the criterion of literality. §3.3.2 anticipates and responds to some objections. §3.3.3 provides considerations in favour of the criterion.

3.3.1 The Criterion of Literality

> When we predicate of any thing its proper name; when we say, pointing to a man, this is Brown or Smith, or pointing to a city, that it is York, we do not, merely by so doing, convey to the reader any information about them, except that those are their names.' (JS Mill, 'Of Names (J.S. Mill, *A System of Logic*, 1843, p. 38)

What Mill says about the use of names in ostensive sentences in the above quote is true of the use of names more generally. When someone (say, Victoria) utters truly that 'Yesterday I met one McTavish' or 'I went to Ardnamurchan ten years ago' to a linguistically competent listener, the listener (say, Mark) comes to learn something about McTavish and Ardnamurchan: Mark learns that McTavish is a person whom Victoria met the day before or that Ardnamurchan is the place that Victoria went to ten years ago. This information about McTavish and Ardnamurchan, however, is communicated by the sentence as a whole and must be distinguished from the information conveyed by the names 'McTavish' and 'Ardnamurchan'. By themselves, all that the names convey to Mark is that the individuals under discussion are called 'McTavish' and 'Ardnamurchan'. If Mark knew nothing about McTavish or Ardnamurchan prior to his interaction with Victoria, Mark would learn nothing new about them (beyond the information provided by Victoria's utterances and the fact that they bear the names 'McTavish' and 'Ardnamurchan'.)

There can, of course, be some situations in which Mark comes to learn more about McTavish or Ardnamurchan, but they do not speak against the thesis just discussed. First, as a competent user of the English language, Mark may glean that the sentential positions in which 'McTavish' and 'Ardnamurchan' appear must get filled by noun phrases standing for persons and places; therefore, Mark may infer that McTavish must be a person and Ardnamurchan a place. Such information, however, is not conveyed by the names used in the utterance, but by the semantic requirement that the direct object positions of the verbs 'meet' and 'went' generally get filled by noun phrases denoting people and places respectively. Secondly, given his prior knowledge of the world, Mark may learn more about the people mentioned by Victoria—for instance, Mark may already know of McTavish's desire to meet

Victoria and upon hearing Victoria's utterance he may learn of McTavish that his desire is fulfilled. Such phenomenon, however, is highly sensitive to the collateral information and worldly knowledge possessed by participants in a linguistic exchange and therefore cannot be considered an *essential* part of the information conveyed by names (or the sentences within which they appear.)

This last point gets further support from the fact that names of individuals can be legitimately and successfully used even when the conversational participants possess no prior knowledge about those individuals. Victoria does not need to rely on Mark's familiarity with McTavish or Ardnamurchan to make her utterances understood.[24] This feature of names is in stark contrast with other types of expressions like ordinary adjectives or common nouns—it would not be possible for Victoria to successfully convey anything through an utterance of 'Yesterday, I felt lucky' or 'I went to a circus ten years ago' if Mark were unfamiliar with the meaning/denotation of 'lucky' or 'circus'. Journalistic reports, stories, or other discourses about unfamiliar individuals can therefore simply begin by introducing their names ('Elizabeth is a queen. She has four children and is the head of a large family'.)

The use of a name does not require even the issuer of an utterance to possess much knowledge about the bearer. One such example comes from Dummett (who, of course, did not endorse the view that I motivate using his example):

---

[24] Depending on factors like their existing epistemic state, their familiarity with the people named (etc.), different individuals may gather different amounts of information—or develop different levels of understanding—upon hearing Victoria's utterance. It is also possible to propose *criteria of competence* with a name needed to reap some such "epistemic rewards" (see e.g., Gray (2016).) The point here, however, is not to identify the levels of competence needed to use a name for specific epistemic or communicative purposes, but the minimal, essential competence needed to participate in the practice of using names more generally. (See also fn. 25 and §3.3.2.2.)

> If, when I come home, one of my children says to me, 'Mr. Cunningham telephoned and asked if you would ring him back', the child may no more know the sense or the reference of the name 'Mr. Cunningham', which, let us suppose, he has never heard before, than does a piece of paper on which such a message is written; the child is acting merely as a recording apparatus. (Dummett, 1973, p. 138)

Dummett's example illustrates that a person's competence in using a name may involve nothing more than a faithful reproduction of the name—a child can successfully issue an utterance containing the name 'Mr. Cunningham' without possessing much information about the individual bearing the name. Although it may be true of many (perhaps most) actual uses of a name that the speaker of an utterance knows a lot about the person(s) whose name she uses in an utterance, such knowledge is not an essential part of the competence required to use a name. Names are indeed distinctive in this regard—while one's competence in using an adjective or a verb crucially depends on one's knowledge of their denotation/meaning, one's competence in the use of a name—as Dummett's example shows—does not. One can use the name 'Gödel's Theorem' to talk about one or more of Gödel's Theorems, all the while having no idea whether these are theorems in logic or in welfare economics (or even that these theorems are named after a person named 'Gödel'.)[25]

It is, however, trivially true that every time a speaker sincerely intends to talk about an individual (or individuals) using a name, she takes the individual (or individuals) to bear the name. What is often meant by a name being a *tag* is that just like plastic or paper tags (think valet parking tickets), a name can be transferred from one conversational participant to

---

[25] A critic had objected that a person who uses a name in a sentence without knowing much about the bearer does not *fully* or *completely understand* what they say. Dummett's example shows that such an objection relies on a strong notion of "understanding" that is not relevant to the practice of using names: Let us grant that the child, or the father, lack understanding of their utterances if they don't know much about Mr. Cunningham. This lack, however, does not obstruct the success of their linguistic interactions. Understanding of this sort is therefore not a *condition* for the successful use of a name. (See also fn. 24.)

another without either of them possessing any substantial information about the individual(s) bearing the tag. Intending to steal a car, a thief may hand over a stolen valet parking ticket to an accomplice without knowing the brand or value of the car attached to the ticket; however, the assumption that the valet ticket is attached to an object is inherent in the very treatment of the valet ticket as a valet ticket. Analogously, any sincere intention to talk about an individual using a name must rest on the assumption that the named individual *bears* that name. (I return to this point in §3.3.2.1.)

So far in this section I have argued that it is an essential and distinctive feature of our practice of using names that neither the issuer of a name (say, the utterer) nor the recipient (say, the hearer) needs to possess substantial information about the bearer(s) of the name. It is then reasonable to assume that instances of name use which *require* the conversational participants to possess substantial information about the bearers of a name must involve harnessing features of a conversational setting that go beyond the essential linguistic features of a name itself. (Such features of the conversational setting may include the epistemic state of participants in a linguistic exchange, contextual information, knowledge of linguistic idioms etc.) If so, then in such uses the linguistic properties of names must be thought to result from a variety of semantic or pragmatic factors and a semantic theory of names alone should not be expected to account for them. Conversely, an investigation into the semantics of names must not assign semantic significance to the linguistic properties of names in uses that substantially depart from the general practice of using names; and such uses must be classified as non-literal uses of names. This can be summarized in the form of a criterion of literality for names:

Criterion of Literality (COL):

> A use of a name is literal iff such use by participants in a linguistic exchange requires them to possess no more information about the bearer(s) of the name beyond the fact that they bear the name in question.

The above formulation calls for an important clarification concerning the epistemological force of 'possess'. It is too strict a demand on participants in a linguistic exchange to *know* that the individual(s) whose name(s) they use also bear the name(s). If X hears that her neighbour bears the name 'Smith' from an unreliable source, then X does not know that the neighbour bears 'Smith'. However, insofar as X possesses the true belief that the neighbour bears the name 'Smith', X's lack of knowledge does not hinder her successfully using the name in linguistic interactions (e.g., when she tells Y 'Smith is raking the leaves'.) Names get 'picked up' within conversational contexts so readily because it is not knowledge, but just the truth of the relevant belief concerning bearer-hood that is pertinent to their use.

3.3.2 Objections and responses

This section considers two objections representing two opposite sources of pressure on the Criterion of Literality. Both objections dispute the right-hand side of the COL bi-conditional: criticizing it for being too demanding ('the Radical Millian') or too weak ('the Minimal Descriptivist') a characterisation of our general practice of using names.

3.3.2.1 The Radical Millian

Objection: Consider a case—like the one discussed by Kripke (1977, p. 263-264)—in which a name is used to refer to an individual who does not bear the name. For instance, two people may hold a productive and coherent conversation about an individual (who bears the name 'Smith') all the while using a name that the individual does not bear (say, 'Jones'). This may be either because they are mistaken about the identity of the referred individual or because

they chose to use 'Jones' as a one-off word to refer to the individual. This case shows that our practice of using names allows us to use a name to refer to an individual who does not bear the name. *A fortiori*, participants in a conversation do not need to possess the true belief that the individuals they intend to refer to using a name bear the name. The criterion is therefore too demanding—it requires name users to possess too much information.

Response: The use of one object to refer to another is part of a more general referential practice that is not necessarily limited to language-using creatures. The relation between any two objects (e.g., *x* owns/wears/resembles/smells-like *y* etc.) may be harnessed to refer to one object using another—e.g., a person may be referred to using a tie that she wears or her social-security number. (Geurts, 1997, p. 326; Bach, 2002, p. 83). Further, it is also plausible that some of the objects that are used to refer in this way turn out to be words/expressions of a language—e.g., someone may be referred to using her favourite phrase ('*I don't agree* didn't attend the colloquium today'.)

This general referential practice must be distinguished from the quintessentially *linguistic* practice of using a singular term—e.g., a name, deictic pronoun, demonstrative etc.—to refer to an individual. The use of a singular term harnesses specific features of the meaning of the term, features of the context, and the object one intends to refer to—for instance, 'he' can be used to refer only to individuals who use 'he' as their pronoun. What makes names distinctive among the class of singular terms is that a name can be used to refer only to individuals who have the name more-or-less permanently assigned to them—i.e., individuals who *bear* the name.

The participants in the above case could have secured reference in the same manner (i.e., either mistakenly or in a one-off manner) by using the wrong pronoun (say, 'she' instead of

'he') or even the wrong description (say, 'the woman' instead of 'the man'.) None of this would raise doubts about the normal practice of using pronouns or descriptions. Analogously, the fact that the interlocutors use the *name* 'Jones' to secure reference is merely incidental and does not speak anything about our normal practice of using names. The case described above is not an instance of the general *linguistic* practice of using a name to refer to an individual but is an instance of a more general practice of using one object to refer to another (and must be considered irrelevant in a discussion concerning our practice of using names or any other singular term.)[26]

3.3.2.2 The Minimal Descriptivist

Objection: Aidan Gray (2016) has highlighted an interesting connection between the use of names on the one hand and testimonial knowledge on the other, which suggests that the practice of using a name requires possession of more information about the bearer(s) of the name than is assumed by the Criterion of Literality. Central to our ability to gain testimonial knowledge is the fact that upon hearing a sincere, trustworthy, and knowledgeable interlocutor utter a sentence (say, P) that contains a name, we can come to know that P—e.g., if the child in Dummett's example *knows* that 'Mr. Cunningham telephoned', from the child's testimony the parent can come to know this too. If so, then it would be puzzling how the parent can gain such testimonial knowledge unless the parent can also (a) identify the person the child intends to refer to using 'Mr. Cunningham' from amongst other people (say, Mr. Bunningham) and (b) disambiguate the intended bearer of 'Mr. Cunningham' from other bearers of 'Mr. Cunningham'. Gray argues that what best explains our ability to gain such

---

[26] Another option would be to treat the use as an *erroneous* use of a name. If so, then the counterexample fails anyway—erroneous uses (by that very fact) cannot be considered part of the *normal* practice of using names.

testimonial knowledge is the assumption that we associate information with a name that goes beyond the fact that the referent bears the name in question.[27] And although this information may not be enough to determine the referent of a name, it should be enough to allow one to narrow down to the intended referent and disambiguate the relevant Mr. Cunningham amongst other possible bearers of 'Mr. Cunningham'.

Response: First, Gray's argument is limited to the use of names in cases of testimonial knowledge and it would therefore be reasonable to circumscribe its conclusions to such cases. One theoretical option is to stick to the position defended in this chapter while also granting that the restricted context of testimonial knowledge requires a special sort of linguistic competence with names—one that goes beyond the minimal, essential competence needed to participate in linguistic exchanges involving names more generally.

But I favour a stronger response. By requiring that an explanation for (a) and (b) must be provided in terms of one's (linguistic) competence with a name, Gray puts too much burden on the notion of *competence with a name*. The task of determining or disambiguating the referent does not have to rely on one's *linguistic* competence. A variety of factors—including (but not limited to) the personal histories of the participants, contextual cues, their epistemic state, their knowledge of their mutual epistemic state etc.—play a role in such determination. Indeed, in this regard, names are like other singular terms: what determines or disambiguates the referent of a singular term in a particular instance of its use is not just one's linguistic competence with the term—i.e., one's knowledge of its linguistic meaning—but also the sort of factors outlined earlier.

CEU eTD Collection

---

[27] Gray's argument assumes that names are *lexically ambiguous*—names of different people count as different names. Therefore, associating information with a name effectively amounts to having beliefs about its bearer.

To see this, consider the following modification of Dummett's example: it is plausible that (atleast in certain contexts) the child could have used the expression '*he* telephoned' or '*that man* telephoned' to convey the same knowledge that the child conveys using the expression 'Mr. Cunningham telephoned'. Concerns like (a) and (b) that arise for the use of names in context of testimonial knowledge will also arise for pronouns and complex demonstratives. However, in the latter case, such questions must be answered by appeal to the historical, contextual, and epistemic factors mentioned in the last paragraph instead of an appeal only to one's linguistic competence with the pronoun 'he' or the complex demonstrative 'that man'.[28] It is then methodologically sound to assume that it is the general account of transfer of knowledge using singular terms that should be extended to explain transfer of knowledge using names (instead of forcing a modification on the general practice of using names to accommodate cases of testimonial knowledge.)

3.3.3 Arguments for the criterion

As an initial test of the plausibility of the Criterion of Literality, let us apply the criterion to the stock example of a figurative use of a name and see if it comes out non-literal:

> 14. George Wallace is a Napoleon   (Burge, 1973)

To successfully use the name Napoleon in the intended (metaphorical) manner, both the utterer of (14) as well as the listener must know much more about Napoleon than the fact that he was called 'Napoleon'—they must know, for instance, that Napoleon was an ambitious and tyrannical dictator. The use of 'Napoleon' in (14) must therefore be classified as non-literal according to the criterion presented above. But beyond delivering correct judgements

---

[28] Which is rather limited and involves knowing things like "that man" can be used to refer to a man in the vicinity of the agent etc.

in the figurative uses of names, there are other strong reasons for adopting the criterion—this is the subject of the next three subsections.

3.3.3.1 *Verdict on non-controversial cases:*

The criterion delivers the judgements that we expect it to deliver in non-controversial cases. It classifies most referential uses of names as literal—for instance, a lack of familiarity with Alfred Nobel does not render (1) infelicitous:

> 1. Thanks to Alfred's beneficence, scientists today get global recognition.

Therefore, the use of 'Alfred' counts as a literal use according to the criterion. Similar considerations apply to the use of 'Donald Trump' in (2).

The figurative referential uses of names are, however, a different story. Consider the example discussed earlier:

> 15. She agreed to speak when I told her that Freud would not be attending.

The use of 'Freud' in (15) is figurative because it is used to refer to a contextually salient individual having the same traits as that of the famous Viennese Psychoanalyst. Clearly, a successful use of this name would require participants in a linguistic exchange to know a lot more about both the person referred to in the context as well as the famous Viennese Psychoanalyst. Such competence, however, is not part of our usual competence in using a name and the criterion correctly classifies this use as non-literal. (Similar considerations apply to the metonymic use of 'Washington' in (16).)

The criterion also delivers the correct verdict on the non-literality of extended uses of names in (5)-(10). The Metonymic uses of 'Romanov', 'Stella', and 'Osama bin Laden' in (5), (6), and (7) crucially rely on the familiarity of conversational participants with the fact that these

71

names refer to a Russian dynasty, a painter, and the mastermind of September 11 attacks (and his looks.)[29] The mass term, verb, and measure phrase use of names also rely heavily on familiarity with some relevant bearer of those names. 'Heidegger' and 'Frege' cannot be used in the intended metonymic manner in (8) unless the conversational participants recognize them as authors of philosophical works; and the use of 'google' in (9) and 'Bill Gates' in (10) both rely on familiarity with Google as a search engine and with Bill Gates as a billionaire. The criterion therefore classifies them as non-literal uses of names.

3.3.3.2 Uniform rationale for non-literality of extended uses.

The criterion also does an excellent job of providing a *uniform* rationale for treating the motley crew of name-uses called 'extended uses' as non-literal. Various sub-types of extended uses are thought to be non-literal for a variety of reasons. Some such reasons include:

1. Some names—e.g., 'Google' in (9) and 'Bill Gates' in (10)—can be naturally used as a verb and a measure phrase in English, but in some other languages such uses are hard to hear. For instance, an equivalent translation of (10) in Hebrew and Hindi is a construction containing a preposition and a referential use of a name (that roughly translates in English as: 'I am rich, but not rich *like* Bill Gates'.) This suggests that these uses are idiomatic expressions of English and a semantic theory of names—

---

[29]The extended-predicative uses considered here are non-literal because their use requires substantial information about a *particular* bearer of a name. However, there may be instances where an extended use is non-literal because it requires conversational participants to bear substantial information about a multitude of people bearing a name. Some such examples are given by Ora Matushansky, of which I will consider one:

    17. The new principal is such a *Priscilla*.   (Matushansky, 2015, p. 358)

The correct truth conditions of (17) in its intended use are obtained by taking the name "Priscilla" as a general term true not of "bearers of 'Priscilla'", but rather the "bearers of the stereotypical properties associated with bearers of 'Priscilla'". As the use of this name requires conversational participants to possess substantial information about the bearers of a name (i.e., their stereotypical properties), the Criterion of Literality (correctly) classifies it as a non-literal use.

which is supposed to account for features of names that hold cross-linguistically—should ignore such idiomatic usages.

2. Another compelling reason comes from Kent Bach, who argues that some extended uses do not exhibit intra-linguistic uniformity:

> …whereas the names of painters, sculptors, and architects can be used as capitalized count nouns for paintings, sculptures, and structures, the analogous situation does not hold for composers and compositions or for novelists and novels. (Bach, 2015, pp. 780–781)

   The fact that the names of artists engaged in one type of artform may be used in an extended manner ('Stella' in (6)) but not others shows that such uses are a result of special practices limited to names of certain categories of individuals. A semantic theory of names, on the other hand, should only be expected to account for the properties of names governed by the general practice of using names within a language.

3. Yet another reason for treating some extended uses as non-literal is that the extended uses of names are mostly limited to names of famous individuals. This suggests that whether a name can have an extended use is governed by special practices sensitive to socio-cultural factors instead of general semantic/syntactic properties of names. A theory of semantics of names that aims at explaining the semantic behaviour of names more generally does not need to provide a direct semantic explanation for them.

All these are strong considerations for taking one or other subtype of extended uses as non-literal—but what speaks for the Criterion of Literality is that it provides an overarching and uniform rationale for taking *all* extended uses as non-literal. In fact, it is easy to see that common to each of the rationale given above is the condition that the criterion employs to identify the non-literal uses of names—i.e., non-literal uses require collateral information that

73

is not part of one's normal competence of using a name. (The collateral information cited in (i) is the knowledge of the idioms of a language, in (ii), the knowledge of the special practices associated with names of certain categories of individuals, and in (iii), the knowledge of socio-cultural status of some individuals who bear a name.)

3.3.3.3 Upholds the Independence-Principle

Another important reason in favour of the Criterion of Literality is that it does not violate the independence-principle. The criterion is indifferent both to the syntactic position in which a name appears (it does not assume that a name must appear in a specific syntactic position to be considered literal) as well as to any specific semantic analysis of names (i.e., it does not assume the truth of any semantic theory of names or beg the question against it.) Instead, the criterion employs a condition related to the *practice* of using names as the basis for distinguishing literal from non-literal uses. As an illustration of this theory-neutrality, consider the fact that the reasons for the non-literality of extended uses provided above are non-semantic and should be equally acceptable to all parties in the debate concerning the semantics of names. Further, the criterion classifies the referential uses of names in (1) and (2)—and as I argue below, the predicative uses of names (3) and (4)—as literal, but it does so on a non-semantic basis that circumvents the possibility of it begging the question against any semantic theory.

Criticisms of the Criterion of Literality (if any) must either question some aspect of the name using practice that it assumes or provide an alternative (non-semantic) basis for distinguishing literal from non-literal names—an inconsistency with a semantic account of names is not among the possible criticisms of the Criterion of Literality.

74

3.3 Concluding Remarks

Recall that Sceptic's Challenge would be met if there are independent reasons for treating the extended-predicative uses as non-literal and for treating predicative uses as literal. I have already showed that the Criterion of Literality classifies extended-predicative uses as non-literal. Consider now the predicative use of 'Alfred' in (3)

3. No Alfred has ever walked on the moon.

The use of Alfred in (3) requires no more information about any (or all) bearers of Alfred beyond the fact that they bear the name 'Alfred'. (Similar considerations apply to the use of 'Donald Trump' in (4).) Further, it follows from the very definition of predicative uses that in its predicative use, a name 'N' truly applies to a 'bearer of "N"' (uses in which a name appears as a general term with a different application condition are classified as 'Extended-predicative uses', which are already shown to be non-literal.) Therefore, the Criterion of Literality classifies predicative uses of names as literal.

The semantic properties of names have been a subject of intense debate and scrutiny, however, the question of which types of name-uses are directly relevant in semantic theorizing about names has received little attention from philosophers. The distinction between literal and non-literal uses of a name is one that all parties in the debate concerning the semantics of names rely upon and endorse. However, the lack of a principled basis for drawing this distinction represents an important deficiency in the debate. The Sceptic's Challenge exemplifies the kind of philosophical problems that can result from such deficiency; in responding to the challenge, this paper also proposes a way to remedy it.

4. Metalinguistic Views and Circularity

One of Kripke's targets in Naming and Necessity is a semantic view of names that Kripke attributes to William Kneale[1]. Kripke summarizes the view thus:

> Here we have a theory of the reference of proper names. 'Socrates' just means 'the man called "Socrates".' (Kripke, 1980, p. 68)

Kripke goes on to argue that this view involves 'the notion of reference in such a way that it is ultimately impossible to eliminate.' (Kripke, 1980, p. 71) Kripke writes:

> As a theory of the reference of the name 'Socrates' it will lead immediately to a vicious circle. If one was determining the referent of a name like 'Glunk' to himself and made the following decision, 'I shall use the term "Glunk" to refer to the man that I call "Glunk"' this would get one nowhere. One had better have some independent determination of the referent of 'Glunk'. This is a good example of a blatantly circular determination. (Kripke, 1980, pp. 72–73)

Kripke's objection is thought to spell trouble for metalinguistic semantic views—views that specify the meaning of a name by mentioning the name. The text after the em dash in the previous line is intended to serve as the definition of metalinguistic views, so the words 'meaning' and 'mentioning' call for more explanation. Following Kripke, I will call any condition that constrains (or determines) the extension of a term—for instance, a Fregean sense, the application condition of a common noun, or the character of a pronoun—the 'meaning' of that term.[2] The meaning of a term, say, 't', is often specified using words that

---

[1] This is a misattribution. Kneale does not specify the meaning of the name 'Socrates' as 'the individual called "Socrates"' but as 'the individual called Socrates' (Kneale, 1966, p. 630). (Kripke adds quote marks around 'Socrates'.) It is therefore unclear whether Kneale's view is metalinguistic in the sense relevant here. (See also fn. 3)

[2] Meaning is understood in a variety of different ways—e.g., as senses, sets, functions etc. Nothing that I say in this chapter relies on substantive assumptions concerning the metaphysics of meaning.

76

are thought to have the same meaning as that of 't'—e.g., the meaning of the term 'human' may be specified using the words 'featherless biped'. I will call the words or expression used to specify a meaning (e.g., the words 'featherless biped') a 'meaning-specification'.

By 'mentioning' all that is meant is that in the metalinguistic meaning-specification, the name makes an appearance within quote marks or some other suitable device of quotation—e.g., italics, guillemets, etc. (More generally, a word or expression is 'mentioned' if it appears within a device of quotation and 'used' if it does not.) Thus defined, metalinguistic views include a motley bunch of views—some treat a name 'N' as a common noun with (roughly) 'entity called "N"' as its application condition (Bach, 2015; Burge, 1973; Elbourne, 2005; Gray, 2012); others as an indexical with 'entity called "N"' as its character (Recanati, 1993); yet others take it to be associated with a sense/description—for instance, 'the entity called "N"' (Geurts, 1997; Katz, 2001).)[3]

My ambition in this chapter is to show that no member of this group is essentially committed to any sort of circularity[4]. Despite their differences, all metalinguistic views employ the device of quotation in specifying the meaning of a name. Therefore, how exactly one understands the metalinguistic meaning-specification directly relies on what one takes to be the function of quote marks. If quote marks are ambiguous—as, following others, I will point out—then the metalinguistic specification of meaning is ambiguous as well.

---

[3] It is not clear whether some further views—e.g., Kneale (1966), Schoubye (2017, 2020a)—must be considered metalinguistic. The proponents of such views do not explicitly employ a device of quotation in their proposed meaning-specification. However, if these theorists take it to be part of the very semantics of 'called' that the word that follows 'called' must be treated as a quote name—e.g., of itself or its form (see next section)—then these views must be considered metalinguistic.

[4] I would like to emphasize the use of the word 'essentially' here. My point here is not that every semantic view of names that is metalinguistic *must* be non-circular. It is rather that a semantic view of names does not become circular by virtue of it being metalinguistic. In slogan form: being metalinguistic doesn't make it circular.

Earlier responses to the circularity objection have mostly followed Kripke in adopting an understanding of quotation which makes metalinguistic views seem explicitly committed to some sort of circularity. Given this understanding, such responses have adopted the strategy of either arguing that the circularity is benign (Gray, 2014; Katz, 1990; Recanati, 1993) or of proposing alternative semantics of 'called' to show that the circularity in such accounts is not semantically problematic (Loar, 1980; Recanati, 1993). My strategy in this chapter, however, is to argue that metalinguistic views are wholly free of circularity. I will argue that the impression of circularity in metalinguistic views results from the decision to resolve the ambiguity of quotation in the metalinguistic meaning-specification in one way rather than the other. Metalinguistic views, however, are not committed to an understanding of quotation that results in circularity. On the contrary, I will argue that there are good reasons to take metalinguistic views as assuming the understanding of quotation on which the circularity worry does not even arise.

Looking ahead, §4.1 begins by drawing a distinction between a word and a form associated with it. It also discusses two ways in which quotations can be ambiguous—quotation marks can form a quote-name[5] of either a word or a form associated with the word. §4.2 argues that the charge of circularity against metalinguistic views arises only when these views are understood as employing a specific understanding of quotation—i.e., the view that quotations form quote-names of words. Metalinguistic views, however, are not committed to this understanding of quotation. On the contrary, I will argue in §4.3 that a plausible

---

[5] For simplicity, I shall assume that quotations refer by forming a proper name (a 'quote-name') of the entity that they refer to. While the argument presented here crucially relies on the fact that the question 'What do quotations refer to?' can have more than one answer, it is indifferent to how one answers the question 'How do quotations refer?'. The assumption is therefore harmless.

metalinguistic specification of the meaning of a name must employ a different understanding of quotation—one on which quotations are understood to form quote-names of forms.

4.1 Words and their associated forms

The same word can be variously expressed—through a gesture (e.g., in a sign language such as the ASL), a sound (e.g., as part of an utterance), or an inscription (e.g., a written mark on paper.) For instance, the same German word can be tokened by an inscription of the type "Information" or a sound of the type /ɪnfɔʁmaˈʦi̯oːn/. Call a type of gesture, sound, or inscription a *form* associated with a word if a token of the form can also be a token of the word.[6] The type of inscription represented by "Information" and the type of sound represented by /ɪnfɔʁmaˈʦi̯oːn/ are both forms associated with the same German word, but the type of inscription represented by "balloon" is not—tokens of the type "Information" can be used to express the German word, but tokens of the type "balloon" cannot.

Although related, a word and its associated form are distinct. Not all tokens of a form associated with a word are also tokens of that word. Aliens living in a faraway galaxy, completely unaware of and uninterested in human affairs, may produce sounds of type /ɪnfɔʁmaˈʦi̯oːn/ every time they scratch their nose—these sounds will count as tokens of the sound-type represented by /ɪnfɔʁmaˈʦi̯oːn/ but not of the German word. A token of the form "bank" may be token of one word (i.e., the word which means a financial institution), or it may be a token of another word (i.e., the land alongside a river or lake), or it may not be the

---

[6] I follow the (metaphysical) assumption—defended by Linda Wetzel (2002, 2009), and John Hawthorne & Ernst Lepore (2011) among others—that words are abstract objects that can be thought of as *types*. This, of course, is not the only way to construe the metaphysics of words. However, the assumption that words are types is innocuous for the argument of this chapter. The plausibility of the metaphysical *distinction* between a word and its associated form is independent of the plausibility of the metaphysics of words that one favours. The argument of this chapter only assumes a distinction between a word and its associated form but does not rely on assumptions concerning the metaphysics of words.

token of any word at all (e.g., when produced by the above aliens.) Furthermore, words and their forms have different properties: words belong to a language but forms—as types of physical phenomena—do not. It is not a word that has a particular shape or sound but rather its (inscribed or spoken) form, and it is a word and not its form that has meaning and other interesting semantic properties.

In many languages, the same linguistic device—e.g., quotation marks of English, guillemets of French, and the word 'इति' of Sanskrit—can be used to form a quote-name of either a word or a form associated with the word.[7] Consider, for instance, that (ordinarily) in English '"soda"' can be used to form a quote-name of a word (e.g., 'in the UK "soda" means fizzy water, not coke') or a quote-name of a form associated with a word (e.g., 'three out of four letters in "soda" are topologically equivalent shapes'.) Two occurrences of quote marks around the same word may thus result in quote-names of two things that are very different from one another.

The precise use and understanding of quotation marks will be central to the argument of this chapter. I will use single quotes to form quote-names of words, double quotes to form quote-names of types of inscriptions, slash ("/") to form quote-names of sounds/phonemes, and use guillemets (i.e., "«" and "»") to form quote-names where it is unclear whether the intended referent of the quote-name is a word or its associated form. I use italics only for emphasis, not for quotation. I will use indents or single quotes to cite the words of others—such uses

---

[7] These are, of course, only two of the many kinds of things that can be referred to using the device of quotation. Paul Saka (1998) for instance, argues that quotations may be used to refer to concepts expressed by quoted expressions or even their extensions.

will be clear from the context. (Cited words have not been modified to accord with the above quotation conventions.)

Metalinguistic accounts specify the meaning of a name by mentioning the name. However, the intended referent of the quote-name thus formed is mostly left unspecified[8]. I shall therefore use guillemets in reporting the meaning of a name 'N' on such accounts as 'bearer of «N»'. (The meaning of a name has been specified by metalinguistic theorists in various ways—e.g., as 'entity called «N»', 'thing attributed «N»', etc.—but the differences between these specifications are not relevant here.) Adopting these conventions may make the language seem artificial at times, but such artificiality is a small price to pay for the clarity that it affords.

4.2 The Circularity Objection

Disproportionate to its influence, Kripke's discussion of the circularity objection in Naming and Necessity is rather short, confined to just a few pages (pp 68-73).[9] Even so, the short and dense discussion in Naming and Necessity runs together several different issues, not all of which are relevant to the issue of circularity[10]. Therefore, I will confine attention to two

---

[8] Notable exceptions here are Paul Elbourne (2005, pp. 221–222) and Aidan Gray (2015). These theorists take the quote-name to be a name of a form. This consideration, however, plays no role in their response to the circularity argument. (Indeed, Gray uses it to motivate a separate, independent objection to metalinguistic views which I do not address in this chapter.)

[9] Kripke did not see the length of his discussion of the circularity objection to be indicative of its importance—e.g., Kripke writes: 'Actually sentences like 'Socrates is called "Socrates"', are very interesting and one can spend, strange as it may seem, hours talking about their analysis. I actually did, once, do that. I won't do that, however, on this occasion. (See how high the seas of language can rise. And at the lowest points too.)' (Kripke, 1980, p. 73)

[10] Two issues that I will not be touching upon in this section pertain to Kripke's criticism of the views of Kneale: First, the view that it is trifling to be told that 'Socrates was called "Socrates"' (when stated using the past tense, the statement is not just substantial, but—in all likelihood—even false) and second the view that the triviality of the sentence 'Socrates is called "Socrates"' can ground theses concerning the meaning of the name 'Socrates' (Kripke argues that the triviality of such sentences need not have anything to do with the meaning of the subject term.)

distinct objections pertaining to circularity in metalinguistic accounts that Kripke can be taken to have raised[11]: one objection against the metalinguistic account of the *meaning* of a name, and another against metalinguistic account of *reference* of names. This section discusses the two objections and argues that the question of circularity in metalinguistic views can arise only if it is assumed that the metalinguistic meaning-specification contains a quote-name of a word and not of the form associated with the word.

4.2.1 Metalinguistic Account of Meaning.

It is helpful to begin by looking at how the notion of circularity is understood more generally in broader discussions within philosophy and what exactly is problematic about it. Circularity is often characterized in terms of the recurrence of the definiendum, the conclusion, or the explanandum in the respective definition, argument, or explanation. Consider, for instance:

> A definition is blatantly or *overtly* circular if the *definiens* contains the *definiendum*. Here is an example:
>> 1. x is putrid =df x smells putrid to normal adults.
>
> […] A definition is *covertly* circular if and only if a chain of definitions must eventually lead back to a later definition that contains the original definiendum.
> Here is a series of examples:
>> 2. x is putrid =df x is decayed
>> 3. x is decayed =df x is rotten
>> 4. x is rotten =df x is foul
>> 5. x is foul =df x is putrid.
>
> (Burgess, 2008, p. 214; emphasis in the original)

---

[11] My goal here is not Kripke-exegesis, but to rid metalinguistic views from the charge of circularity. Although my presentation of Kripke's objections is broadly in line with the text of Naming and Necessity, it must be treated as a rational reconstruction of Kripke's arguments that connects most directly to the contemporary discussions of circularity in metalinguistic accounts.

> I take as a starting point that an argument is circular (note: not viciously circular) if and only if its conclusion repeats one of its premises or repeats a conjunct of a conjunctive premise. (Wilson, 1988)

The above characterization of circularity (in definitions) in terms of the recurrence of a term is rather broad: covering both cases in which the recurrence of a term leads to some problem ('vicious' circularity) and cases in which it does not ('benign' circularity)[12]. The converse of this rather broad characterization provides us with a rather strong test for non-circularity: if a definiendum (or an explanandum) does not recur in its definition (or explanation), then whatever else may be wrong with the definition (or explanation), circularity cannot be one of those things.

Such broad characterization also helps get a better grasp of the sort of trouble that circularity may lead to—a circular definition of a term prevents us from knowing the definition of that term, because the definiens contains the very term whose definition we seek. In some cases, the difficulty may be overcome, making those cases benign cases of circularity. In cases of vicious circularity, however, it will be impossible to know the definition of a term without a prior possession of the definition of the term.

In line with this more general characterization, one may attempt an initial characterization of what circularity in *semantic theorizing* would amount to: a semantic theory that aims at specifying the meaning of a term 't' will be circular if the meaning of 't' as specified by the

---

[12] J. A. Burgess (2008) and I. L. Humberstone (1997) provide an analysis and examples of benign circularity in definitions. To define 'cow' as 'x is a cow $=_{df}$ Prince Charles believes that x is a cow' is to give a circular definition just as defining 'cow' as 'x is a cow $=_{df}$ Prince Charles knows that x is a cow' is. However, unlike the latter, the circularity in the former definition is benign. One does not already need to establish whether something is a cow to establish whether Prince Charles believes that it is a cow, but—given the factivity of knowledge—one would needs a prior definition of a cow to establish whether Prince Charles knows that something is a cow. (Burgess, 2008, pp. 221–222)

83

theory contains the very term 't'. However, vis-à-vis definitions (or arguments, or explanations)—which can all be thought of as sets of sentences—it is more difficult to make sense of what could it be for a meaning of a term to *contain* that term. Whether the recurrence of a word in its meaning is a sensible possibility and whether meanings can be thought of as having a word as its constituent are questions that require substantive assumptions concerning the nature of meaning; answering these questions should not be a precondition for the very formulation of circularity objection.

A more fruitful strategy to characterize circularity in semantic theorizing about meaning is to characterize it in terms of the quintessential problem that circularity leads into—if a semantic theory is circular, then we would expect an imagined agent S to be prevented from knowing the meaning of a term because the meaning-specification that a theory provides for that term contains that very term. In the case of semantic theories that are viciously circular, it would be impossible for S to know the meaning of a term 't' from what the theory says about the meaning of 't', unless S already knows the meaning of 't'. This can be stated in terms of the following non-circularity requirement on semantic theorizing:

> (C_M) If a semantic theory (T) aims at specifying the meaning of a linguistic item 't' and does so by providing a specification 's' such that according to T, the meaning of 's' is the same as the meaning of 't', then it must be possible for an agent S to know the meaning of 's' without prior knowledge of the meaning of 't'.[13]

---

[13] I thank an anonymous critic for help in putting down this condition in these terms. 'Prior' in C1 must be understood as having the force of logical (and not temporal or conceptual) priority. Let us say 's' means m_1 and 't' means m_2 (such that if T is correct then m_1 and m_2 will be identical). Then, for it to be possible for an agent S to know the meaning of 's' without a prior knowledge of the meaning of 't' is for it to be possible for S to know that 's' means m_1 without necessarily knowing that 't' means m_2.

84

Kripke's first circularity objection can then be stated as the violation of C$_M$ by metalinguistic views. If in specifying the meaning of a name 'N' as 'bearer «N»', these views are understood as taking '«N»' to be the quote-name of the very linguistic item whose meaning is being specified (such that the meaning of 'N' is 'bearer of 'N' '), then arguments such as the following may be motivated against the metalinguistic views: Given compositionality—the linguistic item 'N' is either a constituent of the meaning or plays a role in determining the meaning of 'bearer of 'N''. Therefore, unless one has some degree of linguistic competence in the use of 'N'—which, one may argue, amounts to knowing the meaning of 'N'—one cannot know the meaning of 'bearer of 'N''. Metalinguistic views, therefore, violate C$_M$.

I do not wish to suggest that this is the only plausible way to motivate a circularity argument against the above understanding of metalinguistic views, nor is it a part of my overall strategy to respond to such arguments. My strategy is to point out that the charge of circularity against metalinguistic accounts can get off the ground only if '«N»' is disambiguated as a quote-name of 'N' instead of "N".

If metalinguistic meaning-specification is understood as 'bearer of "N"', then it is not the linguistic item 'N' but the quote-name of a form—i.e., the inscription type "N"—that appears in the meaning-specification. One can therefore learn the meaning of 'bearer of "N"' even if one does not know the meaning of the linguistic item 'N' (or even if one is utterly unfamiliar with the existence of 'N' as a linguistic item.) For instance, if one knows the meaning of 'bearing', then one can know that to be a 'bearer of "Gandhi"' is to be in a bearing relationship with the inscription "Gandhi". (More on this in §4.2.2.) If the metalinguistic meaning-specification of Gandhi's (the Indian political ethicist) given name is taken to be 'bearer of "Gandhi"', then one can know the meaning of 'bearer of "Gandhi"' without a prior

knowledge of the meaning of the word 'Gandhi'. (One can know the meaning of 'bearer of "Gandhi"' even if one does not know that the inscription "Gandhi" is a form associated with a word of a language.)

Thus, if '«N»' in the metalinguistic meaning-specification is understood as "N", then metalinguistic views cannot be taken to violate C_M. Non-violation of C_M, however, only shows that metalinguistic views are not *viciously* circular. The above considerations, however, warrant a stronger conclusion: if the metalinguistic meaning-specification of a name 'N' is understood as 'bearer of "N"', then even an impression of circularity—vicious or benign—cannot arise for metalinguistic views. This is because for there to be even a suspicion of circularity, the linguistic item 'N' must play some role in the determination of the metalinguistic meaning of 'N'. However, as discussed above, the linguistic item 'N' is utterly irrelevant in determining the meaning of 'entity called "N"'.[14]

4.2.2 Metalinguistic Account of Reference.

The second way to motivate the circularity objection—perhaps closer to Kripke's own—is to say that it is not the metalinguistic account of the meaning of a name, but rather its account of reference that is circular. In his formulation of the inviolable circularity condition, Kripke writes:

---

[14] It may still be objected that the linguistic item 'N' is covertly, if not overtly, a part of the metalinguistic meaning-specification 'entity called "N"'—after all, it is the linguistic item 'N' that is used to form the quote-name '"N"' in the metalinguistic meaning-specification. In response, it must be noted that the use of the linguistic item 'N' is not essential in forming the relevant quote-name required in metalinguistic meaning-specification. If one adopts an alternative method for specifying forms (e.g., assign number 01 to "A", 02 to "B" and so on…) then the metalinguistic meaning of the name 'Gandhi' can be fully specified as 'the bearer of 070114040809'. The impression that 'N' is covertly a part of 'entity called "N"' is an illusion created by the expressive convenience of '"N"'.

(C$_R$) The properties which are used in the vote [for reference determination] must not themselves involve the notion of reference in a way that it is ultimately impossible to eliminate. (Kripke, 1980, p. 71)

Stated as above, it is not obvious how metalinguistic views can be in violation of (C$_R$). Metalinguistic views are not essentially views concerning how names refer[15]. What binds metalinguistic views together is not a common account of reference, but the fact that all these accounts specify the meaning of a name by mentioning the name. There is no single, unique metalinguistic account of reference and different metalinguistic views account for the referential uses of names differently—for instance, Tyler Burge (1973) explains the referential uses of names on the model of complex demonstratives, Bart Geurts (1997) treats them as incomplete descriptions, while Bach (2002) provides a wholly pragmatic account of how names get used to refer to objects.

However, metalinguistic views are vulnerable to Kripke's objections in an important, albeit indirect way. Names are most frequently used to refer to objects and any metalinguistic view worthy of serious consideration must give some account of how names refer. Although different metalinguistic views spell out the exact mechanism of how names refer differently, on each such account, the meaning of a name 'N' plays the role of constraining, if not determining, the range of objects that the name 'N' can (correctly) be used to refer to[16]. If, however, a full characterization of the meaning of 'N' cannot be provided without appeal to

---

[15] Some metalinguistic theorists even reject the assumption that a semantic theory of names must take the form of a theory of reference (Bach, 2015, p. 778; Geurts, 1997, pp. 325–326). This lack of fit between metalinguistic views and Kripke's objections is perhaps because Kripke's target in Naming and Necessity is Kneale's view, which is a theory of reference (albeit not necessarily metalinguistic.)

[16] Note that this follows from the very way 'meaning' was defined in the introductory section. In contrast with views like Kripke's—according to which names do not have meanings and refer without the mediation of a meaning—metalinguistic views take names to be meaningful such that the meaning of a name—which may be thought variously as a sense, application condition, or character—plays some part in determining the referent of a name.

the use of 'N' to refer to an object, then the metalinguistic views must be circular with respect to determination of the referent of a name.

Here is another way of presenting the objection: metalinguistic views specify the meaning of a name 'N' as 'bearer of «N»'[17], and the meaning of a name plays a crucial part in determining/constraining the referent of a name. Furthermore, these views maintain that an object becomes a bearer of «N» when it comes to *bear* «N» (alternatively, is *given* «N» or *attributed* «N») in an appropriate manner[18]. However, if the property of bearing «N» cannot be defined in terms independent of the property of being referred to by 'N', then metalinguistic account of the referential use of 'N' must in turn appeal to the referential use of 'N', hence circular. The second circularity objection is therefore essentially a challenge to characterize a name-bearing property (i.e., the property of bearing «N») without any prior appeal to the property of name-reference (i.e., the property of being referred to by 'N'.)

Unsurprisingly, metalinguistic theorists are committed to the view that facts concerning an object's coming to bear «N» can be explained without any appeal to facts concerning the use of 'N' to refer to that object. Bart Geurts and Kent Bach, for instance, write:

> Bearing a name is like wearing a tie. Like ties, names are seldom unique, but circumstances permitting they may be used for referential purposes. More accurately, just as you can employ the attribute of wearing a tie to identify to your audience the person you have in mind (John, as the case may be), you can use the attribute of being named 'John' for the same purpose.

---

[17] Alternative formulations include 'entity called «N»', 'thing attributed «N»'. The differences between these formulations are unimportant—each of these formulations are intended at describing a bearing relation (distinct from reference) between an object and «N».

[18] What it takes for an object to bear a name and what counts as an 'appropriate manner' may depend on sociocultural factors and may vary across societies (Burge, 1973, p. 435); metalinguistic views typically take name-bearing properties to be fundamental, for which no reductive analysis may be—or need to be—provided (Bach, 2015, p. 777).

> Taken on its own, however, a name doesn't refer any more than a tie does. (Geurts, 1997, p. 326)

> It is no more essential to the property of bearing a certain name that one be referred to by that name than it is essential to the property of having a certain social security number that one be referred to by that number (Bach, 2002, p. 83).

From the metalinguistic point of view, name-bearing properties, and not name-reference properties, are fundamental: the former ground the latter and not the other way around. If so, then it should be impossible for objects to come to bear «N» purely by virtue of their being referred to using 'N'. However, it has been pointed out that cases of reference transfer—e.g., the case of how Madagascar came to bear its name—show that an object can come to bear «N» purely by virtue of the practices of a group of speakers to refer to the object using 'N' (Evans, 1973; Gray, 2014). In the rest of this subsection, I will argue that even in this modified form, the circularity objection holds water only when the property of name-bearing is understood as the property of bearing 'N' instead of the property of bearing "N".

Consider first an understanding of metalinguistic views on which name-bearing is understood as an object coming to bear a linguistic item—i.e., the name 'N'—by virtue of some sociocultural practice. If the metalinguistic account of reference is to be non-circular, then it should always be possible to specify how an object comes to bear 'N' independent of any facts concerning the use of 'N' to refer to that object. Gray and Evans point out that this need not always be so: the island off the Eastern coast of Africa came to bear the name 'Madagascar' precisely because of the practice of using the name 'Madagascar'—originally attributed to a part of the African mainland—to refer to the island by a group of speakers as a result of some confusion. In cases of reference transfer, there seems to be no other plausible explanation of how a name gets attributed to an object except in terms of that name being

used to refer to that object. If so, then the claim that name-bearing properties are independent of name-reference properties seems indefensible.[19]

However, cases of reference transfer raise an essential problem for metalinguistic views only if in understanding the property of name-bearing, the quote name '«N»' is disambiguated as the quote-name of a linguistic item (i.e., the name 'N') and not as the quote-name of a form associated with that linguistic item. To assume an understanding of name-bearing on which an object is attributed the name 'N' (rather than its associated form) is to take metalinguistic views to be committed to the existence of the name 'N' of an object prior to an act (or event) of attribution. This opens the possibility—one that the argument of the last paragraph crucially relies on—that an object's name 'N' can be used to refer to that object before the relevant act (or event) of attribution. From the metalinguistic point of view, however, it is more natural to think that it is an act (or event) of attribution that leads to an object getting named 'N'—therefore an object cannot be referred to by *its name* prior to such an act.

On the other hand, if an object's coming to bear «N» is understood as attribution of "N" to the object, then the case of Madagascar is readily seen as a special case of the more general (and unproblematic) phenomenon of an object coming to be attributed "N" by virtue of being repeatedly referred to by "N". For instance, by virtue of being repeatedly referred to by "Floop", an object can come to be attributed "Floop", and thereby come to be named

---

[19] Gray goes on to argue that the sort of circularity in cases of reference transfer is benign and not vicious. My point here, however, is that there is no circularity in metalinguistic accounts whatsoever.

'Floop'.[20,21] Prior to the attribution of "Floop" to an object, the use of "Floop" to refer to an object can be thought of as an instance of the use of an *object* to refer to another. Indeed, prior to attribution of "Floop", 'Floop' need not be thought to exist as a linguistic item i.e., a name. Analogously, from the metalinguistic point of view, it is not the use of the name of a part of the African mainland ('Madagascar') to refer to the African island that plays a role in the attribution of "Madagascar" to the island, but the use of the form of that name, i.e., "Madagascar" that plays this role.

One can still insist that it is the *name* 'Madagascar' that results in the attribution of "Madagascar" to the island. However, first, the use of the name 'Madagascar' does not preclude the use of the form "Madagascar" to refer to the island. Second, the metalinguistic theorist can still deny that the use of the name 'Madagascar' counts as a use of the name of an object in a sense that is relevant to the debate. Speakers of a language may, of course, use

---

[20] An anonymous critic had raised the issue of how the *form* "Floop"—which, is not a linguistic item but a type of inscription and thus cannot be said to possess semantic or syntactic properties—may be used to refer to something. However, reference is not something that can be done using only linguistic items: ties and social security numbers are presumably not linguistic items, but individuals can be referred to using the tie they wear (Geurts, 1997, p. 326) or their social security number (Bach, 2002, p. 83). (See also the last paragraph of this section.)

[21] Aidan Gray (2018, p. 236) points out that a monarch does not come to bear "king" in virtue of being repeatedly referred to by the common noun 'king' (which has the form "king" associated with it.) It may be thought that Gray's observations are in conflict with the claim made here. However, the claim here is not that whenever a form "N" is used repeatedly to refer to an object, the object comes to bear "N". (Gray's example shows that that claim would be obviously false.) For the metalinguistic theorist, name-bearing properties are fundamental, and therefore providing a reductive analysis of what it takes for an object to bear a form "N" may be impossible, and more importantly, inessential (see also fn. 18). Nevertheless, some explanation for the sort of phenomenon that Gray discusses can still be provided: from the metalinguistic point of view, there is an asymmetry between the use of a name to refer to something, vis-à-vis the use of a pronoun, a definite description, or (along with a determiner) a common noun (see also fn. 22). Although every use of the common noun 'king' to refer to someone is *ipso facto* also a use of the form "king" to refer, the form "king" is incidental to the referential use of the common noun 'king' in a way that the form "Madagascar" is not incidental to the referential use of the name 'Madagascar'. It is the property of being a monarch (and not the property of bearing some special relation with the form "king") that is relevant in the referential use of the common noun 'king'; however, it is the property of bearing a special relation with the form "Madagascar" that is relevant in referential use of the name 'Madagascar'. This goes some way in explaining why the use of a common noun to refer to an object does not result in the object coming to bear the form associated with the noun—in each referential use of the common noun the use of the form of the noun is incidental to how reference is achieved.

'Madagascar'—i.e., the name of a part of the African mainland—to refer to the African island. However, from the metalinguistic point of view, this use does not count as the use of the name of an object to refer to that object; rather, it counts as an instance of a general pragmatic phenomenon of speakers referring to objects using a name other than its own (Kripke, 1977). Cases of reference transfer are not cases of name-reference—i.e., the use of the name of an object to refer to the object—and therefore cannot be considered as an instance of the property of name-reference grounding the property of name-bearing.

The above discussion also serves to highlight the deep differences between accounts that treat name-bearing properties as fundamental vis-à-vis accounts that treat name-reference properties as fundamental. From the point of view of the former, the use of a name to refer to an object is just a special case of our more general referential practices. Associations between objects are often harnessed in using one to refer to another—we can refer to people using the dress they wear ('Did you happen to talk to brown shirt?'), the objects they own (e.g., 'where is this guy?' uttered while holding someone's pair of spectacles), and even sounds that one is prone to produce ('*I don't agree* did not attend the colloquium today'). Like objects more generally, names can also be used for referential purposes. What makes names distinctive, however, is that—unlike the relation of owning, wearing, or producing—it is the relation of bearing that is harnessed in the referential uses of names. From the metalinguistic point of view, therefore, prior to the event of attribution, the use of either 'Madagascar' or "Madagascar" to refer to the island does not form part of the distinctive practice of the use of a name, as opposed to a more general practice involving referential uses of objects more generally.

4.3 Forms, not names.

I have argued that if one takes seriously the idea that the quote-name in the metalinguistic specification of the meaning (and name-bearing properties) is a quote-name not of a name, but of a form associated with the name, then the impression of circularity in metalinguistic accounts does not even arise. Unless the detractors of metalinguistic views provide some reasons why metalinguistic views cannot be understood as treating quote-names in their meaning-specification as quote-names of forms, the circularity charge against these views is unmotivated. Notwithstanding considerations of circularity, before concluding I provide a few reasons in support of the view that metalinguistic views employ an understanding of quotation on which quotation marks form quote-names of forms.

First, to take the meaning of a name to contain the quote-name of a word (i.e., a linguistic item) is to restrict the range of potential names to the class of words. The range of possible names is however, not restricted in this regard. What is often meant by the phrase that 'names are arbitrary' is that it is possible to name individuals using signs or sounds that are not forms of any word belonging to a language. A rather famous case is that of the American musician Prince adopting the unpronounceable symbol "⚥" as his name. It is possible that "⚥" ends up becoming a linguistic item i.e., a word of English. Metalinguistic views, however, must not be forced to adjudicate that the symbol "⚥" must be a linguistic item, certainly not prior to its attribution to Prince.

Furthermore, metalinguistic theorists maintain that there is a difference between names and other words (such as 'horses', 'sage', 'quark' etc.) in that while the form of a name plays an important role in determining the meaning of a name, the form of other words does not

93

(Bach, 2015, p. 777; Sawyer, 2020, p. 199)[22]. The name 'Socrates' and Socrates are related precisely because "Socrates" was attributed to Socrates; however, the word 'horses' and horses are related not by virtue of some relation between "horses" and horses, but by virtue of horses satisfying an independent condition (e.g., being a mammal, having a particular DNA structure etc.) that has nothing to do with the form "horses". If so, then it is natural to assume that it must be the form associated with a name (and not the name itself) that figures in the metalinguistic specification of meaning (and name-bearing properties.)

---

[22] Why is this asymmetry between names and words important for the metalinguistic theorist to maintain? Bach and Sawyer use the asymmetry to respond to the triviality objection raised by Kripke. But there is I think, another interesting and more general reason why we should think of names as distinctive—unlike other words, the exact way in which a name is spelled or pronounced is important for the identity/individuation of the name. Someone who is given the name 'Simon' using the German pronunciation of Simon (with stress on "o" but not on "i") does not thereby also come to be named 'Simon' pronounced using the English pronunciation (with stress on "i" but not on "o"). Indeed, names tend to retain their orthography/phonology when translated. In contrast, a thing will fall under the word 'virus' of German by virtue of falling under the term 'virus' of English, even though 'virus' is pronounced very differently in the two languages.

94

5. The Cross-linguistic Uses of Proper Names.

Call the use of a proper name that is constructed using the phonetic resources of one language within the sentences of another language a *cross-linguistic use* of the name. For example, Gandhi was given a name—pronounced [ˈgaːndʱi]—constructed using the phonemes of Gujarati, a language spoken in the western part of India. The use of Gandhi's given name in an utterance of an English sentence would then be an instance of a cross-linguistic use of a name. Gandhi, of course, has an anglicized name—pronounced [ˈgandi]— that is often used by English speakers who have trouble pronouncing the /dʱ/ phoneme of Gujarati. But the use of Gandhi's anglicized name in an English sentence is not a cross-linguistic use and I will not be concerned with such uses in this chapter.

It is a distinctive feature of proper names that their cross-linguistic uses are unproblematic and rather widespread—for instance, it is perfectly acceptable to use Gandhi's *given* name in an utterance of the English sentence 'Gandhi was an activist, not a philosopher'. (Indeed, the prevalent social norm—atleast in many English-speaking countries—is to try to mimic the pronunciation of a person's given name as closely as possible when using it.) This feature of names is in stark contrast with the general infelicity of the cross-linguistic use of words belonging to other word classes e.g., common nouns, verbs, adjectives, pronouns, prepositions, etc. For instance, alone by virtue of their competence in English, competent speakers of English would not understand an utterance of the sentence 'the ice-cream is waiting for you in the *konyha*' which contains the Hungarian word for kitchen. To see that their cross-linguistic use is a distinctive aspect of names, one does not have to assume that what counts as a word of a language is a non-vague matter: names do not respect the

boundaries of a language—wherever one draws them—while words other than names do. §5.1 develops these claims concerning the cross-linguistic uses of names vis-à-vis other words in greater detail.

However, the cross-linguistic uses of proper names seem to be rather puzzling: such uses violate the general requirement that although an expression—i.e., a word or a sentence—can be *mentioned* within any language, it can be *used* within a language only if it is articulable using the phonemes of that language. Call it the 'articulation requirement'. §5.2 discusses the nature and status of this requirement and argues that the fulfilment of this requirement is a necessary condition for the successful use of language to communicate information. §5.3 discusses how proper names seem to flout the articulation requirement: given the diversity of world languages and the 'arbitrariness' of names, it is always possible to find a name constructed using the phonemes of one language that are altogether absent in another. The cross-linguistic use of that name within the sentences of the other language—e.g., the use of /ˈɡaːndʱi/ in an English sentence—thus seems to violate the articulation requirement.

§5.3 also argues that the puzzling nature of the cross-linguistic uses results from the (broadly Millian) assumption that proper names are simple devices of reference ('tags') with no further semantic or syntactic structure built into them. Cross-linguistic uses, however, are not puzzling at all on a metalinguistic semantics which takes the exact pronunciation of a name to be an important aspect of our practice of using names and treats the articulation of a name as being mentioned (instead of used) in the syntax (for instance, the view that a name 'N' abbreviates the definite description 'the bearer of "N"'.) The central ambition of this chapter is to argue that the cross-linguistic uses of proper names provide evidence in favour of a certain variety of metalinguistic semantic views.

96

Two caveats before diving in. First concerns the English-centrism of this chapter. English is treated here as the 'base' language such that a cross-linguistic use of a name is the use of a name constructed using the phonemes of a language other than English (call such names 'non-English names') in the sentences of English. It should, however, be obvious that the arguments of this chapter can be repeated by treating any language other than English as the base language. Second, I restrict my examples and discussion to *utterances* of expressions belonging to natural languages. This is in keeping with the widespread assumption within linguistics that natural languages are primarily a spoken phenomenon. Scripts evolved much later historically, and it is not unusual for languages to switch scripts (e.g., Turkish changed script from Arabic to Latin and Kazakh, first from Arabic to Cyrillic, and then to Latin.) Children first learn to speak and not to write. Further, not all languages have writing systems. It is then proper that a semantic investigation into natural language should focus, in the first place, on its spoken form.

5.1 A Distinctive Feature of Names

This section aims at establishing a datum for the rest of this chapter—the cross-linguistic uses of proper names are prevalent and unproblematic, while cross-linguistic uses of words belonging to other categories are not. One may object to the truth of this datum on two grounds: by denying that the cross-linguistic uses of names are prevalent and unproblematic, or by denying that cross-linguistic uses of words belonging to word categories other than names are prevalent and unproblematic. A careful discussion of these objections—which is the agenda of the next two subsections—would clarify some conceptual issues at stake, help avoid verbal disagreement, and make explicit the nuanced conceptual work of the datum in the argument of this chapter.

5.1.1 Cross-linguistic uses of names.

A view that denies the legitimacy of cross-linguistic uses of names would make unacceptable a large chunk of sentences that are (atleast intuitively) bona-fide sentences of English. One casualty would be the (many) English Language novels that have characters with a non-English name. Members of some immigrant families residing in predominantly English-speaking countries often bear non-English names. There is very little reason to believe, however, that someone who uses the original pronunciations of the non-English names "Hanoch", "Abeje", or "Zsuzsanna" in an utterance of an English sentence has committed some sort of infelicity. Further, apart from their given non-English names, many places (e.g., Poggibonsi) and people (e.g., Kishida Fumio) do not also have an anglicized ('English') name. It would severely restrict the expressive power of English if the names of these people or places cannot be part of legitimate utterances of English sentences.

One may object to this last point by maintaining that English language users do succeed in referring to a place—say, Poggibonsi—by using a different, phonetically readjusted pronunciation of its name. The objection, however, does not sustain further scrutiny. Which name of such objects is being used in such cases? Is it so that when English speakers refer to Poggibonsi by uttering 'Poggibonsi', they assign a *different* name to it? It is unlikely, however, that an English speaker who intends to refer to a place using its non-English name thereby also intends to name that place. Or, is it so that in referring to Poggibonsi, English speakers use its *given* (Italian) name, albeit uttered with a different pronunciation? While this proposal may work for names like 'Poggibonsi', it would not work for names from languages sufficiently different from English. Consider, for instance, the name of a South African casino worker, "!Xobile", referred to by the comedian Russell Peters in one of his

98

performances (Russell Peters, 2016). "!Xobile" is a Bantu name pronounced using a click

sound (represented by "!" in English script.) Given the distinctness of the click sound from

every English phoneme, it is impossible to utter "!Xobile" with a phonetically adjusted

English pronunciation without altering the name itself. The proposal is therefore implausible

as a general view concerning the cross-linguistic uses of names.

The appropriateness of the cross-linguistic uses of a name is also attested by the fact that

understanding a sentence in which a proper name is used cross-linguistically does not require

any further competence on the part of language users beyond the minimal competence

required to understand the use of any proper name whatsoever (i.e., the knowledge that an

expression is a proper name[1].) Consider, for instance:

1. I saw !Xobile on my way to the casino.

2. Usiququmadevu is a creature from Zulu mythology. She is a bearded, bloated monster

   who eats every living thing she comes across. Usiququmadevu is said to have a

   husband of the same name. (Wikipedia entry on 'Usiququmadevu', 2020)

Upon being told that "!Xobile" and "Usiququmadevu" are names, a competent user of the

English language would have no trouble understanding an utterance of (1) and (2) even when

---

[1] It is true of our general practice of using names that whenever an expression is intended as a name, it needs be so indicated, either explicitly or implicitly. Language users are, of course, often aware that certain expressions (e.g., 'Mark', 'Victoria', 'Tim', etc.) are frequently used as names. But a lack of familiarity with this *cultural* fact does not speak against *linguistic* competence. (To use Bach's phrase— 'your vocabulary is not deficient because of all the proper names you don't know.' (Bach, 2002, p. 82)) Even the knowledge of which expressions are frequently used as names might not help. Consider utterances of (a) and (b) in which 'Roses' and 'Destiny' are intended as names:
   a) There are two Roses in this room.
   b) She could not stop Destiny from interfering.
To access the intended meaning of (a) and (b) the hearer of the utterance must know—either through contextual cues or by being so told explicitly—that 'Rose' and 'Destiny' are used as proper names. The hearer's failure to access the intended reading—arising out of her failure to recognize that 'Roses' and 'Destiny' are names—does not speak against her linguistic competence.

the names are pronounced using their original pronunciations.[2] A different sounding name may cause some difficulty pronouncing—or may even be a source of some amusement (see e.g., BBC Studios (2009))—but poses no hindrance in understanding and comprehension.

5.1.2 Cross-linguistic uses of other words.

On the other hand, competent users of a language—by virtue alone of their competence in that language—cannot understand sentences that contain the cross-linguistic uses of common nouns. Consider, for instance:

3. Lady Gaga's 'Poker Face' is an *ohrwurm*.

4. The ice cream is waiting for you in the *konyha*

Even upon being told that the words "ohrwurm" and "konyha" are common nouns, a competent user of English language would not be able to access the intended meanings of the sentences (3) and (4). ("Ohrwurm" is, of course, a German word for a catchy song.) The presence of German and Hungarian words in (3) and (4) render them unacceptable as utterances of English sentences. (Similar examples can be constructed using adjectives, verbs, prepositions, indexicals etc. from other languages) Such behaviour of words is in stark contrast with proper names, which can always be used cross-linguistically.[3]

---

[2] The argument of this chapter does not require resolution of the tricky issue of what is involved in 'understanding' a sentence that contains a proper name. All that it requires is that a competent speaker's understanding of a sentence containing a name is not affected based on whether the use of the name is cross-linguistic or not. But a competent speaker's understanding of a sentence containing a word other than a name may be so affected.

[3] One may argue that the infelicity of the cross-linguistic uses of words (other than proper names) is a consequence of the fact that proper names have no meaning but other terms do. For instance, to understand a sentence in which (say) an adjective is used, one needs to know more than the fact that the word is an adjective—one needs to know the meaning of that adjective. Because proper names have no meanings, knowledge of the fact that an expression is a proper name is all that one needs to understand a sentence in which it is used. This is (perhaps) a correct diagnosis of *one* reason behind the truth of the datum. The argument of this chapter, however, requires only the truth of the datum and does not require a further commitment to one or other reason for why it is true.

This is perhaps all too quick. Isn't it that a wealth of 'foreign' words—e.g., bon voyage, ketchup, ciabatta, curry, fjord, sushi—get used in perfectly legitimate sentences of English? They do. But these words are, properly speaking, *loan words* of English: words which have been borrowed from other languages but words which nevertheless belong to the English language. The pronunciation and morpho-syntactic properties of these words (e.g., inflection, morphological derivation etc.) is governed by rules of English and not of their source language.[4] In many cases, the meaning of the English word is significantly different from the meaning of the corresponding word in the source language (e.g., the Hindi/Urdu word "curry"). The use of loanwords in an English sentence is not an instance of a cross-linguistic use and I will not be concerned with them. (Their use in English sentences is analogous to the use of anglicized names.)

The use of loanwords in English sentences is not the only case which will seem to cast doubt on the thesis that words other than proper names cannot be used cross-linguistically. In fact, words of foreign origin that are absent from the lexicon of English are often employed without any (obvious) awkwardness in the language of specialized disciplines—e.g., the use of "*de se*" or "*a fortiori*" in philosophy or "*ex lege*" in legal discussions. Further, it is not uncommon to witness 'code-switching'—i.e., the phenomenon of a speaker alternating between two or more languages in a conversation—in linguistic exchanges between language users who are proficient in more than one language.

Instead of casting doubt on the unacceptability of the cross-linguistic uses of words other than proper names, such uses of words elicit closer attention to the matter of individuation of

---

[4] Although uttering such words using their pronunciation from their source languages may make one seem sophisticated and refined, their English pronunciation are perfectly acceptable when speaking English.

languages. Speakers who are competent only in Russian (or only in English) will be unable to follow the linguistic exchange between language users competent in *both* Russian and English that is characterised by a lot of code-switching. The use of Russian words may be acceptable with respect to a language that is some sort of a combination of Russian and English, but such use is not acceptable with respect to English. Further, the use of Latin or Greek phrases—that is commonplace in 'philosophical English' or 'Legalese'—within utterances of ordinary English would render those utterances incomprehensible to speakers of ordinary English. However, the use of words like "*a fortiori*" is perfectly acceptable with respect to philosophical English—the word *is* part of the lexicon of philosophical English—a lack of knowledge of the meaning of "*a fortiori*" would bring one's competence in Philosophical English into question.

One may, of course, object that this division between ordinary English, philosophical English, and Legalese is artificial. I do not wish to assert that there exist distinct languages with these names. The substantial point here is that the judgement concerning whether a use of a word counts as a cross-linguistic use with respect to a language is sensitive to how a language is individuated. Say, a variant of English—call it '*English'—subsumes ordinary English, Philosophical English as well as Legalese. Then, the uses of "*de se*", "*a fortiori*", or "*ex lege*" are not cross-linguistic uses of words with respect to *English, but the use of "*Asante*"—the Swahili word for 'thank you'—is. A competent speaker of *English would understand utterances of sentences containing "*ex lege*", but not utterances containing Swahili words that are not proper names. Once one makes up her mind about where the boundaries of a language lie, one can judge whether the use of a word is a cross-linguistic use or not. And although—as I argued in §5.1.1—the cross-linguistic uses of proper names are

102

always acceptable, the same is not true of the cross-linguistic use of words other than proper names.

The issues raised by code-switching and the artificiality of the language adopted by specialized disciplines may, in fact, be thought to be orthogonal to the claims made here. The existence of such phenomena strongly suggests that it may be difficult to individuate languages or that the boundaries of a language must be vaguer or broader than is generally assumed. However, it does not throw into question the fact that languages *have* boundaries—it is clear that some words belong to a language, others do not. If so, the essential claim made in this section can always be restated and the arguments can be repeated: proper names do not respect the boundaries of a language, wherever they lie, but words other than proper names do. The felicity of their cross linguistic uses is therefore a distinctive feature of proper names.

5.2 The Articulation Requirement

Every language employs a more or less limited stock of sounds that constitutes the phonology of that language.[5] English, for instance, has around 44 phonemes and German around 56 phonemes. (There can of course be disagreement about how many phonemes a language

---

[5] A distinction is often drawn between *phonemes* on the one hand, and *phones* on the other. While a phone is a type of speech sound that is not specific to a language, a phoneme is a language specific equivalence class of phones. Many phonemes can be articulated using either of a set of distinct phones—its 'allophones'—resulting in different pronunciations of the word that the phoneme constitutes. Using one phoneme in place of another, however, can change the identity of the word. For instance, /pʰ/ and /p/ are distinct phonemes in Hindi but [pʰ] and [p] are allophones of the English phoneme /p/. The use of the phone [pʰ] in place of [p] in pronouncing the English word 'pub' results only in a different pronunciation, but the use of [pʰ] in place of [p] in pronouncing the Hindi word that may be transcribed in Latin script as 'pal' results in an utterance of a different word altogether.

To avoid un-necessarily complicating the exposition, I ignore the complications introduced by allophones and work with the simplifying assumption that every phoneme is associated with just one sound/allophone. (Such that there is a one-to-one correspondence between a sound and a phoneme.) Most arguments presented in this chapter will be unaffected by this assumption insofar as there exist phones that are an allophone of a phoneme of one language but are altogether absent in another language (which is clearly true, for instance, the click sound(s) of the Bantu languages are altogether absent from English.) This assumption, however, is explicitly discharged in the final two paragraphs of this section which deal with the issue of different pronunciations.

contains and how exactly to characterize them but nothing in the argument of this chapter hangs on facts concerning the exact number of phonemes in a language.)

Languages differ from each other with respect to phonemes such that some sounds which are phonemes of one language may be altogether absent in another. Further, competent speakers of a language may note differences between two phonemes of the language that are easily missed by those who are not competent in the language. Kaplan's 'words' exemplify some of these points when he writes:

> One of my Japanese friends, who spoke unaccented Californian, was trying to explain to me how to say two of my favourite words, one of which is "Netsuke" and the other is "Hokusai". There is a "u", as we write it in English, in both of those words which doesn't exactly disappear, and isn't exactly sounded. He kept saying "You are saying this [and he would imitate my pronunciation]; you should be saying this [and he would pronounce the word 'correctly']". I couldn't hear the difference between his imitation and the 'correct' pronunciation. Conversely, as we know, some of our Japanese friends have great difficulty with the R-L distinction, a distinction that we easily make. (Kaplan, 1990, p. 105 fn. 12)

I will now argue that all utterances belonging to a language are governed by a non-semantic, phonological constraint —call it the 'articulation requirement'—which is as stated below:

> **Articulation Requirement:** While any expression (i.e., a word or a sentence) can be *mentioned* within a language, an expression can be *used* within a language only if it is uttered ('articulated') using the phonemes of that language.

As a first step towards seeing why the articulation requirement is indeed a bona-fide requirement, consider an utterance of the following sentence, which contains the Arabic word for scorpion:

5. He survived for three days without water, but eventually succumbed to the bite of a desert *aqrab*.

Imagine that in uttering the above sentence one uses the exact Arabic pronunciation of "aqrab". "aqrab", of course, is not a word of English and its use in (5) is a cross-linguistic use. By virtue of her competence in English alone an English speaker would not understand—and cannot be expected to understand—an utterance of (5).

This much is in line with what has been said until this point—the use of "aqrab" in (5) is a cross-linguistic use of a common noun, and therefore an utterance of (5) considered above is therefore infelicitous as an utterance of *English*. By providing one reason—among perhaps many others—the articulation requirement provides an explanation for why the cross-linguistic use of a word like "aqrab" render a sentence like (5) infelicitous.[6] The word "aqrab" is pronounced using an Arabic phoneme—the voiced pharyngeal fricative, (IPA: "ʕ")—which is not a phoneme of English. Competence in English, however, requires competence only in producing/perceiving phonemes of English, not of Arabic. People who speak (only) English will therefore have difficulty not only in producing this phoneme but

---

[6] The question of which characteristics an utterance must possess to count as felicitous utterance of a language may have a rather complex answer and may involve appealing to features like grammaticality, meaningfulness, the capacity of competent speakers of a language to understand the sentence etc. The articulation requirement represents a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for the felicity of an utterance.

also in perceiving/attending to this phoneme when it is produced. This difficulty in articulation explain—atleast in part—the infelicity of (5).[7]

Note however, that not every occurrence of "aqrab" in an English sentence renders the sentence unacceptable or problematic. "aqrab" can always be *mentioned* in an English sentence. Unlike (5) in which "aqrab" is used, English speakers will have no difficulty understanding this paragraph, which mentions "aqrab" five times. The mention of "aqrab" is, of course, not an exception—any word or sound from any language can be mentioned in English unproblematically. (Indeed, many languages provide dedicated resources for mentioning words or sounds—e.g., the word "iti" of Sanskrit and the guillemets of French.)

Its explanatory potential is not the only reason that speaks for the articulation requirement. Another way to highlight the truth of the articulation requirement is to look at the consequences of denying it. To deny the articulation requirement is to accept the possibility that even fully competent users of a language can be incapable of producing (or perceiving) utterances of sentences belonging to that language, which by itself is a consequence worth avoiding. (A person may, of course, learn to produce (and perceive) any phone whatsoever, but such capacity is not a condition for competence in a language.)

More importantly, a minimal condition for the successful transfer of information using the utterances of expressions of a language is that users of that language should be able to produce and perceive the sounds that constitute those utterances. To deny the articulation requirement is to deny that competent users of a language can successfully communicate

---

[7] The necessity of the articulation requirement is also underscored by the consideration that competent speakers of English (but not of Arabic) who know the meaning of 'aqrab' may still fail to understand an utterance of (5) because given their inability to perceive the phoneme 'ʕ', they may confuse "aqrab" with a similar sounding word of English (say, 'a crab').

information through utterances of sentences of that language. To the extent that communication of information among language users is among the essential functions of a language, the articulation requirement represents a necessary condition that utterances belonging to that language must fulfil for the language to perform this function.

The articulation requirement entails that when uttering an expression in a language, one must use only the phonemes of that language. However, the fact that differences in accents are rather easily tolerated (and often pose no hindrance in communication) might give the impression that the articulation requirement is too strong a demand, amounting perhaps to linguistic imperialism. This impression, however, is partly grounded in an overestimation of the extent to which mispronunciations can be tolerated and partly in the mistaken assumption that the articulation requirement *also* dictates which sounds count as the correct articulations of the phonemes of a language.

While it is true that differences in accents often pose no hindrance in communication, there are limits to how far the pronunciations can vary. When uttered with a heavy non-English accent, utterances of English sentences may be incomprehensible to competent speakers of English. The use of non-English sounds in the utterances of English expressions may render it impossible for competent users of English to figure out which word was uttered, and consequently, what was said. Shedding native accents and learning to produce sounds that are phonemes of English—or at least approximate the sound of English phonemes—is an essential part of learning the English language. The communicative capabilities of someone who deviates majorly from the right way of saying things—say, of someone who cannot produce sounds that have the effect of discriminating 'tap' from 'tab' (or 'beach' from

'bitch')—would be severely restricted and such person cannot be considered a competent user of a language.

This is where it might start to sound like needless puritanism about language. One may object that given the tremendous intermingling of world cultures there has been an expansion in the range of phones/sounds that count as legitimate articulations of the same phoneme: in their utterances of the English word 'right', the native Japanese speaker and the native Spanish speaker may produce quite different sounds corresponding to the letter 'r', but *both* count as legitimate utterances of the phoneme. Further, to be a competent speaker of English in the present cultural context—one may insist—requires the capability to treat a wide range of phones/sounds as legitimate utterances of a particular phoneme.

The articulation requirement does not legislate against any of this. Indeed, the requirement is silent about the question of how strict or tolerant one is about the question of phoneme individuation—i.e., the question of which sounds/phones count as legitimate articulations of a particular phoneme. The question of phoneme individuation for successful communication among language users is a matter of empirical investigation, the results of which must accord with the facts discussed in the last paragraph. However, once this question is settled, the logical force of the articulation requirement follows directly: given a conversational situation, the requirement represents the requirement that the interlocutors share a common ground about which speech sounds are important and must be attended to. Puritans about a language would want to be stingy about how phonemes—say the phoneme /r/ of English—must be pronounced. The articulation requirement is, however, consistent with a variety of ways in which phonemes may be individuated.

5.3 Semantic Repercussions

In the last two sections, I have argued for the following claims:

A. Unlike words from other categories, proper names can be used cross-linguistically.

B. The articulation requirement is a bona-fide constraint on the utterances of a language.

§5.3.1 argues that if a further assumption (C) endorsed by some semantic views—e.g., the Millian View of names i.e., the view held by JS Mill (1843), Ruth Barcan Marcus (1961), and Saul Kripke (1980), among others—is true, then (A) and (B) cannot be true together.

C. Proper names are *simple* devices of reference: they lack semantically relevant syntactic structure.

§5.3.2 argues that this consequence is avoided by metalinguistic semantic views of names according to which the phonological articulation of the name is not used but mentioned in the syntax. The overall purpose of this section is to show that the cross-linguistic uses of proper names provide evidence against the Millian view and provide evidence in favour of a certain variety of metalinguistic semantic views.

5.3.1 A Challenge for the Millian View.

On the standard Millian account, names are analogous to tags that are assigned to an object in an appropriate manner, say, through a naming or baptism event. Tags are *simple* devices whose only function is to stand for an object: beyond determining its identity, the bits of paper or plastic constituting a tag do not play a role in determining the object that it stands for. Likewise, names are simple devices of reference: they are either syntactically simple (e.g., 'Josh', 'David' etc) or their syntactic complexity (e.g., 'The Space Needle', 'Westminster Abbey', 'Joseph Robinette Biden Junior', etc.) is semantically irrelevant.

According to the Millian view, when used in a sentence like (6) below, a name like 'Frege' just stands for the famous German Philosopher and does nothing more.

6. Frege died thinking that his life's work amounted to nothing.

Frege, however, was given a sound constructed using German phonemes—pronounced [ˈfreːɡə]—as his name. Because Frege's name was constructed using the phonemes of German, an utterance of Frege's name in a *German* sentence will always fulfil the articulation requirement. However, the same cannot be said of the cross-linguistic use of Frege's given name in an *English* sentence like (6). Given (B), Frege's given name can be used in an utterance of an English sentence only if English also contains the same German phonemes that were used in constructing Frege's name. Speaking generally, a proper name constructed using the phonemes of one language can be used in an utterance of a sentence belonging to another language only if the language to which the uttered sentence belongs also contains the very phonemes that constitute the proper name.

This requirement is however, not always fulfilled. As discussed earlier, languages differ from each other with respect to their phonemes such that some phonemes of one language may be altogether absent in other languages. Further, what is often meant by the phrase 'names are arbitrary' is that any word belonging to a language may be assigned to an individual as a name. Therefore, it is not necessary that a cross-linguistic use of a name will always meet the articulation requirement. Consider, for instance, Gandhi's given name—pronounced

[ˈgaːndʱi]—which contains the phoneme /dʱ/ that is not a phoneme of English or the Bantu name "!Xobile" which contains a click that is also absent in English.[8]

The Millian is therefore forced to abandon either of (A) or (B)—either she must hold that names cannot be used cross-linguistically, or she must argue that the articulation requirement is not a bona-fide constraint on the utterances of a language. In the previous sections I have given reasons in support of the plausibility of both (A) and (B) and therefore it would speak for a semantic view if it avoids this consequence of the Millian view.

Before moving to the next section, I will anticipate and respond to two ways in which the Millian might reply to the argument presented above. One option for the Millian could be to say that names are an exception to the articulation requirement. However, unless motivated by independent reasons, this exceptionalism for names would seem an ad-hoc move on the part of the Millian. In any case, the burden for motivating such exceptionalism for names within the class of words (which generally follow the requirement) falls squarely upon the Millian.

Second, the Millian could argue that the fact that Millianism forces abandonment of either (A) or (B) is a pre-semantic task that a semantic theory of names is under no obligation to account for. Therefore, it is not a semantic merit of a theory over Millianism if it fits our pre-semantic intuitions better than Millianism. This would perhaps be a good response in a world where the task of a semantic theory—or the distinction between 'semantics and 'pre-

---

[8] It should now be obvious why even on adopting a very broad manner of individuating phonemes—an issue I discussed at the end of the last section—proper names can always violate the articulation requirement. However liberal one is about the range of sounds that count as legitimate articulations of a phoneme within a language— i.e., however liberal one is about interpreting the articulation requirement—it would always be possible to find a name that contains a phoneme which is altogether absent in the language. The cross linguistic use of that name would then violate the articulation requirement construed liberally. (see also, fn. 5)

semantics'—were clearly set-out in advance. However, which aspect of our name using practice a semantic theory is supposed to account for is matter of decision in semantic theorizing. Therefore, to consider the fact that the exact articulation of a name is an important part of our name-using practice—a fact, as I discuss in the next section, that is central to the motivation behind metalinguistic views—a *non-semantic* fact amounts to begging the question against the metalinguistic views.

5.3.2 Metalinguistic views to the rescue.

The exact way in which a name is pronounced is an important aspect of the identity of the name. Someone who is given the name "Michael" using the German pronunciation of the word (i.e., [ˈmɪçaˌeːl]) does not thereby also come to be named "Michael" pronounced using the English pronunciation (i.e., [ˈmaɪkəl]). The exact way in which a name is pronounced is also an important aspect of its use. A vocative utterance of [ˈmaɪkəl] might fail to draw attention of someone who is baptised [ˈmɪçaˌeːl]. On learning how the name sounds in German, English speakers are expected to 'correct' their pronunciation to match the pronunciation of the given name. Further, vis-à-vis other words, proper names are more prone to retain their phonological form when translated.

Such facts about our ordinary practice of using names are one motivation behind what have been called 'metalinguistic' semantic views—i.e., the family of semantic views committed to the following claims:

(a) Proper names have meanings (in the sense of 'meaning' on which definite descriptions, common nouns, or indexicals are thought to have meanings—i.e., meaning is what determines/constrains the extension of a term.)

(b) In the specification of the meaning of a name, the name itself is mentioned.

Depending on the exact way one thinks about the 'meaning' of a name, the commitment (b) above can be satisfied in various ways resulting in different metalinguistic views (of which I shall mention two.) First, Bart Geurts and William Kneale have argued that a name 'N' is equivalent to a definite description of the form 'the individual called "N"'; so, the meaning of a name is specified by its equivalent definite description which mentions the name (Geurts, 1997; Kneale, 1966). Second, Tyler Burge, Paul Elbourne, and Aidan Gray (among others) take proper names to be predicate expressions such that a name 'N' is quite literally the predicate 'bearer of "N"' (Burge, 1973; Elbourne, 2005; Gray, 2012).[9]

Despite their differences, common of these metalinguistic views is the semantic proposal that in the logical/syntactic form of the sentence/expression that a name is a part of, the name (and therefore the phonological articulation of the name) is not *used* but *mentioned*. Consider, for instance, the metalinguistic proposal of Burge and Elbourne. On their proposal, names are (semantically) predicate expressions, and when used as a singular term, a proper name 'N' has the logical form of (determiner)+[bearer of "N"] where the determiner in the logical form (represented as 'Φ_{det}' below) is often covertly present. Therefore, the logical form of the sentences (1) and (6) discussed earlier is respectively:

7.   I saw Φ_{det} [bearer of "!Xobile"] on my way to the casino.

8. Φ_{det} [bearer of "Frege"] died thinking that his life's work amounted to nothing.

---

[9] This view, also broadly known as the 'predicate view' of names (or 'Predicativism'), has been spelled out in different ways. Kent Bach, for example, takes the predicate view to be the view that proper names are syntactically common nouns and semantically general terms (Bach 2015). On Bach's view, like ordinary common nouns, the meaning of a name 'N' is the condition that determines its extension—i.e., (roughly) the condition 'bearer of "N"'. Delia Graff Fara also defends a version of the predicate view similar to that of Bach's (Fara 2015b). However, unlike Bach's view, Fara's view is not metalinguistic for Fara does not provide a metalinguistic specification of the meaning of the proper name. (I do not discuss these views here because my focus is on discussing metalinguistic views according to which the articulation of name is *mentioned* and not *used* in the syntax—see last paragraph of this subsection.)

Because in the logical form of (1) and (6) proper names are *mentioned* they do not violate the Articulation Requirement. As any sound can be mentioned within any language, names like "!Xobile", "Frege", and "Gandhi" may retain their original pronunciations even when they appear within sentences of English. The general phonological restrictions that apply to utterances of a language do not extend to proper names. Such a metalinguistic semantic view of proper names, therefore, does not force an abandonment of (A) or (B).

Before concluding, I shall note two important qualifications to the argument presented here. The first concerns the scale of the achievement of this chapter. Starting with Kripke's circularity and triviality objections against Kneale's metalinguistic proposal, a series of objections have been levelled against metalinguistic view of reference (Kripke, 1980, pp. 68–73; Predelli, 2015). As my main objective here has been to motivate a new argument for the metalinguistic semantic views, I have mostly steered clear of issues concerning reference. The achievement of this chapter must therefore be evaluated in the context of a balance of considerations of metalinguistic semantic views vis-à-vis the Millian view.

Second, not every view that may be termed 'metalinguistic' would have the sort of advantage over the Millian view that the specific metalinguistic view considered above are shown to have. For instance, building upon Arthur Burks' proposal that proper names are analogous to indexicals, many recent theorists analyse proper names as indexicals with a condition like 'a thing called "N"' as their character (Burks, 1951; Pelczar & Rainsbury, 1998; and perhaps also Schoubye, 2017, 2020a). On the characterization presented above, these views do count as metalinguistic. It is however less obvious that the arguments presented above can also be extended to such views. The conclusions of this chapter, must therefore be circumscribed to the kind of metalinguistic semantic views considered above.

Concluding Remarks:

The occurrence of proper names within sentences of different languages remains a largely unnoticed phenomenon. I have argued that given some further plausible phonological principles, our ordinary practice of using names cross-linguistically speaks against the Millian view of proper names while providing new evidence in favour of a certain variety of metalinguistic semantic views.

References

Bach, K. (1987). *Thought and Reference*. Oxford University Press.

Bach, K. (2002). Giorgione Was So-Called Because of His Name. *Philosophical Perspectives*, 16, 73–103. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3840910

Bach, K. (2006). What Does it Take to Refer? In E. Lepore & B. Smith (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Language* (pp. 516–554). Oxford University Press.

Bach, K. (2015). The Predicate View of Proper Names. *Philosophy Compass,* 10(11), 772–784. https://doi.org/10.1111/phc3.12261

Ben-Yami, H. (2004). *Logic & Natural Language: On Plural Reference and its Semantic and Logical Significance*. Routledge.

Ben-Yami, H. (2006). A Critique of Frege on Common Nouns. *Ratio*, *19*(2), 148–155. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9329.2006.00316.x

BBC Studios. (2009, May 9). Your Name? | A Bit Of Fry And Laurie | BBC Comedy Greats. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nq-dchJPXGA

Boër, S. E. (1975). Proper Names as Predicates. *Philosophical Studies*, 27(6), 389–400. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4318947

Bromberger, S. (2011). What Are Words? Comments on Kaplan, on Hawthorne and Lepore, and on the Issue. *Journal of Philosophy*, 108(9), 486–503. https://doi.org/10.5840/2011108925

Burge, T. (1973). Reference and Proper Names. *The Journal of Philosophy*, 70(14), 425–439. https://doi.org/10.2307/2025107

Burgess, J. A. (2008). When Is Circularity in Definitions Benign? *The Philosophical Quarterly* (1950-), 58(231), 214–233. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9213.2007.522.x

Burks, A. W. (1951). A theory of proper names. *Philosophical Studies*, 2(3), 36–45. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02198143

Carston, R. (2019). Ad Hoc Concepts, Polysemy and the Lexicon. In K. Scott, B. Clark, & R. Carston (Eds.), *Relevance, Pragmatics and Interpretation* (pp. 150–162). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108290593.014

Clark, E. V., & Clark, H. H. (1979). When Nouns Surface as Verbs. *Language*, 55(4), 767–811. JSTOR. https://doi.org/10.2307/412745

Crane, T. (1992). Names, Sense and Kripke's Puzzle. *From the Logical Point of View*, *2*, 11–26.

Crane, T. (2012). Tye on Acquaintance and the Problem of Consciousness. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, *84*(1), 190–198. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1933-1592.2011.00557.x

Dummett, M. (1973). *Frege: Philosophy of Language*. Harper & Row.

Elbourne, P. (2005). *Situations and Individuals*. MIT Press.

Evans, G. (1973). The Causal Theory of Names. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volumes*, 47, 187–208. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4106912

Evans, G. (1982). *The Varieties of Reference*. Oxford University Press.

Fara, D. G. (2015a). "Literal" Uses of Proper Names. In A. Bianchi (Ed.), *On Reference* (pp. 251–279). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198714088.003.0013

Fara, D. G. (2015b). Names Are Predicates. *The Philosophical Review*, 124(1), 59–117. https://doi.org/10.1215/00318108-2812660

Frege, G. (1884/1997). The Foundations of Arithmetic. In M. Beaney (Ed.), *The Frege Reader* (pp. 84–129). Blackwell.

Frege, G. (1892a/1997). On Concept and Object. In M. Beaney (Ed.), *The Frege Reader* (pp. 181–193). Blackwell.

Frege, G. (1892b/1997). On Sinn and Bedeutung. In M. Beaney (Ed.), *The Frege Reader* (pp. 151–172). Blackwell.

García-Carpintero, M. (2018). The Mill-Frege Theory of Proper Names. *Mind*, 127(508), 1107–1168. https://doi.org/10.1093/mind/fzx010

Geurts, B. (1997). Good News about the Description Theory of Names. *Journal of Semantics*, 14(4), 319–348. https://doi.org/10.1093/jos/14.4.319

Gray, A. (2012). *Names and name-bearing: An essay on the predicate view of names*. Dissertation. The University of Chicago.

Gray, A. (2014). Name-bearing, reference, and circularity. *Philosophical Studies*, 171(2), 207–231. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11098-013-0262-z

Gray, A. (2015). Lexical Individuation and Predicativism about Names. *Thought: A Journal of Philosophy*, 4(2), 113–123. https://doi.org/10.1002/tht3.164

Gray, A. (2016). Minimal Descriptivism. *Review of Philosophy and Psychology*, *7*(2), 343–364. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13164-014-0202-7

Gray, A. (2017). Names in strange places. *Linguistics and Philosophy*, 40(5), 429–472. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10988-017-9205-z

Gray, A. (2018). On the Very Idea of Metalinguistic Theories of Names. Ergo, an Open Access Journal of Philosophy, 5. https://doi.org/10.3998/ergo.12405314.0005.009

Hawthorne, J., & Lepore, E. (2011). On Words. *Journal of Philosophy*, 108(9), 447–485. https://doi.org/10.5840/2011108924

Hornsby, J. (1976). Proper Names: A Defence of Burge. *Philosophical Studies*, 30(4), 227–234. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4319088

Humberstone, I. L. (1997). Two Types of Circularity. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 57(2), 249–280. https://doi.org/10.2307/2953718

Jeshion, R. (2015a). A Rejoinder to Fara's '"Literal" Uses of Proper Names.' In A. Bianchi (Ed.), *On Reference* (pp. 280–294). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198714088.003.0014

Jeshion, R. (2015b). Names Not Predicates. In A. Bianchi (Ed.), *On Reference* (pp. 225–250). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198714088.003.0012

Jeshion, R. (2015c). Referentialism and Predicativism About Proper Names. *Erkenntnis*, 80, 363–404. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10670-014-9700-3

Jeshion, R. (2017). 'The' Problem for the-Predicativism. *The Philosophical Review*, 126(2), 219–240. https://doi.org/10.1215/00318108-3772008

Kaplan, D. (1989). Demonstratives: An Essay on the Semantics, Logic, Metaphysics and Epistemology of Demonstratives and other Indexicals. In J. Almog, J. Perry, & H. Wettstein (Eds.), *Themes From Kaplan* (pp. 481–563). Oxford University Press.

Kaplan, D. (1990). Words. Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume, 64(1), 93–120. https://doi.org/10.1093/aristoteliansupp/64.1.93

Kaplan, D. (2011). Words on words. *Journal of Philosophy*, 108(9), 504–529. https://doi.org/10.5840/2011108926

Katz, J. J. (1990). *The Metaphysics of Meaning*. MIT Press.

Katz, J. J. (2001). The End of Millianism: Multiple Bearers, Improper Names, and Compositional Meaning. *The Journal of Philosophy*, 98(3), 137–166. JSTOR. https://doi.org/10.2307/2678379

Kneale, W. (1966). Modality De Dicto and De Re. *Studies in Logic and the Foundations of Mathematics*, 44, 622–633.

Kripke, S. A. (1977). Speaker's reference and semantic reference. In P. A. French, T. E. Uehling Jr, & H. K. Wettstein (Eds.), *Studies in the Philosophy of Language* (Vol. 2, Issue 1, pp. 255–296). University of Minnesota Press.

Kripke, S. A. (1979). A puzzle about belief. In A. Margalit (Ed.), *Meaning and Use* (pp. 239--83). Reidel.

Kripke, S. A. (1980). Naming and Necessity. Harvard University Press.

Larson, R., & Segal, G. (1995). *Knowledge of Meaning: An Introduction to Semantic Theory*. MIT Press.

Leckie, G. (2013). The double life of names. *Philosophical Studies*, 165(3), 1139–1160. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11098-012-0008-3

Lee, J. (2020). On the asymmetry between names and count nouns: Syntactic arguments against predicativism. *Linguistics and Philosophy*, 43(3), 277–301. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10988-019-09273-8

Lieber, R. (2009). *Introducing Morphology*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511808845

Loar, B. (1980). Names and Descriptions: A Reply to Michael Devitt. *Philosophical Studies*, 38(1), 85–89. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00354530

Marcus, R. B. (1961). Modalities and Intensional Languages. *Synthese*, 13(4), 303–322. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00486629

Martí, G. (2003). The Question of Rigidity in New Theories of Reference. *Noûs*, 37(1), 161–179. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3506210

Matushansky, O. (2006). Why Rose is the Rose: On the use of definite articles in proper names. In O. Bonami & P. Cabredo Hofherr (Eds.), *Empirical Issues in Syntax and Semantics* (Vol. 6, pp. 285–307).

Matushansky, O. (2008). On the linguistic complexity of proper names. *Linguistics and Philosophy*, 31(5), 573–627. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10988-008-9050-1

Matushansky, O. (2015). The Other Francis Bacon: On Non-Bare Proper Names. *Erkenntnis* (1975-), 80, 335–362. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10670-014-9703-0

Mill, J. S. (1843). *A System of Logic, Ratiocinative and Inductive: Being a Connected View of the Principles of Evidence, and the Methods of Scientific Investigation*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139149839

Miller, J. T. M. (2020). The ontology of words: Realism, nominalism, and eliminativism. *Philosophy Compass*, 15(7), e12691. https://doi.org/10.1111/phc3.12691

Nunberg, G. (1995). Transfers of Meaning. *Journal of Semantics*, 12(2), 109–132. https://doi.org/10.1093/jos/12.2.109

Nunberg, G. (2004). The Pragmatics of Deferred Interpretation. In *The Handbook of Pragmatics* (pp. 344–364). John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470756959.ch15

Oliver, A. (2005). The Reference Principle. *Analysis*, 65(3), 177–187. https://doi.org/10.1093/analys/65.3.177

Peirce, C. S. S. (1906). Prologomena to an apology for Pragmaticism. *The Monist*, 16(4), 492–546.

Pelczar, M., & Rainsbury, J. (1998). The Indexical Character of Names. *Synthese*, 114(2), 293–317. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1004992629004

Popper, K. (1959/2002). *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Predelli, S. (2015). Who's afraid of the predicate theory of names? *Linguistics and Philosophy*, 38(4), 363–376. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10988-015-9177-9

Quine, W. V. (1953). Three Grades of Modal Involvment. *Proceedings of the XIth International Congress of Philosophy*, 14, 65–81.

Quine, W. V. (1987). *Quiddities: An Intermittently Philosophical Dictionary* (Vol. 51, Issue 3, pp. 553–554). Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Rami, D. (2014). The use-conditional indexical conception of proper names. *Philosophical Studies*, 168(1), 119–150. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11098-013-0264-x

Rami, D. (2015). The Multiple Uses of Proper Nouns. *Erkenntnis* (1975-), 80, 405–432. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10670-014-9704-z

Rami, D. (2022). *Names and Context*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Recanati, F. (1993). *Direct Reference: From Language to Thought*. Blackwell.

Reichenbach, H. (1938). *Experience and Prediction: An Analysis of the Foundations and the Structure of Knowledge*. Chicago, IL, USA: University of Chicago Press.

Russell, B. (1911). Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 11(1), 108–128. https://doi.org/10.1093/aristotelian/11.1.108

Russell Peters. (2016, November 1). "African Names" | Russell Peters. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4okFm62gxk

Sainsbury, M. (1993/2002). Russell on names and communication. In *Departing from Frege*. Routledge.

Sainsbury, M. (2005). *Reference without Referents*. Oxford University Press. https://oxford.universitypressscholarship.com/view/10.1093/0199241805.001.0001/acprof-9780199241804

Sainsbury, M. (2015). The Same Name. *Erkenntnis*, 80(2), 195–214. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10670-014-9705-y

Sainsbury, M., & Tye, M. (2012). *Seven Puzzles of Thought and How to Solve Them: And How to Solve Them: An Originalist Theory of Concepts*. Oxford University Press. https://oxford.universitypressscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199695317.001.0001/acprof-9780199695317

Saka, P. (1998). Quotation and the use-mention distinction. *Mind*, 107(425), 113–135. https://doi.org/10.1093/mind/107.425.113

Sawyer, S. (2010). The Modified Predicate Theory of Proper Names. In S. Sawyer (Ed.), *New Waves in Philosophy of Language* (pp. 206–225). Palgrave Macmillan.

Sawyer, S. (2020). Names as Predicates. In *The Routledge Handbook of Linguistic Reference* (pp. 198–211). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003111894-20

Schoubye, A. J. (2017). Type-Ambiguous Names. *Mind*, 126(503), 715–767. https://doi.org/10.1093/mind/fzv188

Schoubye, A. J. (2020a). Names Are Variables. *The Philosophical Review*, 129(1), 53–94. https://doi.org/10.1215/00318108-7890468

Schoubye, A. J. (2020b). Variabilism. In S. Biggs & H. Geirsson (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Linguistic Reference* (pp. 212–224). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003111894-21

Sloat, C. (1969). Proper Nouns in English. *Language*, 45(1), 26–30. https://doi.org/10.2307/411749

Soames, S. (2002). *Beyond Rigidity: The Unfinished Semantic Agenda of Naming and Necessity*. Oxford University Press. https://oxford.universitypressscholarship.com/view/10.1093/0195145283.001.0001/acprof-9780195145281

Stanley, J. (1997). Names and Rigid Designation. In Hale & Wright (Eds.), *A Companion to the Philosophy of Language* (pp. 920–947). John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/9781118972090.ch36

Stojnić, U. (2021). *Context and Coherence: The Logic and Grammar of Prominence*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198865469.001.0001

Strawson, P. F. (1959). *Individuals*. Routledge.

Szabó, Z. G. (1999). Expressions and their Representations. *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 49(195), 145–163. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9213.00134

Szabó, Z. G. (2008). Review of Reference without Referents. *Mind*, 117(468), 1123–1127.

Vicente, A., & Falkum, I. L. (2017). Polysemy. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Linguistics*. Oxford University Press. http://linguistics.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199384655.001.0001/acrefore-9780199384655-e-325

Weiner, J. (1996). Has Frege a Philosophy of Language? In W. W. Tait (Ed.), *Early Analytic Philosophy: Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein* (pp. 249–272). Open Court.

Weiner, J. (1997). Frege and the Linguistic Turn. *Philosophical Topics*, *25*(2), 265–288. https://doi.org/10.5840/philtopics199725217

Wetzel, L. (2002). On Types and Words. *Journal of Philosophical Research*, 27, 239–265.

Wetzel, L. (2009). *Types and Tokens.* The MIT Press. https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/types-and-tokens

Wikipedia contributors. (2020). Usiququmadevu. In *Wikipedia*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Usiququmadevu&oldid=960043580

Williamson, T. (2013). *Identity and Discrimination*. John Wiley & Sons, https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118503591.ch0

Wilson, K. (1988). Circular Arguments. *Metaphilosophy*, 19(1), 38–52. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9973.1988.tb00700.x

Wittgenstein, L. (1953/2009). *Philosophical Investigations* (J. Schulte, Ed.; P. M. S. Hacker, Trans.; 4th edition). Wiley-Blackwell.

Wright, C. (1983). *Frege's Conception of Numbers as Objects*. Aberdeen University Press.

Ziff, P. (1960). *Semantic Analysis*. Cornell University Press.