

Chapter Two

The Causal Theory of Reference

The new theory of reference appears as *an antithesis of the classical theory of reference* as developed by Frege, Russell and others. This theory became widespread in the 1960s and is still flourishing today. It states that many proper names (many locutions) refer directly to items and thus deviated from the classical theory of reference. According to the classical theory of reference or so to speak old theory of reference, names and relevantly similar locutions express descriptive senses or are disguised descriptions. The new theory differs from the classical theory in the sense that it encompasses such notions as direct reference, rigid designation, identity across possible worlds, the necessity of identity, a posteriori necessity, singular propositions, essentialism about natural kinds, the argument from the failure of substitutivity in model contexts that proper names are not equivalent to contingent definite descriptions, and related ideas and arguments. Unlike the classical theory of reference, the new theory of reference encompasses such notions as **direct reference**, **rigid designation**, and **identity across possible worlds**, the necessity of identity, a posterior necessity, singular propositions, essentialism about natural kinds, the argument from the failure of sensitivity in model contexts that proper names are not equivalent to contingent definite descriptions, and related ideas. Some of the leading contributors to the development of this theory include Kripke, Putnam, Donnellan, Kalpan, Perry, Salmon, Soames, Almog, Wettstein and a number of other contemporary philosophers. In this sequel we propose to analyze and explicate the views of Kripke, Donnellan and Putnam.

The Program of the New/ Causal Theory of Reference

The causal theory of proper names is an account of the meaning relation for the terms associated with the relation. For example, when utterance-type N is the proper name of object 0, the connection between N and 0 is – a causal connection of some sort between 0 and at least some utterances of N. The New theory of reference asserts that there always underlies a **chain of causal connection** that would ensure chain of references. In this regard Kripke says, “A rough statement of a theory might be the following: An initial baptism take place. Here the object may be named by ostension, or the reference of the same (sic) may be fixed by a description. When the name is ‘passed from link to link’, the reference of the name must, I think, intend when he learns it to use with the same reference as the man from whom he heard it.”²⁶ Thus the chain of references thesis is introduced as part of the challenges to the descriptive theory’s thesis of use where a speaker’s reference to 0 in uttering N depends upon the uniquely applying descriptions of 0 the speaker associated with N. Thus, the chain theory of references thesis is coupled with the assertion that the chain must go back to 0 itself. Accordingly, by way of stipulating a causal connection from utterances of N to 0 is established. This stipulation actually amounts to a commitment to the causal theory of proper names as the basis for the rigid treatment of these terms. However, it should be kept in mind that the utterance of N to refer to 0 requires a causal connection between the utterance and 0. Having said this, they are in principle separable even though there underlies a chain references in between them. It is perfectly intelligible that the speaker’s reference using a name is to be determined by tracing back a chain of references to an *initial baptismal* reference without insisting that any of the utterances in the chain be causally linked to the referent. This would lead us to allow the crucial baptism to be some sort of association of the name a uniquely applying description that has been in the mind of the speaker.

²⁶Kripke, 1972, p.302.

It might be thought that what is important is not their commitment to the causal theory of proper names per se. Certainly, it is the chain of references thesis that would force us to revise the simple descriptive picture of meaning-knowledge for proper names. Having said this, the chain of references account is still compatible with the semantic chains of descriptive theorist. The fact is that a speaker's reference is not determined by the description(s) he associates with N in no way excludes the logical equivalence of N to some identifying descriptions with which it is associated in its initial baptismal use. By contrast, it can be said that causal theory of proper name does seem to bring with it the semantic thesis that proper names are rigid. Let me begin by laying out the notations of rigid /non-rigid designators. Consider a sentence of the form 'Fa', where 'a' stands for a proper name and 'F' stands for a predicate expression. It is very similar to the singular proposition that we use in predicate logic which may be true or false. Here 'Fa' may be said to express a function from possible-worlds to truth-values. If 'a' is a rigid designator, 'Fa' expresses a function which may be characterized thus: Let W be our world, the world in which 'a' is given its conventional denotation, and let x be the individual which 'a' denotes in W. For any possible-world W', in which x exists, the function then assigns true to W' if x is F in W', and false to W' if x is not F in W', no matter what else is true of x in W'. On the other hand, if 'a' is non-rigid, 'a' is associated with properties P which comprise the criterion of the application of 'a' in W. The function expressed by 'Fa' then assigns true to W' if the individual having P in W' is F in W' and false to W' if the individual having P in W' is not F in W'- no matter whether the individual having P in W' is x. Where 'a' is non-rigid, then, 'a' has in P its Fregean sense.

Now, let W be the world in which N is actually used and let W' be any other world. Clearly, to hold the causal theory of proper name is to hold that with respect to W the referent of N is just

the object 0 with which it has the appropriate causal connection in W. Now what about the referent of N with respect to W? If we do not say that it is 0 – the very same 0 as in W – then either we must say that it is the object having in W' the causal relation to N apropos of naming, or else that the properties P which comprise the criterion of N's application in W determine N's reference with respect to W' as well. Neither of these alternatives seems attractive because in each case, N is equivalent to a definite description and accordingly, the role of causality in connecting the proper name with its referent seems to dissolve. Therefore, in maintain the causal theory of proper name, we seem compelled to treat N as a rigid designator. Thus, the causal theory of proper names itself opposes the classical or descriptive theory of use. Since N will be rigid, these descriptions cannot be taken as equivalent to N according to Fregean sense.

The Chain of References Thesis

1. The Chain of References thesis is like: For utterance-type N and object 0, N is a proper name of 0 if and only if there is an established practice or convention to use taken of N to refer identifying to 0, no matter whether any terms embedded in N are true of 0. Here the causal theory of referring entails the causal theory of proper names. That means, if the speech act of referring requires a causal connection with the individual referred to, then the causal theory of referring incorporates causality as an essential element in the meaning-relation for proper names. On the contrary, if referring does not entail causality, then it is hard to see the proper names do either. In such a case, we can name anything we can refer to.

Points of departures

The new theory of reference deviates from the classical theory of reference on the following points.

First, according to the causal theory of reference proper names are directly referential and are not abbreviated or disguised descriptions, as Frege and Russell and most philosophers up to the 1770s believed. In this regard, Marcus writes, "... to give a thing a proper name is different from giving a unique description. An identifying tag is a proper name of the thing. This tag, a proper name, has no meaning. It simply tags. It is not strongly equitable with any of the singular descriptions of the thing."²⁷ We think this is the basis of the contemporary 'direct reference' theory of proper names which has been further seized the foothold with the contribution of the famous theory 'Rigid designator' of Saul Kripke. Even though there we notice a controversy regarding the forerunner of the theory of direct reference as many would say that it was Kripke who actually has planted the seed of this theory. However, if we carefully go through the literature, it seems clear to us that Marcus has developed this theory before Kripke. Anyway, the debate is not so much relevant in the context of this point. The position of Marcus and Kripke remained the same as both of them talked in favor of direct reference theory that would go against the classical theory of reference. For example, Frege understands reference through sense. Thus, his interpretation of reference is not direct but indirect. Frege actually gives importance on the sense or meaning of proper names. Thus, to Frege the sense of a name is primary and the reference of a name is secondary. The reference of a linguistic term can be known through the sense of the term under consideration. As we have already stated that Frege conceives the sense of a proper name as a mode of presentation. Thus, the position of direct reference theory certainly goes against Frege. Russell says that ordinary proper names are disguised descriptions or abbreviated descriptions. He says that even though ordinary proper names look like proper names but in real sense they are disguised descriptions. We think where there is a scope for descriptions there is a scope of ambiguity. Thus, for Russell, the reference of

²⁷ Marcus, 'Modalities and Intentional Languages', *Synthese*, 13, 1961, pp.303-322.

an ordinary proper name is known by descriptions and its reference is no longer direct; it is indirect. This clearly suggests that the classical theory of reference talks in favor of indirect reference whereas the causal theory of reference talks in favor of direct theory of reference. For example, 'Scott' refers directly to Scott and does not express a sense expressible by such a definite description as "the author of Waverly".

Secondly, every proper name has two aspects, the denotative aspect and the connotative aspect. The denotative aspect is associated with reference and the connotative aspect is associated with sense or meaning or mode of presentation. As a result of that there develops two theories of proper names, such as, the sense theory of proper names and the non-sense theory of proper names. The classical theory addresses on the sense theory of proper names. The causal theory of reference is predominantly concerned with the non-sense theory of proper names. For Marcus, a tag has reference but no sense. For Kripke, a proper name is a rigid designator that would designate the same object in every possible world. Even though Frege admits both the sense and the reference of a proper name, but he gives priority to the sense of a proper name over the reference of a proper name. According to Frege, a proper name cannot be without sense; the sense of a proper name determines its reference. But there may have proper name having sense but no reference at all. Thus, Frege's classical theory of reference admits referential failure of proper name. The direct reference theory does not anticipate any referential failure of a proper name. This is a distinctive deviation of the causal theory of reference from the classical theory of reference.

Thirdly, according to the causal theory of reference, we can single out a thing by a definite description, but this description serves only to single it out, not to be strongly equitable with a proper name of the thing in question. In this regard Marcus says, "It would also appear to be a

preconception of language [especially assigning names] that the singling out of an entity as a thing is accompanied by many unique descriptions, for otherwise how would it be singled out? But to give thing proper names is different from giving a unique description.”²⁸We think this later idea became widely disseminated through Kripke’s discussion of how reference-fixing descriptions are sometimes used to single out a thing as a bearer of a name, but that the names are not disguised descriptions as classical theory anticipated. In this regard Kripke says, “It seems plausible to suppose that, in some cases, the reference of a name is indeed fixed via a description [but the description is not “part of the meaning of the name].””²⁹In this regard, Kripke also added a novel idea by saying that in other cases names’ reference may be secured by a historical causal chain steaming back to the original “baptismal”.”³⁰

Fourthly, unlike the classical theory of reference, the causal or new theory of reference gives importance on **the modal necessity**. By saying that proper names are directly referential both Marcus and Kripke introduced the concept of modal necessity. Modal necessity ensures the referential guarantee in trans-world communication. Let us make clear Marcus position first:

(10) The evening star eq the morning star

(15) Scott is the author of *Waverly*

According to Marcus the symbol ‘eq’ stands for some equivalence notation. According to her, types of equivalence relation include identity, indiscernibility, strict equivalence, material equivalence and others. For Marcus the equivalence relations to be unpacked in (10) and (15) are not strong enough to support the relevant thesis of the *disguised contingent description* theory of proper names. She says, “If we decide that “the evening star” and “the morning star” are [proper]

²⁸ Ibid., p.309.

²⁹Kripke, ‘Naming and Necessity’, in Davidson and Harman, eds., *Semantics of Natural Language*, Reidel, Dordrecht, 1972, p. 276.

³⁰ Ibid., p.298-303.

names for the same thing, and that “Scott” and “the author of Waverly” are [proper] names for the same thing, then they must be indistinguishable in every context. In fact, it often happens, in a growing, changing language that a descriptive phrase comes to be used as a proper name –in an identifying tag – and the descriptive meaning is lost or ignored.”³¹ However, following Marcus, we can say that not all of the relevant expressions are names for the same thing. As a result of that they are not indistinguishable in modal contexts. According to Marcus, if they express a true identity, then, ‘Scott’ ought to be anywhere intersubstitutable for ‘the authority of Waverly’ in modal contexts, and similarly for ‘the morning star’ and ‘the evening star’. However, if they are not so universally intersubstitutable then according to our position they are not really proper names stand for the same thing. That they express equivalence in surface or grammatical level, but in deep or logical level they appear as false. In our case, someone else might have written Waverly and the star first seen the evening might have been different from the star first seen in the morning. If it does then surely, they are not identical. Marcus’ modal argument reflects why the ‘disguised contingent description’ theory of proper names is false. (10) and (15) do not express identities. Here the expressions flanking ‘is’ are not proper names for the same thing. In (10) and (15) a weaker equivalence relation should be unpacked by a theory of descriptions. As a result of that it does not pass Marcus modal test based on necessity. However, instead of these, if we consider the sentence “Hesperus is Phosphorus” it demonstrates an identity sign flanked by the two expressions. As a result of that, it then clearances Marcus’ modal test for containing two proper names of the same thing. Even this modal argument as developed by Marcus and Kripke goes back to Marcus’ proof of the necessity of identity in her extension of S4, which is a fourth component she introduced into her The New Theory of Reference. Here Marcus actually extended Lewis’s S4 by QS4 where the symbol ‘Q’ stands for Quantification. Thus, Marcus’

³¹ Marcus, ‘Modalities and Intensional Languages’, op. cit., pp. 308-309.

Modal theory is a quantification extension of Lewis S4. As identities are necessary, a failure of intersubstitutivity in modal context will show that a proper name does not express the relevant descriptive sense.

Now our point is that if ‘Scott’ is not intersubstitutable with ‘the author of Waverly’, ‘Scott’ does not express the sense expressed by the definite description. It then actually opens the door to the theory that proper names do not express descriptive senses but instead are directly referential. In this regard, we have to distinguish between ‘definite descriptions’ and ‘necessary definite descriptions’. We think Marcus and Kripke by way of outlining direct reference theory do not fully ignore the descriptive content of the proper names. We think Marcus’ position does not prove that proper names do not express sense. What it suggests is that proper names in the real sense of the term do not express sense of contingent definite descriptions. Marcus’ modal argument is consistent with the idea of Linsky (1977) and A Plantiga (1978) that proper names express sense expressible by *necessary definite descriptions*. Necessary definite descriptions are definite descriptions that express modal stable sense. For example, “Scott” may express the modally stable sense of “the author of Waverly”.

Fifthly, Marcus’ argument for the ‘direct reference theory’ make manifest her discovery of the fifth crucial component of the New Theory of Reference, the concept of rigid designation that has been coined by Kripke at first. “Hesperus” is intersubstitutable *salva veritate* with either occurrence of “Phosphorus” in “Necessarily, Phosphorus is Phosphorus”. Each of these two names actually designates Venus in respect of every possible world in which Venus exists and does not actually designate anything in respect of worlds in which Venus does not exist. Now if these two names were instead equivalent to contingent descriptions (e.g., ‘the morning star’ and ‘the evening star’), they would not be intersubstitutable *salva veritate* in this modal context and

thus would be non-rigid designators. According to Marcus, “individual names don’t alter their reference except to the extent that in respect of some worlds they may not refer at all.”³² It should be pointed out here that Marcus does not use the term ‘rigid designator’. It has been used by Kripke. However, we intend to say that Marcus’ perception regarding the direct reference theory has an extensive assimilation with the concept of rigid designator as used by Kripke. We think that Marcus’ points can be incorporated consistently with the continued use of ‘rigid designators’. In fact, if we make the genus/species terminology, we can say that the genus is rigid designators and the different species are proper names, or referentially used definite descriptions in Donnellan sense, attributively used definite descriptions that express a modally stable sense, or uses of indexical, or natural kind terms. We can avoid embracing proper names to some modally stable descriptions since proper names refer directly, whereas attributably used definite descriptions that express modally stable senses refer indirectly via the expressed sense. Sixthly, the New Theory of Reference also departs from the classical or traditional theory of reference in the sense that unlike the latter the former anticipates **a posteriori necessity**. In this context, Marcus’ position about Venus and evening star is particularly relevant. According to Marcus, ‘you may describe as the evening star and I may describe the Venus as the morning star. Further we may both be surprised that, as an empirical fact, the same thing is being described. However, it is not an empirical fact that:

(17) Venus is Venus’³³

Let us consider the expression “Hesperus is Phosphorus”. Here we do not know this to be a priori. Rather it is an analytic assertion whose truth value is known by analysis of the concepts involved. It is, of course, necessary true because here both names refer to the same thing, Venus.

³² Marcus, “Essential Attribution”, *Journal of Philosophy*, 68, 1971, p.194.

³³ Marcus, ‘Modalities and Intentional Languages’, op. cit., p.85.

Accordingly, like the expression “Venus I Venus”, where ‘I’ stands for identity, it is equally true that:

(a) Hesperus I Phosphorus

Given Marcus’ theorem of the necessity of identity, it follows that

(b) Necessarily, Hesperus I Phosphorus

Accordingly, it can be said that the expression “Hesperus I Phosphorus” can be conceived as a synthetic a posteriori necessary truth.

Direct Reference and linguistic meaning:

The point of direct reference is the main contention of the New Theory of Reference. According to this theory, proper names and indexicals are often said to have define referentiality. They are referentially rigid. The term ‘rigidity’ is particularly coined with the name of Kripke. For Kripke, a designator is rigid that denotes the same object in all possible worlds. Even in Kripke’s context, there we notice at least three different notions of the term ‘rigid’. These are: rigidity as a matter of scope, rigidity as a matter of truth-conditions, and rigidity as pure or direct referentiality. In case the last sense of rigidity is mostly relevant. Many would say that a rigid designator is simply a designator that always takes wide scope in modal contexts. Keeping this contention in mind, even Kripke’s notion of rigid designator can alternatively be expressed by saying that a rigid designator refers to the same thing whether we use to talk about what is actually the case or about some counterfactual situation.³⁴ Now when a designator – say, a definite description – takes wide scope in a modal sentence, i.e., in a sentence used to talk about possible worlds, it does refer to the same object as when it occurs in a sentence used to describe the actual world. The description (1) “The president of France”, when it is given wide scope, refers to the person who is the president of France in the actual world, even though the sentence as a whole describes a

³⁴Kripke, 1971, p.145.

counterfactual situation. Thus, it seems that a description designates rigidly when it takes wide scope. The difference between proper names and definite descriptions, on that view, is simply that, contrary to definite descriptions, proper names always take wide scope in modal contexts. That is why (i) The president of France might have been tall- is ambiguous and (ii) Mitterrand might have been tall – is not. (i) means either France might have had a tall man as president or that Mitterrand might himself have been tall. As far as the first alternative is concerned it is asserted that the property of being tall in some possible world- says, w – is ascribed to the individual who satisfies the description in w (but not in the actual world). As far as the second alternative is concerned, it is asserted that the individual who satisfies the description in the actual world is said to be tall in some possible world. Now depending on whether the description does or does not fall within the scope of the modal operator, its referent, i.e., the individual satisfying the description is picked out either in the actual world or in the possible world introduced by the modal operator. What is important to note here is that unlike (i) there is no scope ambiguity in the case of (ii) which contains a proper name instead of a description.

Rigidity and Scope

Many would say that rigidity as comprehended with regard to scope is not tenable. Even Kripke does not accept this. In the preface of *Naming and Necessity*, Kripke tells us that rigidity cannot be reduced to, a matter of scope. It is not at all legitimate to claim that a designator is rigid if and only if it always takes *wide scope* in modal contexts. If it does, then the concept of rigidity would purely be treated as ‘modal rigidity’. But in our case the rigid/non-rigid distinction applies to designators in general.

Again, let us consider the sentences:

(iii) Mitterrand is small

(iv) The president of France is small

Now (iii) and (iv) provide good evidence that 'Mitterrand' contrary to 'the president of France' rigidly designates its referent. (iii) is true with respect to a world if and only if, in w , Mitterrand is small. In this case, there is a unique individual x such that, for any world w , the sentence is true with respect to w if and only if x is small in w . However, there is no single individual such that, for any world w , (iv) is true with respect to w if and only if that individual is small in w . It may perhaps be the case that there is a world in which Giscard is the president of France, Giscard's being small makes (iv) true, whereas in a world with Chirac as president, the truth of (iv) actually depends on Chirac's being small. It thus seems that like (iii), there is no particular individual involved in the truth-condition of (iv). (iv) is true with respect to a world if and only if, in that world, there is an individual x such that x is both the president of France and small. But this individual may not be the same with regard to all possible worlds. We have a different approach altogether in the case (iii). Here the individual whose being small would make the sentence true is the same in all possible worlds. Here we bring the rigid/non-rigid distinction again without bringing the contention of scope. In this regard, Kripke remarks that the rigidity theory 'is a doctrine about the truth-conditions, with respect to counterfactual situations, of all sentences, including simple sentences.'³⁵ Thus, there is no point in saying that that rigidity finds its authenticity with regard to wide scope. At least Kripke does not think it so.

Rigidity and Referentiality

According to Kripke, rigidity is a matter of truth-conditions. Accordingly, to say that a designator is rigid is to say that there is an individual such that, with respect to every counterfactual situation, the truth-condition of any sentence containing the designator involves the individual in question. Actually, this theory was first explicitly put forward by Christopher

³⁵Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge: Mass, 1980, p.12.

Peacocke. According to Peacocke,³⁶ (R) ‘t is a rigid designator in a language L free from both ambiguity and indexical) if and only if: there is an object such that for any sentence G (t) in which t occurs, the truth (falsity) condition for G(t) is that x satisfies. Criterion (R), Peacocke opines, captures Russell’s idea that sometimes the reference of a singular term is a constituent of the proposition expressed by the sentence where it occurs. For if a term t denoting an object x is a rigid designator by criterion (R), then any sentence G (t) will be true if and only if x satisfies G(t), is a constituent of the truth-condition of the sentence. It thus seems that what a rigid designator contributes to the truth-condition of the sentence is the object itself which it refers to, not an attribute which an object possesses in order to be referred to. Russell’s logical proper name is purely referential. For Russell a logical proper name is known by acquaintance. He says that a logical proper name denotes an object with which we are directly acquainted. Thus, in a sense, Russell’s idea is the idea of a purely referential term where reference in terms of acquaintance counts the most. Peacocke, in effect, equates rigidity in the sense of the criterion (R) , with referentiality . In this regard Peacocke remarks: “The criterion of rigid designation can be seen ... as merely a more explicit formulation of an idea variously expressed as that of a term’s ‘serving ... simply to refer to its object’ (Quine) , ‘tagging’ an individual (Marcus), or in general of an expression’s being ‘used to enable ... individuals to be made subjects of disclosure’ (Mill); and the view that proper names are rigid designators in our sense seems a natural elucidation of Miss Anscombe’s remark that the proper name contributes ‘to the meaning of the sentence precisely by standing for its bearer.’”³⁷ We think that this equation of rigidity with referentiality is consonant with Kripke’s perseverance on the Mill’s idea of proper names. In fact, Kripke conceives Mill’s idea of proper name as ‘paradigm example’ of rigid designation.

³⁶Peacocke, 1975, p.110.

³⁷ Ibid. p.111.

Proper name, Mill says, 'are attached to the objects themselves, and are not dependent on ... any attribute of the other.'³⁸ Kripke while outlining the very nature of proper name as rigid designator takes notes following Mill. Following Mill, Kripke goes on to say that the function of proper name is to refer to an object independently of the properties it may have, so as to enable one to refer to this object even with respect to possible worlds. Thus, the link between a name and its referent is, for Kripke, 'stipulative' rather than 'qualitative'. However, as far as referentiality is concerned one may supposed to distinguish proper name from definite descriptions. Some definite descriptions are rigid and satisfy Peacock's criterion. For example, a mathematical description like 'the cube root of 27' denotes 3 in all possible worlds, since '3 is the cube root of 27' is a necessary truth. It can be checked using Peacock's criterion at the level of truth-conditions. For any sentence S of the form 'The cube root of 27 is F', where F stands for a predicate, there is an object x, namely the number 3, such that, with respect to any possible world, S is true if and only if x satisfies the predicate. We cannot say anything on the other way round. That means, we cannot say that for x to be true, x must also be the cube root of 27. More importantly, like any description, the description 'the cube root of 27' denotes the object which has the property it 'connotes', namely, the property being a number of x such that $x^3 = 27$. The link between the description and its referent is typically qualitative in Kripkian sense. Kripke thus finds a subtle distinction between rigidity and referentiality. For Kripke there is a difference between a rigid definite description and a proper name even when the description in question is used to 'fix the reference'. A name, for Kripke, is purely referential, while the rigid description such as 'the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter' is not.

Thus, we may find considerable distinction between referentiality and rigidity. Referentiality always implies rigidity. A referential term is rigid '*de jure*' because it is, Mill's terminology,

³⁸ Mill, 1947, p.20.

‘attached to the object itself’ independent of its properties. As a result of that it cannot fail to denote the same object in all possible worlds. What changes from world to world is not the object itself, but only its contingent properties. The denotation of an object always remains the same as it is attached to name. A name, Wittgenstein says, denotes an object and the meaning of a name is the meaning of an object. Alternatively, it can be said that to be a name is to be a name of an object. The only visible change one may notice in the case of an object is its connotative meaning. However, in the case of mathematical description or for that matter in any essential description we notice exception. A mathematical description is rigid only ‘de facto’ because like any description, it denotes the object that falls under a certain concept. In this case the concept happens to fit the same object in all possible worlds. Having said this, we can still say that as far as the theory of direct reference is concerned the denotative meaning of a name cannot be changed. If there is any change, it is the connotative properties of the object under consideration. Further we can say that the concept of rigidity is well-defined notion unlike the concept of referentiality. Referentiality in the strict sense of the term is not so specific like the concept of rigidity that we notice in Kripke and Peacocke. What does actually mean to say that a referential term refers to the object ‘itself’? One readymade answer is that a referential term is a term wholly devoid of descriptive content, a term whose link to its reference is purely stipulative, as Kripke says. Perhaps this is far too strong, because not all referential terms are like proper names in this respect. Demonstrative expressions like ‘this table’ or pronouns like ‘I’ or ‘You’ clearly have some sort of descriptive content. Following Peacocke we can say that a term is referential if there is an object such that the truth-condition of any sentence containing the term involves this object. However, many would say that this criterion is too weak because it then incorporates all rigid expressions including rigid descriptions which nobody would want to classify as referential.

One should not confuse *referentiality* with *rigidity* even though the concept of referentiality is viable while talking about rigidity. Having said this, it may still be possible to define referentiality as opposed to mere rigidity. According to Lockwood, a rigid expression is an expression such that the truth-condition of any sentence containing it involves a certain object, in conformity to criterion (R). By contrast, when an expression is referential, there is an object such that not only the truth condition but also the proposition expressed involves that object. Now to understand a proposition expressed by an utterance where a referential term occurs, it is necessary to know which object has been referred to. In such a case it is necessary to identify the reference.³⁹ This sort of identification does not seek the *concept of object* under which it falls. However, when a term is non-referential the proposition expressed involves only a certain concept. If the term is rigid *de facto*, this concept happens to fit the same object in all possible worlds. However, it is not necessary for understanding the proposition to identify the object in question.⁴⁰ According to Lockwood, the expression ‘the cube of 408’ is functioning referentially irrespective of whether one knows what the cube of 408 is. The problem is that we do not know exactly ‘what is meant by the proposition expressed’ as opposed to the truth-condition of the utterance. We think the notion of proposition expressed is essentially tied to that of understanding and thus there we seem a connection between referentiality and understanding. ‘The cube root of 27’ rigidly designates the number 3, but we can understand the description without knowing what number it designates. On the other hand, a referential term is such that to understand an utterance one has to know which object it designates. Lockwood thus finds a close proximity between referentiality and understanding. He has put forward a definition of referentiality in terms of understanding which eventually helps one to cognize the relationship

³⁹ See Evans, 1982.

⁴⁰ Lockwood, 1975, p.88

between referentiality and rigidity. According to Lockwood, a term is referential if and only if there is an object x such that (i) an utterance $G(t)$ is true if x satisfies $G(\)$, and (ii) to understand the utterance, one must know that it is true if x satisfies $G(\)$. Following Lockwood, we can say that a referential term is a rigid designator (following clause (i)), but it would be a rigid designator of a very special kind. In such a case to understand an occurrence where it occurs one has to know that it designates an object rigidly and also to know about which object it so designates. Thus, understanding an utterance, according to Lockwood's criterion, actually involves *de re* knowledge of the inference. Here knowing a certain object involves that the utterance is true if and only if this object satisfies the predicate.

Many would still be skeptical regarding Lockwood's criterion of referentiality. According to his criterion of referentiality, understanding an utterance with a referential term involves identifying the reference of the term. This in turn entails that the reference actually entails. Many would indeed say that if the reference of a referential expression does not exist, there remains nothing to understand. If the reference of a referential expression does not exist in the true sense of the term, the expression under consideration would not express a proposition. There is a strong perception that to say anything of an object, one has to presuppose beforehand that the object under consideration must be a real object. An object is to be a real object if it exists. How can we talk of an object that is unreal? Philosophers like Strawson would stick to this philosophical position. However, many would say the other way around. For them identification of reference is not a necessary condition of referentiality. A term may well be referential and understood by the hearer as referential without its reference being identified. To understand the utterance 'Ralph Banilla is a midget' one has to understand or know about who Ralph Banilla is, but to understand the sentence only involves knowing that the term is referential in the sense that there is an

individual that must be identified for an utterance of the sentence to be understood. According to Lockwood, a term is referential only if there is an object such that to understand the utterance involves identifying the object. We think this is wrong because in our sense a term can still be referential even though there actually is no such object. The term 'Ralph Banilla' is referential even if for some reason it would fail to refer or even if it does not exist. Thus, in a sense the category 'referential term' is not different from 'proper name' in that respect. 'Ralph Banilla' is linguistically a proper name even if for some reason it has no bearer. The notion of a referential term without reference would be self-contradictory. Many would even make the distinction between 'referentiality for a term' and 'referentiality for a use of a term'. 'Referentiality for a term' does not require the existence of the object; whereas 'referentiality for a use of a term' makes sense if there is an object it refers to. Accordingly, we can say that expressions, such as proper names and demonstrative pronouns, are referentiality for a term and definite descriptions are referentiality for a use of a term.

Type referentiality

There is a perception that the reference of a linguistic expression is something extra-linguistic. When we say that the reference of a sentence exists independently, it actually means to say that the reference of a linguistic expression is extra-linguistic. Thus, the relevance of type reference comes into being. Type referentiality is supposed to be a feature of the linguistic meaning of some expressions and the linguistic meaning of an expression so to speak is its contribution to the linguistic meaning of the sentence where it occurs. Thus, by the term 'type referentiality' we mean to say: when the term t in an utterance $G(t)$ is a rigid designator, there is an object such that the utterance is true if and only if this object satisfies the predicates G . In such a case, the truth-condition of the utterance is a singular truth-condition. More succinctly it can be said, a

term is a type-referential if and only if its linguistic meaning includes a feature, call it 'REF', by virtue of which it indicates that the truth condition (or, more generally, satisfaction-condition) of the utterance where it occurs is singular. The truth-condition of an utterance $G(t)$ is singular if and only if there is an object x such that the utterance is true if and only if x satisfies $G()$. Now, if the term t is referential, its meaning includes a feature by virtue of which it indicates that there is an object x such that an utterance of $G(t)$ is true or more generally satisfied if and only if x satisfies $D()$. According to this criterion of type-referentiality, some referential terms are not wholly devoid of descriptive content. They have what Loar calls a *referential qualifier*. Many would conceive it as 'referential feature' or referential 'character'. A referential expression such as 'this table' or the pronoun 'you' somehow characterizes the reference in such a way that it can be identified in context. Here understanding the utterance involves identifying the reference of the term. In his identification of the reference, the hearer is helped by the meaning of the referential term. A referential term indicates not only that there is an object such that the utterance is true if and only if this object has a certain property. It equally indicates how this object can be identified. Alternatively, it can be said that a referential term as part of its meaning is a mode of presentation of the reference. Thus, in combination both to the feature REF and to the presentation, a sentence $G(t)$ where t is a referential term indicates: There is an object x which is F (=mode of presentation), such that the utterance is satisfied if and only if x satisfies $G()$.

For example, "This table is G " indicates that there is a table prominent in the vicinity. The utterance that 'The table is G ' is true if and only if it is G . Likewise, 'You are G ' indicates that there is a person to whom the utterance is addressed. The utterance is true if there is a person to whom the utterance is made. In all those cases the 'mode of presentation' associated with the

referential term make a certain object contextually identifiable and the utterances are satisfied if and only if this object has the property expressed by the predicate in the sentence.

Now we are in a viable position to capture the intuitive notion of pure or direct referentiality which, we think, is the foundation of the New Theory of Reference as comprehended and developed by Marcus, Kripke, Peacocke, Lockwood and others. We think that it is part of the meaning of the term, and also the meaning of the sentence where it occurs. The mode of presentation of the sentence is no part of the proposition expressed by the utterance. The proposition expressed by the utterance is the satisfaction condition the utterance presents itself as having. When we say 'a is G', where 'a' stands as a referential term whose meaning includes a certain mode of presentation of its reference. It means that there is an object x, possessing certain property F (= mode of presentation), such that the utterance is satisfied if and only if x is G. Alternatively, we can say that the utterance presents itself is true if and only if a certain object x, of course contextually, is G. The utterance expresses the proposition that a is G – a singular proposition with the object a and not the concept F as constituent. The concept F, as the mode of presentation, helps the hearer to understand under what condition the utterance of the object is satisfied with regard to certain property.

We are now in a position to assess rigidity in terms of truth conditions along with the line of Kripke and Peacocke. A rigid designator is such that the truth condition of the utterance where it occurs is singular. A referential term indicates that the truth condition of the utterance is singular. It indicates that there is an object x such that the utterance G (t) where it occurs is true if x satisfies the predicate G (). A referential term, therefore, is a designator that signifies its own rigidity. Many would say that the notion of 'propositional content' is arguably more problematic than that of truth-conditions. Likewise, the term referentiality is more problematic than that of

rigidity. The reason perhaps is that they are more ‘intentional’, closer to the paradigmatically intentional notion of ‘meaning’. As a result of that it would always be philosophically worthy to analyze the notion of proposition in terms of truth-conditions, or referentiality in terms of rigidity. Many would even say that the study of direct reference is firmly rooted in the study of language and language use. This however does not make sense to say that the study of direct reference is divorced from psychology. Following Grice, we can say that the study of meaning itself is rooted in psychology. Moreover, utterances endowed with meaning are used to communicate thoughts. So, the connections between utterances and the corresponding thoughts cannot be ignored in the pragmatic approach to meaning and communication. Following Evans and Lockwood, we can say that understanding an utterance with a referential term involves forming a *de re* thought about the referent. Thus, the study of *de re* thoughts must be undertaken by anyone endeavoring to theorize about direct reference.

We think this problem is deeply rooted in the philosophical controversies between neo-Russellian’s and neo-Fregeans. Neo-Russellian anticipates singular proposition including direct reference but forgoes mode of presentation and psychological credibility. Thus, it deals with the semantic properties of utterances, Neo-Fregean, by contrast, is both semantically and psychologically adequate. It equally obeys cognitive constraints unlike neo-Russellian. The best philosophical outcome of direct reference theory is to make an attempt to bring both of them close together. We need both the *de re* thoughts of the neo-Fregean and the singular propositions of the neo-Russellian in a complete manner which deals not only with the thoughts which our utterances express but also with the meaning of our utterances themselves. This is how one can enrich the direct reference theory of meaning.

Singular Propositions and Thoughts

So far, we have seen that understanding an utterance involves identifying its truth condition (possible world). However, the truth condition of an utterance need not be identified in an absolute sense for the utterance to be understood. ‘The cube root of 27 is odd’ is true *if* 3 is odd, yet the hearer who understands the utterance may not know that it is the case. Of course, the hearer who understands the utterance must know its truth condition under a certain mode of presentation but the fact is that he may not be able to recognize it under another mode of presentation. The utterance on the background of linguistic meaning gives indications concerning its truth-conditions. For example, directly referential terms convey a semantic feature on the basis of which they indicate that the truth condition of the utterance in which they occur is singular. Thus, in a sense the meaning of the utterance gives rise to a direction to the truth condition. The truth condition is presented by *the utterance itself*. For example, ‘The root cube of 27 is odd’ present itself as true if there is a number x such that $x^3 = 27$ and x is odd. We also observe that the distinction between the *proposition expressed* and the truth condition gives rise to the basis for the distinction between rigidity and direct referentiality. We have seen when the subject term ‘a’ in a sentence ‘a is G’ is rigid, the truth condition of the utterance is singular. When ‘a’ is a directly referential term; the utterance presents its truth-condition as singular. An utterance ‘a is G’ in which ‘a’ stands as a directly referential term means that there is an object x , possessing a certain property F, such that the utterance is true if x is G. This is a singular proposition that contains the reference of ‘a’ and the property expressed by the predicate ‘G’. Thus, in a sense, the proposition expressed by an utterance in which a directly referential term occurs includes the reference of that term as a constituent, in the same way as the truth condition of an utterance in which a rigid designator occurs includes the reference of that designator as a

constituent. Now in order to understand the proposition expressed one has to know about the truth condition of the utterance conveyed by the sentence. Understanding the truth condition of the sentence involves more than merely understanding the meaning of the sentence.

It is noted that the distinction between truth condition of the utterance and the proposition it expresses enables us to define direct referentiality as opposed to mere rigidity. The second distinction between the meaning of the sentence and the proposition expressed enables us to cognize as directly referential terms which convey a certain mode of presentation of their reference. Terms like 'I' or 'this table' are directly referential, yet they present their reference with certain attribute. To define direct referentiality in terms of the proposition expressed makes it possible to bypass Mill's overly strong definition of direct referentiality as straightforward lack of meaning or 'connotation'. Here the descriptive meaning of a referential term is not reflected in the proposition expressed. As such proposition is singular, it involves only a particular object. The pronoun 'I' is referential and connotative, contrary to Mill's equation of referentiality with non-connotativeness. Kaplan expresses the same by means of his famous distinction between 'content' and 'character'. According to Kaplan, the content of a connotative term may be either its reference or the mode of presentation of the reference. If the content is constituted by the reference, i.e., if the term is referential, the mode of presentation of the reference is external to the proposition expressed and constitutes only the character of the term. However, if the mode of presentation does not only belong to the character of the expression but also constitutes its content, as happens when the term is not referential, then it is the reference that is external. It is external in the sense that it is only part of the world. In such a case, it is possible for the utterance to make sense even if the reference does not exist or cannot be identified. Contrary to this, if the

term is referential, its reference is part of the proposition expressed by the utterance and must be identified for the latter to be understood.

Of course, Kaplan has devised an operator, DTHAT, which prevents the mode of presentation of the reference from going into the content in such a way so that the content of an expression within the scope of DTHAT can only be its reference. In a sense, reference does exactly the same job as DTHAT. The only notable difference between reference and DTHAT is that reference to be regarded as the semantic feature of language whereas DTHAT is an operator in an ideal language. Reference is part of the meaning of referential expressions, namely, proper names, demonstratives and the like. Since definite descriptions are not referential, reference is not part of their meaning. However, Donnellan thinks the other way around. According to Donnellan a description can be used referentially so as to express a singular proposition. More succinctly it can be said that descriptions can only be 'token referential' whereas proper names and demonstratives expressions are 'type referential'. This is where the difference between reference and DTHAT comes out. The presence of DTHAT simply means that a singular proposition is expressed with the reference, but not the mode of presentation of the reference as a constituent.