CHAPTER 7

Reference & Propositional Attitudes

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7.1 INTRODUCTION

- **Propositional-attitude constructions**
  - **Intensional construction**
  - Basic Worry
  - → the meaning of words is concerned with **things in the world (real things)** rather than things in the mind (something conceptional)

- **Propositional attitude: embedded sentence within a 'that' clause**
  - Gives us the *content* of the propositional attitude
  - Tells us *what* is believed, hoped, desired (as the *object* of the propositional attitude)
  - The word 'proposition' itself refers to the *proposition* to which the *attitude* (i.e. hope, believe, desire) is taken

  Joan of Arc *believed* that *she was called by God to save France.*

         attitude   *object*

7.1 INTRODUCTION

- **The main focuses of this chapter:**
  - Problems arise when someone has **a propositional attitude**, such as:
    - A belief about a specific thing
    - Hope/desire directed to some particular things

- **Quine's 'Quantifiers and Propositional Attitudes'**
  - Similar to that of his *de re* modality problems mentioned in chapter 6
  - He uses the dichotomy between **referential _opacity_** and **referential _transparency_**
  - If a singular term genuinely refers to an object ➜ can be replaced by other (co-referring singular terms)
  - If such intersubstitution is problematic ➜ the singular term does not refer to an object

7.2 QUINE'S PROBLEM

- Page 135

(1)   Ralph believes that someone is a spy.

Ambiguous, why?

(1a) There's someone whom Ralph believes to be a spy.

- A *relational* sense of (1):
    - Describing the relation between Ralph & a particular person (here as a spy)
    - Describes a *de re* belief that is concerned with a particular object.

7.2 QUINE'S PROBLEM

- Page 135

(1)   Ralph believes that someone is a spy.

Ambiguous, why?

(1b) Ralph believes that there're spies.

- A *notional* sense of (1):
    - NO relation between Ralph and a particular person is described
    - A *de dicto (concerns a way of describing objects)* construal

7.2 QUINE'S PROBLEM

- **Quine's problem**
  - How to understand the difference between (1a) & (1b)

- He then attempted to render (1a) & (1b) into **quantifier-variable notation**

- (**1a***) (∃x)(Ralph believes that x is a spy)
  - **Interpretation**: There is an x such that Ralph believes that x is a spy

- (1b*) Ralph believes that (∃x)(x is a spy)
  - **Interpretation**: Ralph believes that there's an x such that x is a spy

7.2 QUINE'S PROBLEM

- (1a*) (∃x) (Ralph believes that x is a spy)

- **Interpretation**: There is an x such that Ralph believes that x is a spy

  - Problematic (as he objected to *de re* modality)]

    If (1a*) represents a genuinely *de re* belief → possible to swap co-referring singular terms in the position of the '*x*' within the 'that'-clause in (1a*)

    ➔ Not possible as belief constructions are INTENSIONAL

1. There is a certain **man in a brown hat** whom Ralph has glimpsed several times under questionable circumstances on which we need not enter here; suffice it to say that Ralph suspects he is a spy.

2. Also there is a gray-haired man, vaguely known to Ralph as rather a pillar of the community, whom Ralph is not aware of having seen **except once at the beach**.

3. **Now Ralph does not know it, but the men are one and the same**

QUESTION: Can we say of this man (Bernard J. Ortcutt, to give him a name) that Ralph believes him to be a spy? (page 136)

(2) Ralph believes that the man in brown hat is a spy. (TRUE)

(3) The man in the brown hat = the man seen at the beach. (TRUE)

LEIBNIZ'S LAW

- If we begin with a truth about an object, in which the object is referred to by one name, we should still have a truth if we refer to the same object by a different name (i.e. (3) The man in the brown hat = the man seen at the beach.)

- If we accept above-mentioned law, we then will get:

(4) Ralph believes that the man seen at the beach is a spy. (FALSE)

➔ According to Quine, we cease to affirm any relationship between Ralph and any man at all

➔ difficulties with the intersubstitution of co-referring singular terms ➔ NOT referential *transparent* ➔ therefore singular terms are not really referring there at all ➔ referential *opaque*

DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF THE CASE OF MODALITY…

(1a) There's someone whom Ralph believes to be a spy.

(1b) Ralph believes that there're spies.

- Contrast between these two is undeniable

- There's an obvious difference between having a particular person in mind & merely holding general beliefs

- Could be further extended to the following *attitudes:*
  - *Striving*
  - *Wishing*
  - *Wanting*

7.3 QUINE'S PROPOSED SOLUTION

Quine's proposed solution to the ambiguity of *construction*

- **The ordinary propositional-attitude verbs** are themselves systematically ambiguous

- **Intensions**: said by a sentence/predicate

AN INTENSION OF DEGREE 1

- What is said by **a one-place predicate** (i.e. a predicate with one variable to mark a place where a singular term may go)

E.g. *ugliness* is an intension of degree 1:

- It's said truly of Socrates by saying that he's ugly
- i.e. by using the **predicate 'x is ugly'** to describe him
- Intension corresponding to the **predicate: x**

AN INTENSION OF DEGREE 2 & 3 & 0

- **An intension of degree 2**
  - What is said (of 2 objects, taken in order) by a two-place predicate

- **An intension of degree 3**
  - What is said (of 3 objects, taken in order) by a three-place predicate

- **An intension of degree 0**
  - A Proposition which is said by a whole sentence
  - By means of 'that'-clauses (e.g. ....that they are spies)

QUINE'S SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF *DE RE* PROPOSITIONAL ATTITUDES IN TERMS OF THESE INTENSIONS....

(1b) Ralph believes that there are spies. (Notional reading of (1))

- Formed from **a two-place predicate**

$$\text{'x believes}_1\text{ y'}$$

- 1st variable: 'Ralph' (as a person)
- 2nd variable: 'that there are spies' (as a proposition)
- Expresses a two-place ('dyadic') relation (believing) between **a person & a proposition**

→<u>**Falls within the rule of extensionality, why?**</u>

- 'that there're spies' can be replaced by any other expression referred to the same proposition (e.g. in a different language)

WHAT ABOUT THE RELATIONAL SENSE OF (1)?

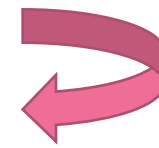**(1a) There is <u>someone</u> whom Ralph believes to be a spy.**

- A three-place predicate ('triadic' relation)

$$x \text{ believes}_2 \ y \text{ of } z.$$

- 'x' – the name of a believer (i.e. Ralph)

- 'y' – the name of an intension of degree 1 (i.e. being a spy)

- 'z' – the name of the object the belief is about (i.e. Bernand J.Ortcutt)

(5) Ralph believes2 y's being a spy of Ortcutt.

(1a**) There is an **x** such that Ralph believes2 y's being a spy of **x**.

_De re_ beliefs involving more than one person

> (6) Tom believes that Cicero denounced Catiline.

- A _de re_ belief which Tom has about both Cicero & Catiline

(6a) Tom believes$_3$ x's denouncing y of Cicero and Catiline (in that order).

REFERENTIALLY TRANSPARENT

- The singular terms occur in referentially transparent positions

(5) Ralph believes$_2$ y's being a spy of Ortcutt.

- Ortcutt → replaced by any expression that refers to the same man
- Y's being a spy → replaceable with any of the same intension of degree 1

(6a) Tom believes$_3$ x's denouncing y of Cicero and Catiline (in that order).

- Cicero & Catline → replaceable (expression)
- X's denouncing y → replaceable (e.g. in another language) (intension)

(2) Ralph believes that the man in the brown hat is a spy; (TRUE)

(4) Ralph believes that the man seen at the beach is a spy. (FALSE, as Ralph doesn't know)

→ (two-place predicate)

(2n) **Ralph** believes$_1$ **that the man in the brown hat is a spy**; (TRUE)

(4n) **Ralph** believes$_1$ **that the man seen at the beach is a spy**. (FALSE)

Singular terms

The two expressions are not functioning here as singular terms for a particular man at all ➜ thereby not intersubstitutable

different propositions → cannot swap one clause for the other

ALTERNATION – RELATIONAL READING

- (2r) Ralph believes$_2$ *x's being a spy* of **the man in the brown hat;**
- (4r) Ralph believes$_2$ *x's being a spy* of **the man seen at the beach**
    - 'Ralph' – refers to Ralph
    - 'x's being a spy' – refers to an intension of degree 1
    - 'the man in the brown hat' – refers to Ortcutt

All in referentially transparent positions, therefore we can derive (4r) from (2r)

Provided (2r) is TRUE, (4r) must be TRUE

<u>MOST IMPORTANTLY:</u>

It is safe to do so as (4r) doesn't imply (4n)

(i.e. something to do with the FACT rather than Ralph's belief)

QUINE'S REFORMULATIONS

- **Treating propositional attitudes as involving, NOT relations to intentions, but relations to *sentences & predicates***
  - Replace 'believes' with 'believes-true'
- For the notional reading of (2)
  - (2n*) Ralph believes-true$_1$ 'The man in the brown hat is a spy'.
- For the relational reading of (2)
  - (2r*) Ralph believes-true$_2$ 'x is a spy' of the man in the brown hat.
1. **(2n*) is not 100% equivalent to (2) when translating them into French (page 142)**
2. **Discontent with the analysis in terms of quoted sentences & predicates**
   - It's possible for the same word to have different meanings
   - We'll need to specified the language/scheme of interpretation

ASSIMILATING THE DISTINCTION

- Any thoughts????

7.4 PERRY & THE ESSENTIAL INDEXICAL

1. I once followed a trail of sugar on a supermarket floor, pushing my cart down the aisle on one side of a tall counter and back the aisle on the other, seeking the shopper with the torn sack to tell him he was making a mess.

2. With each trip around the counter, the trail became thicker.

3. But I seemed unable to catch up.

4. Finally it dawned on me.

5. I was the shopper I was trying to catch.

- (8p) I realize that I am making a mess. (by Perry)
- (8w) John Perry realized that he was making a mess. (by the audiences)

What if....

- (8pa) I realize that **John Perry** is making a mess;
- (8wa) John Perry realized that **John Perry** was making a mess

➔ **(8pa) & (8wa) do no have the same explanatory power UNLESS**

- (9p) I believe that I am John Perry;
- (9w) John Perry believed that he was John Perry.

7.5 THE PROBLEMS FOR QUIENE'S SOLUTION

- To find a middle way between referential transparency & referential opacity → translucency

- 'I' & 'he' → refer to John Perry BUT don't just refer to him