REFERRING AND DESCRIBING

THREE ESSAYS ON THE MEANING AND USE OF DEFINITE DESCRIPTIONS AND COMPLEX DEMONSTRATIVES

by

FELIPE S. AMARAL

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Philosophy in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

2010

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Philosophy in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Michael Levin

Date

Chair of Examining Committee

Iakovos Vasiliou

Date

Executive Officer

Michael Devitt

Stephen Neale

Jonathan Adler

Supervisory Committee

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Abstract

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Adviser: Professor Michael Devitt

This dissertation is composed of three independent essays, and it investigates the meaning and use of definite descriptions and complex demonstratives and the form of complex demonstratives. In the first essay, I tackle the referential-attributive status of definite descriptions. I argue that these expressions are referential-attributive ambiguous in the sense of *semantic polysemy* – as opposed to homonymy or pragmatic polysemy. In the second essay, I turn to complex demonstratives and argue on methodological grounds that they are non-quantificational terms that refer and describe, *descriptive designators* I dub them. I also provide arguments against the idea that demonstratives, from a syntactic point of view, are articles in disguise. And in the third essay, I argue against `direct reference' theorists and quantificationalists alike, claiming that complex demonstratives *and* referential descriptions are descriptive designators. This hypothesis provides the *simplest* explanation of the full semantic significance of nominals in both expressions.

Preface

The first essay of this dissertation investigates the `referential-attributive' status of definite descriptions. Along with Keith Donnellan, Howard Wettstein, Michael Devitt, George Wilson, and Marga Reimer, among others, I favor the view that definite descriptions are referential-attributive ambiguous. Thus, the novelty in my argument is not in the claim of ambiguity *per se*. Rather, I propose to remove an important concern with the ambiguity thesis. This concern says that, if definite descriptions were referential-attributive ambiguous, we would be faced with an extraordinary cross-linguistic fact: an ambiguity at home would be independently reproduced in many other languages. (Saul Kripke and Kent Bach have voiced this type of concern in the philosophical literature.) Employing the traditional grammar distinction between two types of lexical ambiguity – `homonymy' and `polysemy' – I claim to have defused this argument. My basic proposal is that, if we treat English definite descriptions as referential-attributive *polysemous* rather than *homonymous*, there is nothing extraordinary about their being translated into similarly ambiguous definite descriptions in many other languages. For, polysemies are constituted by conceptual associations made by speakers, associations that are largely independent of the particular languages speakers in fact speak. And in virtue of this polysemies carry over across different languages. Since we have independent reasons to believe that definite descriptions are referential-attributive polysemous rather than homonymous, I argue that the only plausible ambiguity claim for definite descriptions is polysemy.

In addition, I point out that the referential-attributive polysemous nature of `the' shows why `Kripke's D-test' – to the effect that true ambiguities at home are always removed in other languages – may not fruitfully apply to `the'. For one thing, it is unclear whether the test should be run on polysemies without further ado. For another, even if it should, running it *at this point* does not undermine the ambiguity thesis, since at this point there is no comprehensive and detailed cross-linguistic study of definite articles, from which it follows that we cannot tell right now whether there are languages with two definite articles, one purely referential and the other purely attributive. In fact, drawing on data previously unacknowledged by philosophers of language, I show that there *are* languages with two definite articles whose uses correspond fairly closely to referential-attributive. These languages are Mönchengladbach and Malagasy. This fact suggests that `the' may very well pass Kripke's D-test, after all. I close the essay by addressing three objections to the (semantically) polysemous nature of `the' and show that all three are met. In light of the independent arguments for the ambiguity thesis (provided by others), I claim that the case for ambiguity is made.

If definite descriptions are referential-attributive ambiguous, we should inquire into their referential meanings. Are referential descriptions devices of `direct reference'? Are they natural language quantifiers instead? Siding with Michael Devitt and Tyler Burge, I propose to look at these questions from the perspective of *complex demonstratives*.

The second essay deals exclusively with complex demonstratives. The main issue I take up is how the descriptive `matrix' of a complex demonstrative – i.e. its nominal – should enter into its literal content (on the assumption that it does). One popular suggestion invokes definite descriptions, here understood as natural language quantifiers. It says that complex demonstratives are *synonymous* with definite descriptions that contain the demonstrative nominal. So, for example, `that book' is synonymous with `the book over there' or, perhaps, with `the book identical to that'. In light of widely accepted methodological, semantic, modal, epistemic, and psychological considerations, I suggest that the `Gödelian description theory' of complex demonstratives, which entails that complex demonstratives are synonymous with descriptions of the form `the F identical to that', comes out as the best description theory of complex demonstratives. I then turn to the syntax of complex demonstratives and attempt to determine whether syntactic considerations in the *Principles and Parameters* tradition force us to view complex demonstratives as Gödelian descriptions in disguise. My conclusion is negative. I suggest that there is room for treating complex demonstratives as *nominal complexes*, complexes of pronouns adjoined to common nouns along the lines of `we musicians', `you engineers', and `them kids'. I close with a methodological argument to the effect that complex demonstratives are *not* Gödelian descriptions semantically, but rather non-quantificational terms that refer *and* describe. I dub these terms `descriptive designators'. Since this sort of view captures the virtues of the best description theories of complex demonstratives while keeping their semantics as simple as possible – all the while being consistent with syntactic considerations in the *Principles and Parameters* tradition – I think we should endorse it.

In the third essay, I set out to do four things: (i) to discharge an assumption I made in Essay 2 about nominals in complex demonstratives being part of literal content (or meaning), (ii) to extend these findings to referential descriptions, (iii) to assimilate both expressions to the paradigm of the descriptive designator, and (iv) to undermine a hypothesis about natural language (singular) terms whose truth would spell the end of the descriptive designator view. Thus, against `direct reference' theorists, I argue that the nominal in a complex demonstrative is *fully significant semantically* – i.e. both on the level of `reference determination' and on the level of literal or semantic `content'. I offer two arguments with respect to reference determination and five arguments with respect to literal content. I extend these arguments to referential descriptions and hypothesize that the paradigm of the descriptive designator does a very good job in capturing the semantics of both expressions. I close with a discussion of the hypothesis that all natural language terms fall into either of two semantic kinds: they are semantically *simple* and *referential* or else semantically *complex* and *quantificational*. I argue that this hypothesis is dubious because some referential terms seem to lack certain features the hypothesis implies they have (viz. semantic simplicity) and some quantificational terms seem to possess certain features the hypothesis implies they lack (viz. `object dependence'). I urge that we have good methodological reason to countenance a third semantic kind, the kind of non-quantificational terms that refer and describe. I claim that referential descriptions and complex demonstratives belong to this kind. If this is right, describing with a term does not imply quantifying, *pace* Stephen Neale.

Acknowledgements

This dissertation started out as a standard book-type dissertation, later morphing into the more ambitious three-essay format. The idea of writing a three-essay dissertation came to me early in 2008, as the British journal *Analysis* accepted a paper of mine for publication – Amaral, F. (2008). Definite descriptions are ambiguous, *Analysis* 68(4), pp. 288–97. This paper originated from an early chapter I had written in the fall of 2006. Essay 1 of this dissertation is a (slightly) longer version of the published article. Thanks to *Analysis*, The Analysis Trust, and Oxford University Press for allowing the use of this material here. Essays 2 and 3 are independent papers and – with hope! – will be published in the near future.

I am greatly indebted to my dissertation adviser, Michael Devitt, whose work in the philosophy of language has had a deep impact on my thinking about the subject. I am also indebted to Michael for many comments, numerous suggestions, and helpful advice on my work (the three essays composing this dissertation in particular). I would also like thank Michael for his insistence on clarity, precision, and concision. I would also like to thank Stephen Neale and Jonathan Adler, members of my supervisory committee, and Robert Fiengo (Linguistics Department) and Michael Levin, readers for the exam, for discussion, advice, and criticism on the three essays composing this dissertation. I am most grateful to Marga Reimer for reading two earlier versions of Essay 1 and providing helpful comments and advice. And I am very grateful to Kent Bach for reading the three essays and providing helpful comments and constructive criticism. I am also grateful to Marcel den Dikken (Linguistics Department) for a very informative e-mail exchange during the fall of 2008 on the syntax of complex demonstratives, GB style. And I am grateful to Marcel for reading an earlier version of Essay 2 and offering helpful advice. I also thank Francesco Pupa for many helpful comments on my work and engaging discussion throughout the years.

My greatest personal debt is to my dear parents, Paulo Sérgio do Amaral and Maria Amélia S. do Amaral. I am deeply grateful for their continued support, and I feel extremely lucky to have them as my parents. I am also very grateful to my lovely fiancée, Fernanda Rodrigues, for the moral support, the encouragement, and the many international calls. Thank you for waiting for me.

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Essay 1

Definite Descriptions are Ambiguous[1]

1. The Problem

Keith Donnellan (1966) contrasted two uses of definite descriptions, the referential and the attributive. In using a definite description referentially the speaker communicates content about a particular object in mind,[2] whereas in using the same description attributively the speaker communicates content about whatever object uniquely satisfies the description.

Assuming that definite descriptions have a quantificational attributive meaning, the main problem raised by Donnellan's contrast between uses is whether descriptions also have a referential meaning.[3] If they do, it is plausible to think *that the definite article is ambiguous between a referential and an attributive meaning*. In what follows, I will call this thesis `Ambiguity'. For ease of exposition, I will take it as a thesis about English.

[1] This essay is a longer version of Amaral, 2008. I am grateful to *Analysis*, The Analysis Trust, and Oxford University Press for allowing the use of this material here. See the bibliography for complete details.
[2] The approach to having an object in mind I favor says that a speaker has an object in mind only if he or she has perceived this object or is linked to it by a Kripkean causal-historical chain (see Devitt, 1974).
[3] The referential and attributive meanings of a definite description may be understood thus: if the definite description is referential, its meaning is partly constituted by the object the speaker has in mind. If the description is attributive, it has a Russellian quantificational meaning. For an alternative view on attributive definite descriptions see e.g. Szabó, 2000.

The most influential arguments against Ambiguity invoke the independently motivated Gricean distinction between what a speaker *means* and what he or she *says* (Grice, 1989). According to these arguments, we do not need to postulate a referential meaning for definite descriptions to account for referential uses. We can account for such uses in terms of what a speaker means but does not literally say. Thus, in using a definite description referentially the speaker means or communicates content about a particular object in mind, but what the speaker literally says is determined by the description's quantificational attributive meaning. We are then told that on the grounds of parsimony this account of referential uses is superior to Ambiguity (see Grice, 1969; Kripke, 1977; Bach, 1981; Neale, 1990).

I think all such arguments against Ambiguity have been seriously weakened in the face of the following points: (a) definite descriptions are *regularly* used referentially, and this shows that there is no prima facie reason to deny that referential uses are literal; actually, this usage regularity strongly suggests that referential uses are literal, just as literal as attributive uses (see Devitt, 1997; Reimer, 1998; compare Neale, 2004; *forthcoming*); (b) complex demonstratives and referentially used definite descriptions are used similarly in a *wide* variety of situations, and this strongly suggests that both expressions have a similar referential meaning (see Devitt, 2004) (e.g. `*That/the* concert last night was great, wasn't it?'); (c) referentially used `incomplete' descriptions may be used to express truths even if speakers *cannot* provide completions for them, and this also strongly suggests that descriptions have a referential meaning (e.g. `*the tall kid* who used to sit in the front row in first grade was born in Rio de Janeiro') (see Wilson, 1991; Devitt, 2004; compare Wettstein, 1981; Schiffer, 2005). Thus, not only do I think that the Gricean arguments above do not succeed in undermining Ambiguity. I also think there is a strong case *for* Ambiguity.

Yet, not everyone would agree. An important source of concern, perhaps the only one still standing at this point, involves the issue of definite descriptions in other languages. Two arguments involving this issue have been employed in the literature to discredit Ambiguity.

The first makes use of the following test for the detection of lexical ambiguities (see Kripke, 1977):

> (D) Examine languages other than the home language and see whether the alleged home language ambiguity is removed.[4] If no language removes this ambiguity, it is probable that it is not genuine in the home language.

[4] To a first approximation, a lexical ambiguity at home is removed in another language if the senses conventionally associated with the ambiguous word at home are each conventionally associated with different

Applying this test to `the', we have the following: since there seems to be no language with two definite articles, one referential, the other attributive, it seems that `the' is not referential-attributive ambiguous (see Ludlow and Neale, 2006).

The second argument against Ambiguity involving definite descriptions in other languages was recently voiced by Kent Bach (2004). In a nutshell, this argument says that if `the' were referential-attributive ambiguous we would be faced with a remarkable cross-linguistic fact: that an ambiguous word in English is translated into likewise ambiguous words in many other languages. Presumably, this cross-linguistic fact is remarkable because there is no plausible explanation for it. Denying that `the' has a referential meaning frees one from the duty of providing such an explanation.

My main purpose in this paper is to show that these two arguments against Ambiguity do not work. First, I will address Bach's argument. Then, I will address the argument based on the D-test. I will then proceed to describe three objections to my argument and argue that all three are met. Last, I will claim that once we couple the findings of the present discussion with the independent arguments for Ambiguity the case for Ambiguity is made.

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words of the other language and these senses are not conventionally associated with the same word of the other language (see Kripke, 1977: 19).

2. Cross-linguistic Coincidences?

In a recent publication, Kent Bach writes

> `…the thesis that definite descriptions have referential meanings misses the cross-linguistic generalization that, in any language that has a definite article, definite descriptions have double uses. It would be a remarkable fact that an ambiguous word (`the' in this case) in one language should have translations in numerous other languages that are ambiguous in precisely the same way.' (2004: 226–27)

I think Bach is right to suggest that in many languages there is just one definite article with at least two standard uses, one referential, the other attributive. And he raises an interesting point with respect to this fact, captured by the following question: if `the' is indeed referential-attributive ambiguous, how can we explain it being translated into similarly ambiguous articles in many other languages? I think the Ambiguity theorist has an answer to this question. And the essential part of this answer involves the existence of different kinds of lexical ambiguity. Let me elaborate.

Broadly put, there are two kinds of lexical ambiguity in natural languages: homonymies and polysemies. Consider polysemies first. It is common to understand polysemies as the product of conceptual associations made by speakers (Ravin and

Leacock, 2001: 2). Thus, take the English word `foot'. English speakers commonly talk of the feet of chairs, stools, tables or the foot of a mountain. Plausibly, these secondary uses of `foot' originated in associations with the concept of human foot, associations like <that part of a table is like the foot of a person in that it is at the bottom of the table, gives support to it…>. With time these secondary uses became conventionalized and a secondary meaning to `foot' came to life: <base>. Or take the word `mouth'. English speakers also speak regularly of the mouth of a bottle, the mouth of a cave or the mouth of an oven. Plausibly, these secondary uses arose of associations with the concept of animal mouth, associations like <that part of a bottle is like the mouth of an animal in that it is an obviously visible opening to the bottle, is used for filling the bottle…>. With time these secondary uses became conventionalized and a secondary meaning to `mouth' was born: <opening>.

Now, just as English speakers conventionally use the word for human foot and the word for animal mouth in these ways, speakers of other languages do too. In Portuguese, for example, people conventionally use `pé' – the word for human foot – to speak of the feet of chairs, stools, tables, and the foot of a mountain. And they conventionally use `boca' – the word for animal mouth – to speak of the mouth of a cave, bottle or oven.

Moreover, there are Portuguese counterparts of many other English polysemies.[5] And the same is true of various other languages (see Sweetser, 1990; Heine and Kuteva, 2002; Traugott and Dasher, 2005). Now, this is not a cross-linguistic coincidence. What best explains it is that the mechanism of generation of polysemies, conceptual association, is independent of the particular languages speakers in fact speak.

Homonymous expressions, in contrast, very commonly express meanings that do not display any interesting relation, being instead the product of phonological, or at least orthographical, convergences peculiar to a particular language. Thus, take the graph `bass’ in Modern English. One of its meanings is related to a kind of fish and is derived from Old English `bærs’. Yet, another of its meanings is related to the lowest register of the male voice and is derived from an entirely different word: `basso’ in Italian (Ravin and Leacock, 2001: 2–3). Now, the fact that that graph is associated with those two meanings is a peculiar fact *of Modern English*, and should not be expected to have any interesting bearing on the existence of lexical ambiguities in other, unrelated languages. For, why would the orthographical convergence of two different words with radically

[5] For example: `green’$_{\text{color}}$, `green’$_{\text{immature}}$, , `rusty’$_{\text{affected by rust}}$, `rusty’$_{\text{impaired by disuse}}$, `translate’$_{\text{from one language to another}}$, `translate’$_{\text{explain}}$, `close’$_{\text{spatial}}$, `close’$_{\text{time}}$, etc.

different meanings in one language have any interesting connection to the lexical ambiguities of other, unrelated languages?

With these considerations in mind and turning anew to definite descriptions, we find a plausible reason for Bach's charge that on the Ambiguity view it is remarkable that `the' should be translated into likewise ambiguous articles in many other languages: a tacit assumption that on the Ambiguity view `the' is *homonymous*. I fully concur that if the alleged ambiguity of `the' were homonymy, it would be remarkable that `the' were translated into likewise ambiguous articles in many other languages – just like it would be remarkable, for example, if `bass' turned out to be translated into single graphs meaning <perch> and <deep sounding male voice> in many other languages. Yet, there is no good reason for the Ambiguity view to allege that `the' is homonymous. In fact, I do not think that anyone has alleged that `the' is homonymous, and given what the *OED* says about the etymology of `the', it would be rather odd if they did. For, the *OED* says that `the' is the reduced and uninflected stem of the later Old English demonstrative `the', `théo', `thæt', a state of affairs that makes it rather implausible that the referential-attributive multiplicity of sense associated with `the' is the result of the phonological and orthographical convergence of *two different words*, one with a referential meaning, the other with an attributive one.

If, on the other hand, `the' is referential-attributive *polysemous*, it is not at all remarkable or coincidental that `the' should be translated into likewise ambiguous articles in many other languages. For, polysemies are grounded on thought associations speakers make independently of the particular languages they speak. And in virtue of this polysemies carry over across different languages.[6] Since no one has provided an argument showing that `the' is not polysemous, no one has shown, pace Bach, that it is remarkable or coincidental that `the' should be translated into likewise ambiguous articles in many other languages.

Moreover, it is rather likely that if `the' is ambiguous it is polysemous (see Neale, 2004: 69, n. 1). For, as pointed out above, `the' is unlikely to be homonymous. Furthermore, plausible reconstructions of derivations of the referential meaning from the attributive one and vice-versa are found, just as we would expect if `the' were indeed referential-attributive polysemous. Let us look at these reconstructions in turn.

Supposing the attributive meaning came first, we have the following reconstruction: when `the F' applies uniquely to the object the speaker has in mind, the speaker may use the attributive meaning of `the F' to communicate content about that object in

[6] In fact, several linguists have used cross-linguistic evidence to determine whether an alleged ambiguity is homonymy or polysemy: if the ambiguity carries over to unrelated languages, it is likely to be polysemy. See Haiman, 1978 and Croft, 2003.

particular. For, the attributive meaning of `the F' *identifies* that object. If instead `the F' applies non-uniquely to the object the speaker has in mind, the speaker may use its attributive meaning, with the help of the required mechanisms of utterance completion,[7] to communicate content about that object in particular. For, the attributive meaning of `the F', with the help of the required mechanisms of utterance completion, identifies that object. With time and widespread use in the community, a convention of using `the F' to (literally) express content about an F-object in mind is formed, making `the F' referential-attributive polysemous.

It is worth emphasizing, furthermore, that critics of Ambiguity will be asked to show *how* the referential contents associated with referential uses are derived from the single attributive meaning definite descriptions have according to the critics. *Any* explanation they give may be adopted by the Ambiguity theorist to explain how, with time and widespread use in the community, descriptions *became* referential-attributive polysemous. For, what basis have Ambiguity critics to object?

If the referential meaning came first, we have the following reconstruction instead (compare Pupa, 2008: 94–97): when referential `the F' is uttered in a context where

[7] What these mechanisms of utterance completion are and how speakers and their audiences exploit them are controversial matters I will not tackle here. I simply assume that there must be such mechanisms, and that speakers and audiences succeed in exploiting them, at least in many cases.

there is no perceptually available F and the speaker has no particular F in mind, this being clear to the audience, the speaker may use `the F' to communicate at least that there is an F. For, the referential meaning of the type `the F' directs speakers to use `the F' when there is an F. Given, moreover, that speaker and audience share knowledge that there can be only one F, the speaker may use `the F' to communicate not only that there is an F, but also that there is only one. For example, suppose that in 2007 the speaker utters, `the soccer team that wins the FIFA World Cup in 2010 will get a cash prize'. Supposing the speaker does not have a particular team in mind, and that there can be only one such team, this being clear to the audience, the speaker may utter the definite description to communicate not only that there will be such a team but also that there will be only one. (Replacing `*the* soccer team…' above with `*that* soccer team…' gives us clearer insight into *what it would be like* to use referential descriptions to express attributive content in a language without attributive descriptions.)

If the referential description applies to more than one object, the derivation is similar, except that now the speaker will need further help from the context to communicate the intended attributive content. For example, suppose the speaker utters, `the mayor ought to be impeached,' while driving through a small town with bumpy roads in a foreign country (Evans, 1982: 324). Supposing it is clear that the speaker is not talking about a particular mayor in mind, the speaker may use `the mayor' to communicate at least that there is a mayor. Given further contextual clues (e.g. the geographical position of speaker and audience at the time of the utterance) and shared encyclopedic knowledge (e.g. that towns have only one mayor), the speaker may communicate not only that there is a mayor but also that there is only one as specified by the clues in the light of the shared encyclopedic knowledge. Since there are no attributive descriptions at this stage of the language, it is very useful to use referential descriptions in the attributive way. Hence, it is plausible to suppose that with time a convention of using referential `the F' to express attributive content is born, making `the F' referential-attributive polysemous.

To conclude: we have very good reason to think that if `the' is ambiguous it is polysemous. And by the same token we have very good reason to think that Bach's worries about Ambiguity are exaggerated. For, on the Ambiguity view there is no coincidence in the fact that `the' is translated into similarly ambiguous articles in many other languages. These cross-linguistic similarities are very plausibly grounded on the *polysemic* character of these articles.

3. Kripke's D-test

Yet, one may point out that if `the' were indeed ambiguous, some language or other would remove this ambiguity. Since there seems to be no such language, `the' does not seem to be ambiguous. This is Kripke's D-test.

In response, I should say the following: (1) it is unclear that the D-test is an appropriate test for polysemies, and (2) even if it is, its application does not undermine Ambiguity. Let me explain each point in turn.

First, the D-test is based on the principle that ambiguities at home are probably removed in other languages. This principle, even though very plausible for homonymies, is dubious for polysemies. After all, many polysemies may very well be universal, and if they are universal, the D-test is not an appropriate test for polysemies, hence not an appropriate test for whether `the' is referential-attributive polysemous.

Second, even if we *assume* that the D-test is an appropriate test for polysemies, Ambiguity critics are still not out of the woods. For, there is no comprehensive and detailed cross-linguistic study of definite articles, and there may well be languages that remove the alleged referential-attributive polysemy of `the'. In fact, there are several languages with *two* definite articles with *different meanings*, a state of affairs that suggests more cross-linguistic variation in definite articles than what is usually recognized. Let us look at two examples.

Malagasy, an Austronesian language, has two definite articles: `ny' and `ilay' (Keenan and Ebert, 1973). *Ilay*-descriptions are only used to refer to a particular object `the hearer has specifically identified prior to the utterance' (423), whereas *ny*-descriptions are variously used: attributively, in the way *ilay*-descriptions are, and in other ways. (Neither definite description is used deictically; demonstratives must be employed for that purpose). Thus, *ilay*-descriptions are always referential, whereas *ny*-descriptions can be either referential or attributive.

Mönchengladbach, a Low Franconian dialect spoken in the northwest of Germany, also has two definite articles: the `Dɛ-article' and the `Dəɹ-article' (Hartmann, 1982). Dɛ-descriptions are mainly used deictically or anaphorically. (Anaphoric Dɛ-descriptions take both referential and attributive antecedents.) Dəɹ-descriptions, in contrast, are not used `in any sense deictically or anaphorically' (194), but are used instead generically as in `the whale is a mammal' or when unique application holds (195–7). This unique application use subdivides in two: (i) the attributive use, where the speaker does not intend to talk about a particular object in mind (e.g. `*the next mayor* will have a lot of work to do after the elections'), and (ii) the `past-tense' referential use,[8] where the

[8] I borrow the label `past-tense' from Gareth Evans's discussion of `past-tense demonstratives' (1982: 306), an example of which is `*that Czech lady* last night was a riot, wasn't she?' uttered by a speaker who intends to refer

speaker intends to refer to a particular object perceived in the past, and unique application holds within a domain of shared memory with the audience (e.g. `I think *the apartment* is too small for us', after speaker and audience leave an apartment building, having visited one unit to see if it is worth renting). In brief, whereas Dɛ-descriptions, modulo anaphora, are very commonly used deictic-referentially, Dəɹ-descriptions are not used in this way, being used generically, attributively, and past-tense referentially instead.

Now, these facts look discouraging to those seeking a neat removal of the alleged polysemy of `the'. For, clearly, there is referential-attributive overlap between the two articles in these two languages. Despite this, it is worth considering two things. First, homonymies are typically removed very neatly in other languages; one word (of the other language) for each meaning, and no interesting meaning overlap between the two words. On the assumption that polysemies should be removed in other languages too, why *require* their removals to be so neat? Second, depending on how much meaning overlap there is between the two words in the other language (allegedly removing a home language polysemy), there may well be *no fact of the matter* about whether we actually

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to a particular lady perceived the night before. Since the complex demonstrative occurrence in such cases is almost always replaceable by the corresponding referentially used description, I call the corresponding descriptions `past-tense'. Kent Bach (1994) calls such uses `memory uses'.

have a removal. Consequently, it seems to me hasty to conclude that the alleged polysemy of `the' is *not* removed in Malagasy or Mönchengladbach.

In any event, for the purposes of the present discussion, the key point about the D-test and `the' is this: even if we assume that the test is reliable for polysemies, we should not take for granted that Ambiguity would not pass the test. *There are thousands of natural languages* – estimated 5000–7000 (Crystal, 2000) – *and no comprehensive study of their definite articles*. Malagasy and Mönchengladbach clearly suggest that Ambiguity might very well pass the test. Consequently, pending a comprehensive cross-linguistic study of definite articles, using the D-test to undermine Ambiguity is clearly inefficient, even if we assume that the test is reliable for polysemies, an assumption itself in need of justification.

4. Taking Stock

So far, I claim to have shown two things. First, that on the Ambiguity view it is not coincidental that `the' is translated into similarly ambiguous articles in many other languages. For, if `the' is ambiguous, it is very likely polysemous, and polysemies are very often translated into similarly polysemous words in many other languages. Second, I claim to have shown that an application of Kripke's D-test to `the' fails to undermine

Ambiguity. For one thing, it remains to be seen whether the D-test is reliable for polysemies. For another, much more needs to be said about world languages and their articles before the test can be fruitfully run on `the'. Thus, I conclude that critics of Ambiguity have not succeeded in using evidence from other languages to discredit Ambiguity.

Indeed, I think that in light of the positive arguments for Ambiguity, in particular the argument based on the fact that definite descriptions are *very frequently* used referentially (Devitt, 1997; Reimer, 1998), there is a compelling case for the idea that definite descriptions *are* referential-attributive ambiguous (in the sense of semantic polysemy). In the next section, I will describe and respond to three objections to this idea.

5. Against Polysemy

Objection 1: A word's regularly conveying two or more types of content need not be a matter of polysemy or homonymy. Consider, for example, the case of `and', which is regularly used to convey at least two types of secondary content (viz. a temporal content and a causal content, besides its basic, conjunctive content). Very plausibly `and' is not homonymous. Furthermore, it is not clear that it is polysemous, since it is unlikely that its secondary uses came into being solely in virtue of `conceptual associations' made by speakers. Indeed, it is much more plausible* *that the temporal order of speech explains the fact that `and' has acquired its secondary uses. Perhaps, then, an analogous point is true of `the'. Perhaps, some other set of factors, different from `conceptual association', grounds the word's having acquired a secondary use. Since you have not ruled this out, you have not really shown that `the' is referential-attributive polysemous.[9]

This objection trades on a very restrictive understanding of the role of conceptual association in the generation of polysemies. Even though I claim that the mechanism of generation of polysemies is conceptual association, this should not be taken to imply that conceptual association is the *only* relevant factor in the generation of a particular polysemy. Rather, it should be taken to imply that it is of the *essence* of polysemies that there *was* conceptual association. Therefore, there may be other factors – which we may refrain from calling `conceptual association' – which contribute to the generation of a particular polysemy.

Consider the phenomenon of `utterance completion', which made an appearance in the derivation I provided from the attributive content of `the' to its referential content. In many referential uses of definite descriptions, the attributive content is simply insufficient to identify the speaker's intended referent, the description being `incomplete'

[9] I'm grateful to Gary Ostertag for proposing a version of this objection (p.c.).

(in the philosophical jargon). Thus, the speaker exploits mechanisms of utterance completion to successfully communicate the intended referential content, starting from the attributive content provided by the attributive quantificational meaning of the definite article. Nothing in this, however, excludes definite descriptions from *having become* referential-attributive polysemous. Speakers must still have derived the referential content from the attributive content – on the assumption that the attributive meaning is basic – and this sort of psychological association is the heart of polysemy.

Similar considerations would apply to `and' *if* `and' were ambiguous. For in this case the ambiguity would very probably be polysemy, since the conjunctive meaning of `and', *ex hypothesi* basic, would clearly help in the derivation of its other meanings. In the case of its temporal meaning, conjunction would help because priority in time presupposes more than one event, precisely what conjunction is likely to give us. And in the case of the causal meaning, conjunction and priority in time would help because causation involves two events, one prior to the other. Thus, the fact that the order of speech has assisted in the derivation of one content from the other does not show that the word is not polysemous *if* ambiguous. It only shows that speakers have employed complex strategies (about which pragmatists have been teaching us a great deal) to associate one concept with the other, and hence to causally derive one meaning from the other. All this is consistent with the word’s having become semantically polysemous.

Objection 2: It is uncontroversial that there is conceptual relatedness between what is literally expressed and what is merely conveyed in many so-called `pragmatic regularities’ (e.g. generalized conversational implicatures), in which case one may suggest that many of these `pragmatic regularities’ are actually polysemies.[10] *For example, <some> and <some but not all> are clearly related, which suggests that `some’ is polysemous. If you are right in suggesting that `the’ is referential-attributive ambiguous because polysemous, you apparently prove too much. Many pragmatic regularities will turn out to be ambiguities because they are polysemies. Since pragmatic regularities are not ambiguities, there seems to be something wrong with your argument about `the’.*

The first point to note is that pragmatic regularities like GCIs may turn out to be theoretically superfluous, in which case they may have to be assimilated to ambiguities, very plausibly polysemies. But let us assume that they are theoretically useful (for an

[10] To a first approximation, a pragmatic regularity is the regularity of using a word (or expression) to convey a content that is not literal (for that word or expression). A `generalized conversational implicature’, in Paul Grice’s sense, would be an example.

extended argument for this claim see e.g. Levinson, 2000). What, then, is the difference between a pragmatic regularity and an ambiguity?

One difference surfaces with respect to *redundancy*. When we make the content of a pragmatic regularity explicit by spelling it out with words that literally mean what the pragmatic regularity merely conveys – i.e. when we `reinforce' the pragmatic regularity – no redundancy is generated (see Sadock, 1978: 374).[11] For example, suppose you ask a friend, `How's your intro to philosophy going this semester', and she replies, `some of the students are very good', meaning to imply that some *but not all* of her students are very good. Had she uttered instead `some, but not all, of the students are very good', she would have been a bit more verbose, but no one should accuse her of being redundant. Yet, if <but not all> had been part of the literal meaning of `some', tagging `but not all' to `some' *would* generate redundancy – at least provided that the speaker's communicative intentions were clear in the context of her utterance.[12]

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[11] Francesco Pupa (2010) proposes a similar argument to the effect that uniqueness is part of the literal content of `the'.

[12] This proviso is crucial, since the redundancy test may give the wrong results when the speaker's communicative intentions are not clear in the context of the utterance. For, in these cases the reinforcement of uncontroversially ambiguous words (e.g. `bank') may work like clarifications, no redundancies being generated (e.g. I'll meet you at the bank, I mean the river bank, not the financial institution). However, if the intended meaning/content of an ambiguous word is clear in the context of its utterance, its reinforcement *will* generate redundancy. Consider: `I got an e-mail from my bank today, a financial institution, saying that my balance is negative.' This strikes me as redundant, since river banks do not issue e-mails to account holders to tell them about their account balances.

Now, redundancy is precisely what we find when we make referential contents of definite descriptions explicit by tagging a demonstrative to the description. Consider the following, with the description uttered referentially: `The mailman is calling you downstairs' (after speaker answers his apartment intercom). Had the speaker uttered the following instead there would be redundancy: `The mailman, *he*, is calling you downstairs.' Since this generalizes to all cases of referential uses of definite descriptions, in all argument positions, under all speech act types there are, we have very good reason to think definite descriptions have a referential meaning.[13]

In this way, the arguments of this essay need not identify pragmatic regularities with ambiguities. For, even if we chose to *call* such pragmatic regularities `polysemies', the considerations just adduced would appear to constitute evidence for a distinction between two kinds of polysemy: *pragmatic* and *semantic*. Only the latter pass the redundancy test. And only they are true ambiguities.

Objection 3: Nothing in your argument guarantees that `the' is polysemous. For, `the' is a `grammatical' word, a word that lacks `substantive, descriptive' meaning, whereas `foot' and

[13] For example, as a friend and I leave a concert, I utter, `the concert, *that*, was great wasn't it. Or suppose I ask a family member, `Where's my wallet? Have you seen it?', to which my relative answers, `the wallet, *it*, is on the kitchen table.'

`mouth' are `content' words, words that have `substantive, descriptive' meaning. Polysemy is uncontroversial for content words (e.g. nouns, verbs, and adjectives), but prima facie questionable for grammatical words (e.g. auxiliaries, complementizers, inflectional endings). Since `the' is a grammatical word, its alleged polysemy is prima facie questionable.[14]

An immediate concern with this objection relates to what a `content' word is. It is not clear what `substantive, descriptive meaning' is supposed to amount to. Consider `substantive' first. Is a `substantive' meaning the special kind of meaning *nouns* have? If so, we would need to explain this kind of meaning (no trivial task) and also show how adjectives, verbs, and adpositions also have it (also no trivial task, given their differences).

Consider `descriptive' next. If the sense of describing we are after is merely representing, we will probably fail to throw light on the content-grammatical contrast. For, plausibly, grammatical words like articles and auxiliaries are descriptive in this sense: they represent functions, as opposed to (concrete) objects. If, on the other hand, the sense of describing we are after is more restricted, closer to representing a concrete object, articles and auxiliaries might fail to be descriptive. But then we throw the baby out along

[14] I'm grateful to Francesco Pupa for suggesting a similar objection in his Ph.D. dissertation (2008: 130, n. 100).

with the bath water, for not all content words would be descriptive in this sense. What concrete object does, say, \`daily' in \`daily mail' represent?

In this way, talk of \`substantive, descriptive meaning' does not appear to be helpful in elucidating a content-grammatical contrast.

In the face of this, one may invoke the \`open class/closed class' distinction (see e.g. Haegeman, 2006: 41). Content words are said to compose *open* classes in that these classes have large cardinalities and new members are added with ease. Grammatical words, in contrast, are said to compose *closed* classes in that these classes have small cardinalities and new members are not added with ease. (We do not create new articles and new auxiliaries with the same facility we create new nouns and new main verbs, for example.)

I think the open class/closed class distinction provides a good way of giving substance to the content-grammatical contrast. The problem, however, is that, as conceived, this contrast does not provide *any* evidence whatsoever against the alleged polysemy of \`the'. For, there seems to be no significant correlation between a word's being closed-class and not polysemous.

Furthermore, given that \`the' is not homonymous and that there are derivations of the referential content from its attributive content and vice-versa, polysemy best explains the presumed referential-attributive ambiguity of `the'. *This* is good evidence that polysemy extends to grammatical words!

6. Concluding Remarks

Once we couple the arguments of the present paper with the fact that definite descriptions are very frequently used referentially, that complex demonstratives and definite descriptions are very commonly used similarly, and that referentially used `incomplete' descriptions may be used to express truths even when speakers cannot provide completions to them, the case for Ambiguity is made. For, it is not so easy to see which arguments are still left for Ambiguity critics to show otherwise.

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Essay 2

Are Complex Demonstratives Synonymous with Descriptions?

1. Introduction

Complex demonstratives in English are expressions of the form `this F' or `that F', where `F', the *nominal* of the demonstrative, is a common noun possibly modified by other expressions such as adjectives, prepositional phrases or restrictive relative clauses (e.g. `that woman', `that tall woman', `that tall woman with glasses', `that tall woman with glasses looking in your direction'). Bare demonstratives contrast with complex demonstratives by lacking a nominal. `This' and `that' are bare demonstratives in English.[15]

Much of the debate around the semantics of complex demonstratives has centered on the issue of whether nominals make a semantic contribution. On the assumption that they do, the question becomes what kind of contribution this is. In the wake of influential work by David Kaplan (1989), this question has been approached from two complementary perspectives: nominals may contribute to *reference determination* and nominals may contribute to *literal content*. On the former perspective, nominals constitute a condition on successful reference; if the intended referent does not fit the

[15] In this essay, I will not discuss demonstratives in the plural.

nominal, it cannot be referred to by the complex demonstrative token. On the latter perspective, nominals constitute a condition on truth and falsity; if the referent does not fit the nominal in the circumstance of evaluation, the expressed literal content is false, if apt for truth.

Those who think that nominals contribute to reference determination *only* have conquered important new ground in the past few years (e.g. Salmon, 2008; Braun, 2008). Yet, I still think that nominals contribute both to reference determination and to literal content. One very good reason is that this hypothesis affords the best explanation for the intuitive validity of arguments like `if that violinist is a conductor' ∴ `some violinist is a conductor' (see Lepore and Ludwig, 2000).

Thus, my main concern in this essay lies not in *whether* nominals contribute to the literal content of complex demonstratives, but rather in *how* they might do this. A traditional way of understanding this contribution is via definite descriptions: `F' contributes to the literal content of `that F' because a definite description containing `F' expresses the literal content of `that F'. For example, `table' contributes to the literal content of (a token of) `that table' in a particular context of utterance because `the table there' expresses the literal content of `that table' in that context.

I believe the contribution nominals make to the literal content of complex demonstratives is independent of any definite descriptions speakers may come to associate with them. And I think this because the literal content of complex demonstratives is not determined by associated descriptions of any sort. In my view, descriptions play *no* distinctive explanatory role in the literal content of complex demonstratives, so on methodological grounds we are better off without them.

Yet, to show this, I will take an indirect route. In section 2, I will summarize what I take to be core constraints on all synonymy theories of complex demonstratives, those theories that entail that complex demonstratives are synonymous with definite descriptions. I will argue that only one such theory meets all of these constraints, namely the \`Gödelian' theory, put forth by Ernest Lepore and Kirk Ludwig (2000) and Stephen Neale (2004, 2008b) (see also Jeffrey King, 2001; compare Soames, 2005).[16] According to the Gödelian theory, \`that F' is synonymous with a Gödelian description \`the F identical to that', where \`that' picks out the object the speaker intends to refer to in uttering \`that F'. The upshot of this discussion will be *that the Gödelian theory is the best synonymy theory of complex demonstratives*. In section 3, I will turn to natural language

[16] On my usage, and following Stephen Neale, \`Gödelian descriptions' are descriptions of the form \`the F identical to that'. They are employed by Neale to \`spell out Gödel's slingshot argument' (Neale, 2004: 171).

syntax and ask the following question: on the hypothesis that complex demonstratives are synonymous with Gödelian descriptions, what syntax do they have? I will describe two strategies to an answer and urge that syntactic theory in the *Principles and Parameters* framework does not force us to choose either.[17] The upshot of this discussion will be *that we should cultivate a positive disposition towards complex demonstratives being what they seem to be at face value: non-quantificational terms that refer and describe*. And, last, in section 4, I will develop a methodological argument that shows that the literal content of complex demonstratives in a context of utterance is not determined by Gödelian descriptions. Since Gödelian descriptions are the only ones in the running among description theories, I will claim *that the literal content of complex demonstratives is not determined by definite descriptions of any sort*. I will end with a brief outline of what I think complex demonstratives are from a semantic point of view.

[17] One may wonder at this point whether complex demonstratives and definite descriptions, Gödelian descriptions in particular, *could* be synonymous. For, on the assumption that these expressions are different syntactically, they should be different in meaning, one may suggest. In response, I should say three things. First, we need to get clear on what constitutes a syntactic difference between two linguistic strings. Second, we also need to get clear on what constitutes a meaning difference. And, third, it seems very much open to question that syntactic differences entail meaning differences. For, if this were true, syntax would appear to supervene on meaning, in the sense that, necessarily, for any difference at the supervening level (syntax), there is a difference at the base level (meaning), in which case *meaning would appear to fix syntax*. Since this result is unacceptable to many, I conclude that there is nothing wrong with the working hypothesis that complex demonstratives and definite descriptions are synonymous. I will reject this synonymy hypothesis later on, but for reasons that are independent of the alleged autonomy of syntax vis-à-vis semantics.

Thus, if I am right, explaining the contribution nominals make to the literal content of complex demonstratives does not involve recourse to associated descriptions. And this, coupled with the idea that definite descriptions are natural language quantifers (Neale, 1990), has an important implication for our view of natural language semantics: expressions standardly used to *refer* may have *descriptive* content *without being quantificational*, *pace* Neale (1993; 2008). They are what I call *descriptive designators*.

But before starting, two preliminary points are in order. First, I will consider perceptual uses of complex demonstratives only, uses according to which the speaker intends to refer to a particular object in mind, an object he or she perceives in the context of the utterance. I think my main conclusions carry over to other referential uses, but I will not argue for the point here.[18,19]

Second, following Saul Kripke (1980) it is customary to distinguish two types of description theory of a given term: a theory of `reference determination' and a theory of `meaning'. In this essay, I will focus on the second kind – `synonymy theories', as I will

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[18] The other referential uses I have in mind are memory uses (e.g. `that lady last night was a riot, wasn't she?) and anaphoric uses with referential antecedents (e.g. `here, take this; this pill will help you with your cold'). On my view, and differing slightly from Gareth Evans, perceptual, memory and anaphoric are the three basic types of referential use of complex demonstratives. I borrow the label `memory' from Kent Bach's (1994) illuminating discussion of singular thought.

[19] But how about non-referential uses of complex demonstratives as in `those men who help others should be rewarded'? (King, 2001) On my view, complex demonstratives – the linguistic types – are referential-attributive ambiguous in the sense of *semantic polysemy*. See my 2008, p. 293.

call them. The main claims I will make apply to reference determination theories as well, though I will not argue for this point here.

2. Synonymy Theories of Complex Demonstratives

In the philosophical literature in the past forty years, synonymy theories of complex demonstratives have been assessed with respect to several dimensions, including methodological, modal, epistemic, semantic, psychological, and syntactic (see e.g. Burge, 1974; Perry, 1977; Schiffer, 1981; Higginbotham, 1988; Kaplan, 1989, Neale, 1993; Richard, 1993; Braun, 1994, Schiffer, 1995; Borg, 2000; Lepore and Ludwig, 2000; Perry, 2001; King, 2001; Dever, 2001; Salmon, 2002; Devitt, 2004; Neale, 2004; Schiffer, 2005; Neale, 2008a,b). In virtue of these assessments and in light of independently achieved results on the semantics of other terms, notably proper names, incomplete definite descriptions, and pronouns, a list of constraints on synonymy theories of complex demonstratives is gradually coming into focus. The list I have in mind is not meant to be exhaustive – for example, it leaves out syntactic constraints – although I think it is fair to say that all, or at least most, of its members are necessary components of an exhaustive future version.[20] Here is the version I have in mind:

[20] Devitt, 2004 contains a similar list, although its focus is incomplete definite descriptions.

(1) A synonymy theory of complex demonstratives should be *principled*.

(2) The theory should not predict *implausible ambiguities*.

(3) It should not predict *implausible indeterminacy*.

(4) It should not predict *implausible necessities*.

(5) It should not predict *implausible a priori knowledge*.

(6) It should not predict *implausible entailments*.

(7) It should not ascribe *implausible attitudes* to speakers.

(8) It should not attribute *implausible psychological associations* to speakers.

In 2.1, I will briefly describe these constraints. In 2.2, I will assess synonymy theories in their light.

2.1 The Constraints

*Constraint 1: `Principled basis'* (see Devitt, 2004; compare Schiffer, 1995). Speakers often associate several definite descriptions with a complex demonstrative token. For example, `that table' in `that table is expensive' as uttered by me in a particular context may be associated with `the table over there', `the table next to June', or `the table I intend to refer to now'. A synonymy theory of complex demonstratives should explain why one associated description, rather than another, is synonymous with the complex demonstrative.

Constraint 2: No implausible ambiguities (compare Salmon, 2002; Devitt, 2004). Our unreflective judgments about the literal content of complex demonstratives suggest that if the nominal of a complex demonstrative is not ambiguous, the complex demonstrative as a whole is not ambiguous either. Since we have no persuasive reasons to revise these judgments, a synonymy theory should preserve them.

Constraint 3: No implausible indeterminacy (compare Wettstein, 1981; Schiffer, 1995). Our unreflective judgments about the literal content of complex demonstratives also suggest that if the nominal of a complex demonstrative does not induce indeterminacy in literal content, the complex demonstrative as a whole is not indeterminate in literal content either. Since we have no persuasive reasons to revise these judgments, a synonymy theory should preserve them.

Constraint 4: No implausible necessities (compare Kaplan, 1989; Braun, 1994; King 2001; Soames 2002). Our unreflective judgments about the literal content of sentences containing complex demonstratives suggest that when ϕ is not an essential property of an object * and the content of ϕ is not part of the content of the nominal `F', a declarative utterance of `that F is ϕ' with the demonstrative used to refer to * does not have a necessary reading (e.g. `that tomato is perceived by me now'). Since we have no persuasive reasons to revise these modal judgments, a synonymy theory should preserve them.

Constraint 5: No implausible a priori knowledge (compare Soames, 2002). Our unreflective judgments about the literal content of complex demonstratives also suggest that when the content of ϕ is not part of the content of the nominal `F' and $\phi$ is an empirical property, an utterance of `if that F exists, then that F is ϕ' is not knowable a priori (e.g. `if that tomato exists, then that tomato is perceived by me now).[21] Since we have no persuasive reasons to revise these epistemic judgments, a synonymy theory should preserve them.

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[21] The intended contrast here is with logical or mathematical properties, which are arguably a priori knowable. For example, the property of self-identity is a property every individual whatsoever has. Arguably, this is a logical property.

Constraint 6: No implausible entailments (see Lepore and Ludwig, 2000; compare Kaplan, 1989; Perry, 2001). A synonymy theory of complex demonstratives should not predict implausible entailments from the literal content of complex demonstrative utterances. For example, it should not predict that from the literal content of an utterance of, say, `that tree is dead' it semantically follows that the speaker of the demonstrative exists.

Constraint 7: No implausible attitude ascriptions (see Neale, 2008b; compare Schiffer, 1995; Soames, 2002). A synonymy theory should not ascribe implausible propositional attitudes to speakers. For example, it is perfectly conceivable that someone in a counterfactual world believes the literal content of my utterance of, say, `that river is polluted' without harboring any attitude whatsoever with respect to me or the actual world (my actual world). A synonymy theory should preserve these sorts of intuitions.

Constraint 8: No implausible associations (see Perry, 1977; Wilson, 1991; Devitt, 2004; Schiffer, 2005). A synonymy theory should not attribute associations between complex demonstratives and definite descriptions competent speakers do not (or could not) make.

2.2 Synonymy Theories and the Constraints

Arguably, there are four main types of synonymy theory of complex demonstratives: the mechanism theory, the set-theoretic theory, the locational theory, and the Gödelian theory. In what follows, I will argue that in light of the constraints above the Gödelian theory is the best of the four. Since these four are arguably the better ones, the Gödelian theory is arguably the best *simpliciter*.

2.2.1 The Mechanism Theory

According to the mechanism theory, a complex demonstrative `that F' (or `this F') is synonymous with a definite description whose nominal contains `F' and a restriction on `F' describing a mechanism of reference determination, a complex of physical relations between speaker and referent necessary for the determination of the latter. Let us call these definite descriptions `mechanism descriptions' (compare Devitt, 2004, p. 300; Neale, 2008b, p. 314).

Hans Reichenbach (1947, pp. 284–5) proposed a species of mechanism theory, according to which `this F' (or `that F') is synonymous with `the F pointed to by a gesture accompanying τ', where `τ' refers to the original complex demonstrative token. Versions of the mechanism theory include: `this F' (or `that F') is synonymous with `the F I am perceiving now' (compare Schiffer, 1981); `this F' (or `that F') is synonymous with `the actual F I am demonstrating' (compare Neale, 1993); `this F' (or `that F') is synonymous with `the F causing my demonstrative utterance' (compare Lewis, 1984); `this F' (or `that F') is synonymous with `the actual F I intend to refer to now'.

For the purposes of the present discussion, I will assume only one type of mechanism description is synonymous with a complex demonstrative. The main reason for this is that mechanism descriptions are best viewed as representing *the right sort* of mechanism that helps determine the reference of a complex demonstrative token. On the plausible assumption that there will be only one sort of mechanism that is right, one implementation of the theory will be superior. I adopt a model for discussion: `that F' (or `this F') is synonymous with `the actual F I perceive now', where `I' rigidly refers to the speaker and `now' rigidly refers to the time of the utterance.[22] I think this model presents the mechanism theory in a favorable light.

An immediate challenge to the present theory, however, is associated with constraint 6, according to which a synonymy theory should not predict implausible entailments. Consider `that book has exactly 100 pages' uttered by me in a particular context (to refer to a particular book in my perceptual field). According to the present theory, this

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[22] The notion of rigidity I use is the Kripkean one (1980): `a' rigidly refers to * iff `a' refers to * in all possible worlds where * exists and `a' does not refer to anything else.

utterance is synonymous with `the actual book I perceive now has exactly 100 pages' (uttered by me in the same context). Yet, it is counterintuitive that from what I literally express it semantically follows that I exist (Lepore and Ludwig, 2000, p. 210). Moreover, and confirming this point, it is perfectly conceivable that the literal content of my original utterance is the object of a propositional attitude by someone else in a counterfactual world independently of any attitudes whatsoever this person may come to have with respect to me, the actual world or perception (Neale, 2008b, p. 315; compare Soames, 2002, pp. 43–50). The mechanism theory would seem to predict otherwise, against constraint 7.

A further problem relates to constraint 8, which says that a synonymy theory should not predict implausible associations. By `association' here I mean a three-place relation relating a speaker and two linguistic tokens such that a speaker associates `that ϕ' with `the $\psi$' only if he or she forms a belief whose content is <that $\phi$ is the $\psi$> (compare Devitt, 1981).[23] I call this sort of belief an `i-belief' – short for `identification-belief'. So, at the root of the present problem is the idea that whenever a speaker utters `that F' to refer to an F in mind, he or she forms an i-belief whose content is <that F is the actual F I perceive now>.

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[23] Throughout I use the convention of surrounding an expression with angled brackets to refer to its content.

I think such associations are at best dubious. For one thing, it is unclear whether young children can always make them. The literature on first language acquisition reports that young children start producing complex demonstratives at around 2 to 3 years of age and many of these utterances are plausibly construed as utterances to refer to a perceptually available object (see e.g. Clark, 2001). It would seem remarkable that, say, four-year-olds who are competent with complex demonstratives even *possess* the concept of actual world (`I and all my surroundings', `a maximally complete property of the universe') expressed by a rigidifier like `actual' involved in the i-belief speakers should have when they utter a demonstrative token (on the present theory). Also, the concept of perception is potentially problematic, for depending on the child's age he or she may very well lack any grasp of what perception is, and yet remain competent with demonstratives all the same.

In addition, these associations are dubious for an ulterior reason: the relation between speaker and referent necessary for the determination of the latter will have to be *a lot* more sophisticated than what is suggested by mere `… perceived by …' (Devitt and Sterelny 1999, pp. 61–2). This is so because the mechanism theory must do justice to the idea that complex demonstratives typically pick out the right F when the speaker perceives (or demonstrates or is caused to speak by) several Fs in the context of the utterance, and doing justice to this idea is likely to involve mechanism descriptions that express very sophisticated concepts, concepts of a scientific semantics probably. Yet, we have no good reason to expect that speakers possess such concepts simply in virtue of their competence. Three or four-year-olds exemplify the point very well. Should we expect them to have these concepts? I doubt so. Such an expectation would seem to imply an implausible paroxysm of the Piagetian idea that children are `little scientists'! In sum, it seems too optimistic to think all competent speakers would even have the conceptual resources to make the associations the mechanism theory predicts they make – let alone actually make them in uttering complex demonstratives. For these reasons, I believe the mechanism theory is untenable.

2.2.2 The Set-Theoretic Theory

According to the set-theoretic theory, a complex demonstrative `that F' (or `this F') is synonymous with a definite description `the F in Φ', where Φ is a set containing the right F. I call these definite descriptions `set-theoretic' (compare Barwise and Perry, 1983; Stanley and Szabó, 2000, pp. 234–5).

Immediately, we face the question of the nature of the term `Φ' in a set-theoretic description. Three answers come to mind: (a) `Φ' is a proper name; (b) `Φ' is a definite description; (c) `Φ' is an indexical.

The adoption of (a) renders the set-theoretic theory intractable. For, very often neither speaker nor audience, when they utter and interpret complex demonstratives, possess proper names that pick out sets containing their intended referents, from which it follows that very often speakers and their audiences cannot utter and understand complex demonstratives. Since this is absurd, (a) is a non-starter.

Option (b) is an improvement upon (a), for in uttering complex demonstratives speakers may often associate a definite description that denotes a set containing their intended referents. A set-theoretic description may look like this on (b): `the F in the set of *things next to Jane now*'. To separate this option from the previous one, let us replace `Φ' for `δ', where δ is a description stating the membership conditions of the relevant set.

An initial problem with this implementation is the availability of different statements of membership condition for the *same* speaker within a single context. For example, I may associate `the set of things here' ($\delta_1$), `the set of things I see now' (δ_2), and `the set of things next to Bill' (δ_3) with my demonstrative utterance. Which δ makes into the set-theoretic description synonymous with my demonstrative utterance? This is the problem of the principled basis (constraint 1).

Even if there were a basis for a single speaker, we would need to tackle the likelihood of *different* speakers employing different δs in a single context (compare Devitt, 2004, p. 299). Since it is likely that speakers will diverge in this regard – after all, sets are famous for being describable in multifarious ways – the literal content of different tokens of `that F' to refer to the same F-thing in the same context is likely to diverge from speaker to speaker. This clashes with the intuition that ambiguity in a complex demonstrative is due to ambiguity in its nominal (constraint 2). Since there does not seem to be a general solution to this problem, option (b) seems problematic.

This brings us to (c). On (c), the `$\Phi$' in a set-theoretic description is an indexical. By `indexical' I mean three things here: it is a context-sensitive item, it is not synonymous with a definite description, and it probably picks out its referent rigidly. To set this option apart from the others, let us replace `$\Phi$' by `ι'. On (c), then, `that F' (or `this F') is synonymous with `the F in ι'.

One advantage of this option over the last one is that it does not predict implausible ambiguities, although this is not nearly sufficient to ground the set-theoretic theory. One reason is that we should now ask *how* `ι' itself refers to the relevant set the speaker has in mind. Saying that the context somehow provides this set is not very helpful. One has mainly two options here, I suppose: `ι' picks out its set non-descriptively or else it does so descriptively, by means of an associated definite description.

At face value, the first option seems unappealing. What sort of non-descriptive mechanism might be invoked here? The usual candidates (viz. perceptual contact, ostension, causality and so on) would seem unfit for picking out sets. How could they pick out the empty set, one might ask? Furthermore, how could they reliably determine where a set begins and where it ends? Thus, it seems that some other means for determining the reference of `ι' may have to be invoked. The most plausible candidate is a definite description.

But as soon as we pursue this line of argument we face problems. For, we should now indicate what kind of definite description determines the reference of the indexical `ι'. Given the various ways a set can be picked out by description, it is not even clear that different speakers uttering the same complex demonstrative within a single context would use co-denoting descriptions to pick out their relevant sets. Thus, we may be facing the problem of content indeterminacy, even when the nominal of the complex demonstrative does not induce any indeterminacy (against constraint 3).

Furthermore, if the set in a set-theoretic description must be picked out rigidly by `ι', more questions arise, for in this case some sort of rigidifying item will have to be associated with `ι', in which case competent speakers will have to possess the concept expressed by this item. And it is unclear whether we should accept this.

But, for the sake of the argument, let us assume that all of these problems have a solution (no small assumption). Let us assume that (c) does provide a minimally satisfactory statement of the set-theoretic theory. Still, there are problems with the theory.

One problem is that it cannot avoid countenancing implausible entailments, since the relation of set-membership is part of the literal content of a complex demonstrative token (constraint 6).

Second, it is conceivable that the literal content of a complex demonstrative utterance in the actual world can be the object of a propositional attitude by someone else in a counterfactual world independent of any propositional attitudes this person may have with respect to set-membership (constraint 7).

Third, it is doubtful that, whenever a young child utters `that F' (or `this F') to refer to an F in mind, he or she thereby forms an i-belief containing the concept of set-membership: <that F is the F *in* ι>. For, depending on their age, it is debatable that young children possess this concept (constraint 8).

And last, the set-theoretic theory faces an independent methodological problem: it postulates a dispensable semantic mechanism, namely the relation of set-membership. On the assumption that the set in a set-theoretic description is picked out by description, this description in tandem with the demonstrative's nominal is sufficient to determine the content of the complex demonstrative. Set-membership is dispensable (compare Neale, 2004, p. 125).[24]

2.2.2 The Locational Theory

But, perhaps, synonymy theorists will take the following line: a complex demonstrative `this F' is synonymous with a definite description `the F here', and a complex demonstrative `that F' is synonymous with a definite description `the F there', where `here' and `there' refer to the *location* the intended referent occupies in the context of the utterance (compare Quine, 1960; Bernstein, 1997). Let us assume provisionally that

[24] One may propose an alternative synonymy theory, which may be called `the situational theory': `that F' (or `this F') is synonymous with `the F *in* σ', where σ is a situation containing the right F. Many of the criticisms leveled against the set-theoretic theory apply to the situational theory as well. In particular, being a member of a situation (or *in* a situation, as one may prefer to put it) probably does no distinctive semantic work when it comes to perceptual complex demonstratives.

`here' rigidly refers to a location *close* to the speaker and that `there' rigidly refers to a location *far* from the speaker. Let us call a description `the F here' (or `the F there') a `locational description'.

This sort of theory holds plausibility. For one thing, it is a truism that objects occupy some location or other. For another, the location an object occupies is often used to identify it, for it is relatively costless from a cognitive perspective to invoke locations to elucidate an intended referent. For example, as I order a muffin in a crowded coffee shop, the person behind the counter may ask, `which muffin do you mean?' to which I may reply, `that one, next to the biscotti basket'.[25]

An initial problem with the locational theory, however, relates to the cross-linguistic fact that demonstratives are not always used to express a relation of distance between speaker and referent – even if we restrict ourselves to perceptual uses. Thus, suppose I come close to a Matisse painting and utter, while looking at it, `that painting is an amazing achievement'. This seems like a perfectly felicitous use of `that painting'. In fact, depending on one's views of Matisse's work my utterance expresses a literal truth. Yet, if the locational theory is right, the utterance may be infelicitous. After all, I may be too

[25] One problem with the locational theory relates to other referential uses of complex demonstratives, like memory and anaphoric. For, what role would a locational element play in these cases? Since arguably there are sufficient and independent grounds to reject the locational theory, overlooking this problem should not be a problem.

close to the painting. Since there is nothing wrong with my utterance, even if I am very close to the painting, there is something wrong with the theory – at least as stated.[26]

But there is a quick and effective patch to this problem: `this F' (or `that F') are synonymous with `the F ere', where `ere' rigidly picks out a distance-neutral location. This certainly accounts for the distance-neutral uses of demonstratives, although arguably it is not nearly sufficient to ground the locational theory.

One important reason is that the locational theory will often make wrong truth conditional predictions. Consider the following scenario. There are two copies of Reimer and Bezuidenhout's *Descriptions and Beyond* in the room my interlocutor and I occupy. One copy is on the only desk in the room. It is missing page 541. The other copy is inside a drawer of this desk, and it is not missing page 541 (suppose my interlocutor and I are unaware of the second copy). The drawer is closed, so the copy it contains is invisible. Suppose, furthermore, that by chance the position of the invisible copy is perfectly symmetrical with respect to the position of the visible one; the invisible copy is exactly under the visible one, the two separated only by the top of the desk. Now, consider my utterance of `this copy of *Descriptions and Beyond* is missing page 541' as I

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[26] There are languages containing demonstratives that are always neutral with respect to speaker-referent distance (see Lyons, 1999, p. 112). French is an example; `ce' is itself neutral with respect to distance, although it may occur accompanied by the morphemes `ci' and `là', which imply closeness and distance, respectively.

look at the visible copy and (presumably) intend to refer to it. Intuitively, this utterance is true because *that* particular copy is missing page 541. Yet, the locational theory would seem to predict otherwise. For, according to it the literal content of my utterance is <the copy of *Descriptions and Beyond* ere is missing page 541>. On the assumption that <the> is Russellian, my utterance would seem to be literally false. There are *two* copies of the book in the relevant location. This is a significant drawback to the locational theory.

Note that resort to a non-descriptive mechanism of reference determination for `ere' does not seem to help. First, 'ere' is vaguer in content than `this' and `that', from which it follows that scenarios like the one above are not very hard to come across. Second, and worse, whichever non-descriptive mechanism we may invoke to explain the reference of `ere' is itself sufficient to determine the reference of `that' and `this' taken on their own. This undercuts the motivation for an analysis of `that F' as `the F ere' in the first place. Moreover, the locational theory predicts implausible necessities and implausible a priori knowledge (constraints 4 and 5). On the face of it, an utterance of, say, `that desk is here' does not seem to have a reading on which it is necessary. And neither does it seem to be knowable a priori. But according to (an unrigidified version of) the locational theory it would; its literal content would be <the desk ere is here>, where <ere> and <here> are the same location.

If we add a rigidifier to the locational description, we may avoid the implausible necessity problem, but we face other ones. First, there is the problem of implausible attitude ascriptions (constraint 7). It is perfectly conceivable that a person in a counterfactual world believes the literal content of my utterance of, say, `that desk is here' without harboring any attitudes whatsoever with respect to the actual world.
In addition, there is the problem of the theory's attribution of implausible associations (constraint 8). It is debatable that all speakers who are competent with complex demonstratives associate rigidified locational descriptions when they utter them. The main reason is that they would have to possess the concept of actual world first, and it is unclear whether we should accept this. For these reasons the locational theory does not appear to be very promising.[27]

2.2.4 The Gödelian Theory

Perhaps, then, one will propose the following alternative: a complex demonstrative `that F' (or `this F') is synonymous with a definite description `the F identical to that', where

[27] One may propose an alternative synonymy theory, which may be called `the situational theory': `that F' (or `this F') is synonymous with `the F *in* σ', where σ is a situation containing the right F. The main problem with this theory is that being a member of a situation (or *in* a situation, as one may prefer to put it) probably plays no distinctive semantic work when it comes to deictic referential complex demonstratives. For, whichever mechanisms of individuation *of situations* we invoke would appear to be sufficient to determine the reference of `that' in `that F'. Reference to situations would thus be superfluous.

\`that' is a rigidly-referring non-descriptive expression referring to the object the speaker has in mind in uttering the complex demonstrative (see Lepore and Ludwig, 2000; Neale, 2004; compare King, 2001). I will follow Neale and call these definite descriptions \`Gödelian' and the corresponding synonymy theory \`the Gödelian theory'.[28,29]

I think the Gödelian theory fares very well with respect to all of the eight constraints described, and for this reason I think it is the best synonymy theory of the four. In fact, I am convinced that it is the best synonymy theory of complex demonstratives *simpliciter*.

First, the Gödelian theory does not predict implausible ambiguities. For, complex demonstratives will be ambiguous insofar as their nominals are ambiguous (constraint 2).

Second, the Gödelian theory does not predict implausible content indeterminacy. For, complex demonstratives will have indeterminate content insofar as their nominals induce content indeterminacy (constraint 3).

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[28] Neale (2004; 2008b) claims that complex demonstratives are equivalent to *indefinite* Gödelian descriptions. I will not pursue these differences here.

[29] An alternative name for this sort of theory might be \`the haecceity theory', according to which a complex demonstrative is synonymous with a haecceity description, a definite description that denotes a particular object via its haecceity. As I construe it, a haecceity is the *property* an object α has of being identical to itself (viz. λx $(x=\alpha)$). Compare Robert Adams's use of \`thisness': "a thisness is the property of being identical with a certain particular individual – not the property that we all share, of being identical with some individual or other, but my property of being identical with me, your property of being identical with you, etc." (1979: 6). One reason I stick with \`Gödelian theory' and \`Gödelian description' is that I am not certain that I should graft the Gödelian approach onto the hypothesis that English \`that' is a (pronominal) predicate.

Third, the Gödelian theory does not predict implausible necessities (constraint 4). For, `that F is identical to that' – assuming both occurrences of `that' are co-referential – *has* a reading on which it is necessary (cf. `that F is identical to itself').

Fourth, the Gödelian theory does not predict implausible a priori knowledge (constraint 5). For, the content of `if that F exists, then that F is identical to that' is as good a candidate for a priori knowledge as there is (cf. `if that F exists, that F is identical to itself').

Fifth, the Gödelian theory does not predict implausible entailments (constraint 6). It *does* predict, though, that from the literal content of an utterance of, say, `that F is here', we can infer `the F identical to that is here', but this does not seem to be a problem.

Sixth, the Gödelian theory does not encourage implausible attitude ascriptions (constraint 7). For, it is very plausible that if someone in a counterfactual world has an attitude with respect to the literal content of `that F is G' as uttered by me in the actual world this person thereby has the same sort of attitude with respect to `the F identical to that is G' uttered by me in the original context.[30]

[30] This point may be disputed, since we can conceive of worlds where speakers (competent with demonstratives) simply lack the concept of token identity. There is the question, of course, of how far these worlds are from us, and hence how relevant to our practices they are. I will not pursue this here.

Seventh and last, the Gödelian theory does not seem to attribute implausible associations to speakers. It does entail that in uttering \`that F' a competent speaker thereby forms an i-belief whose content is <that F is the F identical to that>. But this, for all we know, is a belief any competent speaker forms in uttering \`that F'.

Not everyone would agree with this last remark, nevertheless. Emma Borg (2003, p. 550) and Stephen Schiffer (2005, p. 1176), for example, have independently suggested that it is dubious that competent speakers associate Gödelian descriptions when they utter complex demonstratives. One way to express their concern is by claiming that it is dubious whether speakers form i-beliefs whose contents are <that F is the F identical to that> when speakers utter complex demonstratives to refer to objects they have in mind. For ease of exposition, let us call these i-beliefs \`Gödelian i-beliefs'. Since the issue Borg and Schiffer raise is important, and has not received much attention in the recent literature, a digression is called for.

Arguably, there are two main paths to criticizing the Gödelian theory on the grounds of implausible associations. One path – call it *the concept possession path* – comprises the idea that (a subclass of) competent speakers become competent with complex demonstratives *before* acquiring the concepts composing a Gödelian i-belief. A candidate class is very young children and a potentially problematic concept here is token identity, expressed by 'identical to' in a Gödelian description.

The other path – call it *the concept application path* – comprises the idea that even though all speakers who are competent with complex demonstratives possess the concepts composing a Gödelian i-belief they do not employ them all when they utter demonstratives. A salient candidate for lack of employment is once again the concept of token identity, and a salient class of speakers is very young children.

As things stand, I believe both argumentative paths fail to show the desired conclusion. Looking at the concept possession path first, it does carry initial plausibility, however. For, one does wonder whether very young children who are competent with complex demonstratives (e.g. 2 or 3-year-olds) possess the concept of token identity.[31] Interestingly, however, the work of developmental psychologists Elizabeth Spelke, Susan Carey, and Fei Xu among others (see e.g. Xu, 1997) indicates that this type of concern is probably exaggerated. In a series of illuminating experiments, they provide strong evidence that infants as young as four months old can tell whether an object is the same as the one they perceived before. And from this it is a very small step to the conclusion

[31] Another potentially problematic concept here is the concept expressed by `the'. If it is Russellian, competence with demonstratives may very well involve grasp of the concept of totality.

that these infants have a grasp of token identity. Thus, when the infants reach their second and third birthdays and start uttering complex demonstratives to refer to an object in mind, the concept of token identity is an old staple. The Gödelian theorist may point to this evidence and claim that association with a Gödelian description does not exclude young children from the class of speakers who are competent with complex demonstratives.

Turning to the second path – the concept application path – the critic's goal is to show that even though all competent speakers *possess* all concepts expressed by a Gödelian description, these speakers often fail to employ them all when they utter complex demonstratives. If this were indeed shown, the Gödelian theorist would have some explaining to do. But the problem is that it has not been shown, *pace* Schiffer and Borg. And the core reason for this, it seems to me, is that once we overcome our doubts with respect to concept possession, there does not seem to be a reliable test left for determining that a speaker does not form a Gödelian i-belief when he or she utters a complex demonstrative.

One proposed test involves *asking the speaker* what he or she means in uttering a complex demonstrative (compare Schiffer, 2005, p. 1176). But problems arise almost immediately when we attempt to use this test. First, there is the question of *what to ask*.

Should the question be, `what do you mean to express by your utterance of `that F'? Or should it be `by uttering `that F' do you mean to express `the F identical to that'? Or should it be something else instead? Those who use this test will be asked for a principled basis. And a lack of basis is potentially harmful because different types of questions may induce different types of answers. It is plausible, for example, that if my subject is adult and understands English and I ask, `by uttering `that F' do you mean to express `the F identical to that'?' pointing to the relevant thing, I will gather more positive evidence (in favor of the Gödelian theory) than if I ask merely, `what exactly do you mean to express by `that F'?' The subject may be at a loss by the latter question, or simply point to the intended referent, looking puzzled.

Moreover, speakers may be competent with complex demonstratives but unable to *articulate* with precision what they mean in uttering them. Young children provide examples. Would the questions above elicit relevant evidence from, say, four-year olds? I doubt so, since they may not have the linguistic means to articulate with precision what they mean (e.g. they might not have identity relations in their vocabularies). Once we couple this problem with the problem of the principled basis for formulating the questions in the first place, asking the speaker what he or she means appears problematic.

Since there does not seem to be an alternative test at our disposal, the Gödelian theory seems to stand with respect to the threat of implausible associations.

In this way, we arrive at an appealing hypothesis for why the Gödelian theory also meets the only remaining constraint on synonymy theories, namely the principled basis constraint: meeting constraints 2-8 *is* the principled basis for the choice of associated description. This dovetails very nicely with Neale's suggestion that Gödelian descriptions provide a `fool-proof' way of `regularly interpreting utterances' of complex demonstratives (2004, p. 171).

To conclude: the Gödelian theory comes out as the best synonymy theory of the four. Since these four are arguably the better ones, the Gödelian theory comes out as the best synonymy theory *simpliciter*. In this way, it provides an empirically and intuitively sound account of how the nominal of a complex demonstrative contributes to its literal content: it is part of a Gödelian description synonymous with it.

3. A Syntactic Interlude: Descriptions in Disguise?

Yet, if complex demonstratives are Gödelian descriptions semantically, and linguistic form constrains linguistic interpretation, it is natural to wonder about their syntax. For, depending on what we may discover about their syntax, we may have reason to reconsider their semantics. So, what is the syntax of complex demonstratives?

Briefly, my argument in this section will be this. Assuming the Gödelian theory in semantics, I will put forth two heuristic assumptions about the syntax of complex demonstratives, `the naïve assumption about SS' and `the Gödelian assumption about LF'. I will suggest that holding them both generates rather serious problems in syntax. I will then propose two strategies of revision, and urge that if we aspire to a unified syntax for bare and complex demonstratives both strategies of revision imply syntactic claims that turn out to be empirically disputable. The upshot of my discussion will be that syntax does not compel the acceptance of the Gödelian theory in semantics. I will thus commend that we cultivate a positive disposition towards complex demonstratives being what they seem to be at face value: non-quantificational terms that refer and describe. But to start things off, I should say something about the syntactic framework in which I will locate my discussion. As the last paragraph suggests, it is the generative framework, and the particular embodiment I will use is the *Principles and Parameters* model of syntax, the classic P&P model (see e.g. Chomsky, 1981, 1982, 1986). Within this model, I will ask definite questions about the syntax of complex demonstratives, and thereby attempt to assess the Gödelian theory from the vantage point of syntax.

The questions I am going to ask aim at elucidating how a complex demonstrative sentence with the perceptible features it has can receive the interpretation the Gödelian theory assigns it. In P&P syntax, answering this question involves answering at least two other, more specific questions: *`what is the SS of a complex demonstrative sentence?'* and *`what is the LF of this sentence?'* These questions will guide my discussion in what follows.[32]

From a very high level of abstraction, let us heuristically assume, as a first pass, that the SS of a sentence like `that woman sings well' contains the following elements arranged in the following way:

(SS0) $[_{IP}$ $[_{DP}$that woman] $[_{VP}$sings well]]

where `IP' stands for inflectional phrase, `VP' for verb phrase, and `DP' for determiner phrase.[33] Let us call this heuristic assumption `the naïve assumption about SS'.
One feature of the naïve assumption about SS is the lack of a `null' determiner in the subject DP.[34] P&P theory teaches us about these entities, often referred to as `empty

[32] One may suggest that this discussion should be couched in Minimalist terms, as opposed to the classic GB P&P terminology, which is arguably `outdated'. I favor classic P&P because talk of optimal design of the language faculty seems very much open to question and classic P&P seems largely adequate empirically.
[33] I assume the DP-hypothesis without discussion (see e.g. Abney, 1987), although close to the end of this section it will become clear that this assumption is not necessary.

categories', syntactically real yet unpronounced and unwritten. They are required for the proper explanation of a number of syntactic phenomena, including the argument structure of certain infinitival clauses, structure preservation of sentences after transformations, argument structure of subjectless clauses in certain languages and more (see Haegeman, 1994, pp. 433–79; compare Chomsky, 1982, pp. 17–36). The freedom from null determiners implied by the naïve assumption about SS will serve us well in differentiating strategies on the syntax of complex demonstratives below.

On the Gödelian theory, the complex demonstrative `that woman' is synonymous with a Gödelian description `the woman identical to that'. Given that LF is the level of syntactic representation interfacing syntax with semantics, it is sensible to ask whether the LF contribution of `that woman' has the structural organization suggested by the Gödelian description that supposedly gives its meaning. On the heuristic assumption that it does, the LF of our sample sentence may have the following (simplified) structure:

(LF0) $[_{IP}[_{DP}$the woman $[_{XP}$identical to that]] $[_{VP}$sings well]]]

[34] This particular SS representation is highly idealized. In P&P syntax, SS is a level of representation where all sorts of null elements reside. For example, under the so-called `VP-internal subject hypothesis', subjects are born VP-internally at DS, moving up to Spec, IP at SS, leaving a co-indexed trace in their original VP positions. I bypass such considerations to achieve a simpler exposition. For much the same reasons, I bypass talk of an agreement layer between DP and NP. None of this should detract from the main points I intend to make.

On the assumption that DPs undergo `raising', the LF we are looking for will actually be somewhat different, but for our immediate purposes we can overlook this (compare May, 1985). Let us assume, then, that something like LF0 is the LF of `that woman sings well'. Let us call this heuristic assumption `the Gödelian assumption about LF'.

We then run into the following question: how do we derive LF0 from SS0 within the P&P model?

(SS0) $[_{IP}$ $[_{DP}$that woman] $[_{VP}$sings well]]

(LF0) $[_{IP}$ $[_{DP}$the woman $[_{XP}$identical to that]] $[_{VP}$sings well]]]

For this question to have full empirical content, we need to determine XP at LF first. Since determining X involves being clear about several other elements within LF0, I will leave this aside and attempt to proceed on the present level of abstraction. Still, for the question to have empirical content at all, we should make it clear that the demonstrative `that' leaves a `trace' after it moves. Traces are essentially copies of moved elements, and they ensure that syntactic structure is preserved after transformations occur. Thus, the presumed derivation we should be assessing relates SS0 to LF0*, rather than SS0 to LF0, where `t' represents the trace left by the moved `that':

(SS0) $[_{IP}$ $[_{DP}$that woman] $[_{VP}$sings well]]

(LF0*) $[_{IP}\ [_{DP}$the t woman $[_{XP}$identical to that]] $[_{VP}$sings well]]]

Given the salient discrepancy between SS0 and LF0*, three questions arise:

(Q1) Where does the extra definite article at LF come from?

(Q2) Where does the extra XP at LF come from?

(Q3) Where does the identity relation within the XP at LF come from?

Let us refer to these questions collectively as `the discrepancy questions' and to the sort of problem they convey `the discrepancy problem'.

The discrepancy problem is not the only problem with an attempted derivation from SS0 to LF0*. The demonstrative `that' would have to move *down* from SS to LF. Downward movement is generally disallowed in the P&P model, the main reason for this being that the trace left by a moved element should be `c-commanded' by it, a requirement downward movement disrespects.[35] (Intuitively, the c-command requirement preserves the idea that a trace should be within the scope of its antecedent). Let us call this problem `the downward movement problem'.

[35] A node X c-commands a node Y iff the first branching node dominating X dominates Y (and neither dominates the other). See e.g. Haegeman, 1994, p. 134.

So, the situation we seem to be facing is this: on the naïve assumption about SS and on the Gödelian assumption about LF, two problems arise, the discrepancy problem and the downward movement problem. The downward movement problem blocks a derivation from SS0 to LF0*. The discrepancy problem also calls for a solution, and there seems to be no easy way out. Thus, some sort of revision is called for. The obvious candidates for revision are the naïve assumption about SS and the Gödelian assumption about LF. Accordingly, two strategies of revision come into focus.

On the first strategy, we give up the Gödelian assumption about LF but hold fast to the naïve assumption about SS. We thus hypothesize that the LF of a complex demonstrative sentence is syntactically similar to our naïve understanding of its SS. In brief, we *simplify* LF. On the second strategy, we give up the naïve assumption about SS and hold fast to the Gödelian assumption about LF. We thus hypothesize that the SS of a complex demonstrative sentence is syntactically similar to our Gödelian understanding of its LF. In brief, we *embellish* SS.

I will call the first strategy `the simplicity strategy' and the second `the universalist strategy' (for reasons to become clear below). Each encompasses an independent perspective on the syntax of complex demonstratives, consistent with the Gödelian theory in semantics. I will discuss them separately.

Yet, before proceeding, a word of caution is called for. The syntactic claims to be presented below, associated with these two strategies of revision, are motivated and justified *on independent syntactic grounds* – as attested by the literature in generative syntax in the past decades. Intuitions about linguistic form in the guise of the naïve assumption about SS and the Gödelian assumption about LF *play a heuristic role only* in the argument of this section, the epistemic heavy lifting being done by independent syntactic argumentation and evidence.

3.1 The Simplicity Strategy

On a naïve understanding of the SSs of sentences containing complex demonstratives, DPs hosting complex demonstratives contain no null determiners. Thus, a natural specification of the SS contribution of complex demonstratives sees the demonstrative morpheme as the determiner, the head of the DP, the D of the DP. Indeed, this sort of view has been fairly standard in the syntax literature (see e.g. Haegeman & Gueron, 1999, p. 59; Alexiadou *et al*, 2007, p. 93; compare Postal, 1966).

On the simplicity strategy, then, the simplified SS of a sentence like `that woman sings well' would be something along the following lines:

(SS1) $[_{IP1}\ [_{DP}\ [_{D}\text{that}]\ [_{NP}\text{woman}]]\ [_{VP}\text{sings well}]]$

Since one of our aims is to discover an LF that is syntactically compatible with this SS, a natural candidate would have the following form, where the DP is raised, leaving a co-indexed trace (`t_1') in its original position:

(LF1) $[_{IP2}\ [_{DP}\ [_{D}\text{that}]\ [_{NP}\text{woman}]]_1\ [_{IP1}\ t_1\ [_{VP}\text{sings well}]\ ]\ ]$

From a very high level of abstraction, LF1 differs from SS1 only in having the DP raised. Since this operation is motivated on independent syntactic grounds, the derivation is overall unproblematic.

Yet, one may ask now what this syntactic result has to do with a Gödelian *semantics* for complex demonstratives. For, by eliminating the Gödelian assumption about LF, which finds Gödelian structure in the syntax, have not we strayed too far from the spirit of the Gödelian theory?

The answer, I think, is `no'. For, on the present syntactic perspective, demonstrative pronouns like `that' and `this' turn out to be *determiners*, the sort of item from which the DP is projected.[36] Now, articles are determiners *par excellence*. Consequently, it is not

[36] There appears to be an equivocation in the use of `determiner' in the philosophical literature. Some use it to refer to an item that `combines with nominals to form complex noun phrases' (see e.g. Lepore and Ludwig,

wholly implausible to hypothesize that for all syntactic ends and purposes demonstrative `pronouns' are really a species of article (see Postal, 1966) – this hypothesis would help to explain, for example, the alleged fact that complex demonstratives cluster with definite descriptions on a number of syntactic phenomena, including `Weak Crossover Effects', `Antecedent Contained Deletion', and `Bach-Peters Sentences' (see King, 2001; although see Altshuler, 2007 for criticism); and it would also help to explain why definite and indefinite articles in English do not co-occur with demonstratives; if they are different realizations of the same syntactic category, we have a straightforward explanation.

Thus, `that' and `this' may be seen as *Gödelian articles*, definite and indefinite articles receiving a Russellian account, Gödelian articles receiving a Gödelian account (see Neale, 2004; compare King, 2001). This sort of view suggests an improvement in our understanding of how complex demonstrative sentences, with the perceptible features they have, receive the Gödelian interpretation they purportedly receive.

Nonetheless, this picture of complex demonstrative syntax is not without its problems. First, we need to explain how demonstratives, unlike definite and indefinite

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2000, p. 203) while others use it to refer to a certain position in the DP, the head position of the DP. In this essay, I always use the term in this second sense.

articles, frequently occur bare in speech and writing, without any nominal complement. This is true of English and of many other languages – perhaps all languages. If `that' and `this' were a species of article, we should expect them to always occur accompanied. One way of handling this problem invokes so-called `intransitive' DP-heads (see Abney, 1987, p. 266), in analogy with intransitive VP-heads (i.e. intransitive verbs). On this view, an important syntactic difference between demonstratives and the standard articles is that the former may be transitive/intransitive whereas the latter are always transitive, always requiring a nominal complement.

Yet, there is something uncomfortable about this proposal even if we stop calling demonstratives `articles' for a moment. For, we will probably need two lexical entries for demonstratives, one for the transitive form, the other for the intransitive one; such entries would each specify how many and which sorts of complements (if any) a demonstrative expression takes. This suggests that demonstratives are syntactically ambiguous, a *prima facie* undesirable result.[37]

[37] Furthermore, there would be little point in calling such intransitive determiners `determiners' since nothing syntactic would appear to compel us to see them as determiners. Why not call them `NPs' instead?

To avoid this potential problem, one may propose that demonstratives like `that' and `this' always occur with a nominal complement (see Neale, 2004, p. 118).[38] It is just that when demonstratives occur bare their complements remain unperceived. In other words, these complements are null.

But problems arise on this line of thought. For one thing, we should specify the content of these allegedly null NP-complements. For, as Neale has pointed out, what would be the point of an expression that is phonetically and semantically empty? (Neale 2005, p. 232, fn. 116). Perhaps, then, the content of these alleged null NP-complements is something like <thing> or <entity>? If so, `that', when used demonstratively, would have the semantic import of <that thing> or <that entity>. From this it would follow that a demonstrative utterance of `that is a thing', if true, is a logical truth, on a par with `that thing is a thing', a counterintuitive result.

In response, one may point out that (i) intuitions may differ in these cases and (ii) we need a clearer view of logical truth before we reach any serious conclusion. Since these

[38] Definite articles *do* at times occur without complements, but the explanation for this phenomenon is presumably `syntactic deletion'. Portuguese exemplifies this: `o carro do João é mais rápido do que ***o*** […] da Maria', where the bold italicized `o' is the (masculine singular) definite article without a complement – the brackets indicate where the complement would go. In English, this example would be (literally) `the car of John is faster than ***the*** […] of Maria' which would be better expressed by `John's car is faster than Maria's […]', where the nominal `car' is deleted from the constituent `Maria's'. These cases of deletion, however, seem independent of whether bare demonstratives always have null NP-complements. Compare Lasnik and Saito, 1992, p. 161.

issues are complicated, one may suggest that the hypothesis stands: bare demonstratives plausibly contain null NP-complements. I accept the point for now, but will come back to it later, near the end of this section.

Still, the idea that demonstratives are a species of article – hence heads of the DP – has been challenged on independent syntactic grounds. For, it has been shown that despite the unacceptability of phrases containing article-demonstrative combinations in English (and in other languages), their counterparts in several other languages are perfectly acceptable (* indicates unacceptability):

(a) *This the house

(b) *The house this

(c) *House the this

In Hungarian, Javanese, and Greek, for example, phrases of the form (a) [demonstrative + article + common noun] are perfectly acceptable (see Alexiadou, Haegeman and Stravrou, 2007, p. 110):

(a1) Ez a haz (Hungarian)
this the house

(a2) Ika n anak (Javanese)
this the baby

(a3) Afto to vivlio (Greek)
this the book

Also, Greek (see Alexiadou *et al.*, 2007; compare Neale 2008a, p. 99), Spanish (see Bruge, 1996), and arguably Ewondo (see Lyons, 1999, p. 119) accept phrases of the form (b) [article + common noun + demonstrative]:

(b1) to vivlio afto (Greek)
the book this

(b2) el libro ese (Spanish)
the book this

And Romanian accepts phrases of the form (c) [common noun + (affixal) article + demonstrative] (see Giusti, 1997, pp. 107–9):

(c1) baiatul acesta (Romanian)
boy-the this

From the point of view of P&P syntax, the implications for the structure of the DP in these languages seem clear. Since phrases cannot have two heads, and the canonical position of the definite article is the head of the DP, the demonstrative will have to sit somewhere else in the DP domain.

The question then is what this tells us about English. If we think that the study of the basic structure of the DP is not mostly due to Universal Grammar (UG), that different languages may differ radically with respect to their DPs, the mentioned evidence does not say much about English. Undoubtedly, this is a respectable theoretical stance.

Nonetheless, a growing number of linguists have been arguing for some time now that this is not the right way to think about things. For, according to them it is methodologically preferable to work with the stronger hypothesis that the DP is essentially the same in its elemental composition and hierarchical organization in all languages (see Cinque, 2002, pp. 3–4; compare Chomsky, 1982, p. 16). And if we accept this hypothesis (sometimes referred to as `the universality hypothesis'), the adduced evidence bears significantly on the location of demonstratives in the English DP. By parity of position, it will be hard for one to propose that they occupy the D position. And this tips us in the direction of the second strategy regarding the relationship between SS and LF of sentences containing complex demonstratives, the universalist strategy.

3.2 The Universalist Strategy

On the universalist strategy one takes very seriously the distribution of articles and demonstratives in the above-mentioned (and other similar) languages. This enterprise practically forces the rejection of the naïve assumption about SS. For, by parity of position, if demonstratives are not in D in these other languages (because there is a definite article in D), they are not in D in English either. Thus, when they occur accompanied by a common noun in English something else will be in D. This something is plausibly a null article. And, indeed, this sort of view has also received independent syntactic support in the syntax literature (see e.g. Bruge, 1996; Giusti, 1997; compare Haegeman and Guéron, 1999, pp. 446–8).

Now, on the universalist strategy, something like the Gödelian assumption about LF is preserved. This requires that a complex demonstrative like `that woman' be something like `the woman identical to that' at LF. One promising way of juxtaposing this requirement with the rejection of the naïve assumption about SS is to locate the demonstrative in the left periphery of the DP at SS, a null article occupying D:

(SS2) $[_{IP1}$ $[_{DP}$ $[_{XP}$that$]_1$ $[_{D}$the$]$ $[_{NP}$woman$]$ $t_1]$ $[_{VP}$sings well$]]$

The corresponding Gödelian LF is LF2, with the DP raised, as is usual:

(LF2) $[_{IP2}$ $[_{DP}$ $[_{XP}$that$]_1$ $[_D$the$]$ $[_{NP}$woman$]$ $t_1]_2$ $[_{IP1}$ t_2 $[_{VP}$sings well$]]$ $]$

Two things call for immediate explanation. First, the `identical to' locution, which figured previously in LF0, is absent from both SS2 and LF2. One may find this objectionable, but insofar as the locution is motivated primarily by a particular formal implementation of the Gödelian semantics, we do not need to have a problem. Furthermore, the eradication of this locution is attractive in that it obviates the question about its syntactic origin (Q3 above). If this is right, all we need in order to capture the idea that `that woman' is syntactically `the woman identical to that' is the combination `article + demonstrative + common noun' in the same DP domain (viz. `the woman that'). This is precisely what SS2 and LF2 offer.

Second, at SS2 there is a trace within the DP (viz. `$t_1$'), bound by the maximal projection XP which hosts `that'. This means that the linear order we find at SS2 is derived, the demonstrative being inserted lower, moving up to the left periphery of the DP at SS.[39] This hypothesis has received good empirical support from cross-linguistic

[39] It should be pointed out that the common noun itself arguably occupies a derived position at SS, being inserted lower and then moving up closer to the article. I will leave this complication aside (see Bruge, 1996 for further discussion).

evidence (and is consistent with the word order we find in English) (see Bruge, 1996; Alexiadou *et al.*, 2007). In fact, it seems plausible if we aim at an explanation of the different word orders involving demonstratives and articles across different languages, for if we postulate a single word order at the base with the demonstrative inserted low, we can then explain the different word orders in terms of upward movement and parametric variation.

Thus, the universalist strategy suggests an improvement to our understanding of how complex demonstrative sentences, with the perceptible features they have, can receive the Gödelian interpretation they purportedly receive.

Nevertheless, the present syntactic perspective is not without its difficulties. The most important one is associated with the idea that `that' and `this' will be something like adjuncts, i.e. modifiers (cf. `the *blue* book', `the *that* book', `the book *of poems*', `the book *that*'). Thus, they will require an element to modify, in this case a nominal element. But as noted above demonstratives occur bare, without any nominal supplementation, in which case they do not seem to modify anything.[40]

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[40] Actually, things are more complicated than this suggests. There are at least five different ways in which we can understand demonstratives within the universalist strategy: demonstratives are (a) *adjuncts*, maximal projections that are sisters to N', dominated by NP, itself sister to D; (b) demonstratives are *adjective heads*, immediately dominated by AP, itself sister to D; (c) demonstratives are *specifiers* of a dedicated functional phrase between DP and NP; (d) demonstratives are elements of a *relative clause* (CP) adjoined to DP (cf. the

Furthermore, inferences of the form `that F is G' ∴ `that is G' are valid. If demonstratives were modifiers, what would they modify in the conclusion of these inferences? One answer might be: a null NP, with the semantic import of <thing>. So, the inference type would be `that the F is G' ∴ `that the thing is G'. But now we face a problem that has not been touched upon in the discussion so far, and a quite serious one in my opinion: *there is no syntactic evidence demonstrating the existence of null NPs in bare demonstratives*. From a syntactic point of view, bare demonstratives seem to be perfectly autonomous items. Thus, we seem to be facing a significant empirical problem on the universalist strategy.

It should be noted, incidentally, that *both* the simplicity and the universalist strategies postulate a null NP in the syntax of bare demonstratives, though the syntactic role this NP plays is different in each strategy. On the simplicity strategy, the null NP must be a complement, required by the demonstrative morpheme, which is essentially an article. Thus, bare `that' is syntactically [$_{\text{DP}}$[$_{\text{D}}$that] [$_{\text{NP}}$thing]],[41] on a par with [$_{\text{DP}}$[$_{\text{D}}$the] [$_{\text{NP}}$thing]]. On the universalist strategy, in contrast, the null NP need not be a

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blue car; the car which is blue; the *that* car; the car which is *that*); (e) the demonstrative `that' is always a complementizer. All of these options have one thing in common, however, which is crucial to the present discussion: they require null NP supplements when demonstratives occur bare. This justifies the simplification in the body of the text.

[41] I use the grey color in these elements to highlight the fact that they are unpronounced.

complement; instead, it may be an adjunct that modifies a null NP, itself a complement to a null article. On this strategy, bare `that' is syntactically $[_{DP}[_{D}\text{the}]\ [_{NP}\text{thing}]\ [_{XP}\text{that}]]$. However, given the lack of syntactic evidence for null NPs in the syntax of bare demonstratives, it is sensible to wonder whether we are on the right track. Where should we go from here?

I see three options: (i) endorse the simplicity strategy or the universalist strategy and live with the cost of null NPs in the syntax of bare demonstratives, a cost that can be partially settled theoretically; (ii) embrace a fundamental syntactic ambiguity between bare and complex demonstratives; or (iii) seek syntactic unification while preserving the insight that bare demonstratives are autonomous nominal items.[42]

3.3 Referring and Describing

Even though (i) is the more popular view and (ii) also has followers (see e.g. Decháine and Wiltschko, 2002), I think we might very well benefit from the pursuit of (iii), according to which bare demonstratives are autonomous NPs. If they occur accompanied, in `complex form', they are still NPs but NPs that combine with other

[42] There are at least three ways in which we can understand the syntactic autonomy of bare demonstratives: (i) they require no complements (unlike articles); (ii) they require nothing to modify (unlike adjuncts/adjectives); (iii) they are DP-external. Irish is arguably a language in which demonstratives are DP-external (see Lyons, 1999, p. 120).

NPs to form *nominal complexes*. Note that there is nothing extraordinary about nominal complexes in natural language; plausible candidates would include `we philosophers', `you linguists', `them kids', `Princeton University', `Carnegie Hall' and arguably `I myself', `William of Ockham' and `Saul Aaron Kripke'. We need, of course, to *explain* the syntax of nominal complexes (no trivial task). Since my purpose here is not to argue *for* any particular syntactic proposal, I will have no theory to offer. But I do have two suggestions to make, which seem to me to carry initial plausibility.[43]

First, we might consider the hypothesis that complex demonstratives are adjunction structures, essentially NP-NP combinations of the form $[_{NP}[_{NP}\text{that}]\ [_{NP}\text{man}]]$. This seems to make some sense of the similarities between complex demonstratives, complex pronouns (e.g. `we philosophers') and descriptive names (e.g. `Carnegie Hall') – and also of full names like `Saul Aaron Kripke'.

Second, we might consider the idea that complex demonstratives instantiate a `relator phrase' (RP) in the sense of Marcel den Dikken (2006). On this perspective, complex demonstratives may have the following structure: $[_{RP}[_{NP}\text{that}]\ [_{R'}\text{r}\ [_{NP}\text{man}]]$, where `r' is the head of the relator phrase (and may remain unpronounced). Note that RPs not only have the ability to illuminate the syntax of complex pronouns and descriptive names, but

[43] This sort of proposal is consistent with the DP-hypothesis though it does not require it.

also throw light on the syntax of small clauses, for example: `I consider *this an interesting proposal*'. The constituent in italics might instantiate an RP: $[_{RP}[_{NP}\text{this}]\ [_{R'}\text{r}\ [_{DP}\text{an interesting proposal}]]]$.

Surely, a lot more needs to be said about both suggestions if we are to accept them. Yet, in face of the empirical problem of null NPs in the syntax of bare demonstratives, and motivated by the desire to unify the syntax of bare and complex demonstratives, we may very well make progress pursuing these and kindred alternatives.

In any event, the moral of the present discussion to the main theme of this essay is merely this: *P&P syntax does not force us to see complex demonstratives as Gödelian descriptions.* For one, we do not seem to be forced to adopt either the simplicity or the universalist strategies in syntax. For another, even if we adopted either, a Gödelian *semantics* would not *follow* from this. Thus, we should cultivate a positive disposition towards complex demonstratives being what they seem to be at face value: non-quantificational terms that refer and describe.

In the next section, I will offer a methodological argument that shows that from a semantic point of view complex demonstratives probably *are* non-quantificational terms that refer and describe.

4. The Domino Argument

I will start this section with what seems to me a rather plausible observation: the literal content of *bare* demonstratives is probably not given by associated descriptions. This negative claim includes two negative sub-claims: (i) the literal content of a bare demonstrative is not given by an associated description and (ii) the referent of a bare demonstrative is not determined by an associated description.

Why think (i) and (ii)? First, because analyzing bare demonstratives in terms of impoverished locational descriptions (viz. `the thing t/here') would produce unsatisfying results, since locational descriptions without a substantive nominal would very often make wrong truth-conditional predictions. A simple utterance like `this is yours; take it' is analyzed as `the thing here is yours; take it', which is trivially false, since an enormously large number of `things' occupy any one location. Second, analyzing bare demonstratives in terms of set-theoretic descriptions would also be unsatisfying. For, it is unclear what distinctive semantic work the relation of set-membership would be doing. Third, analyzing bare demonstratives in terms of impoverished Gödelian descriptions (viz. descriptions of the form `the thing identical to that') would not work either, since this proposal would appear to be *ad hoc*.

Thus, the better option for a description theory of bare demonstratives would probably be some version of the mechanism theory, which builds a mechanism of reference determination into the descriptive content of the bare demonstrative. But then we run into the following methodological problem, described by Lepore and Ludwig in the following passage (see also Devitt, 2004):

> `The description approach is a form of mimicry, piggybacking on an independent means for securing a referent for predication as a way of imitating the behavior of demonstratives. It attempts to treat "that" as a quantifier by treating the means by which its referent is determined, namely, by demonstration, as a general condition to be met for singling out an object by way of a definite description. But the fact that it must appeal to an independent means for securing an object for predication shows that it is a counterfeit of the hard coin of demonstration. The same work is being done twice over, but less well the second time around. The act of demonstration itself secures the object for predication. It would be pointless to go on to try to secure it a second time by means of the matrix "x is demonstrated by s at t".' (2000, pp. 210–11)

If we understand `demonstration' as any `act of referring' (as Lepore and Ludwig do), the passage applies equally well to any mechanism description theory as conceived in section 2.1.1. Since mechanism description theories are the only description theories in the running for bare demonstratives, bare demonstratives are not synonymous with descriptions, but plausibly have their contents determined non-descriptively, probably by the very mechanisms of reference determination mechanism descriptions attempt to describe.

But then the Gödelian theory of *complex* demonstratives faces a similar fate. For, given a non-descriptive semantics for bare demonstratives and the contribution the nominal `F' makes to the literal content of `that F', it becomes unclear what distinctive semantic work Gödelian descriptions are supposed to be doing. Modifying Lepore and Ludwig's passage slightly, the point can be made in their own words, mostly (modifications in italics):

> 'The *Gödelian* description approach is a form of mimicry, piggybacking on an independent means for securing a *referent for complex demonstratives* as a way of imitating the behavior of *complex* demonstratives. It attempts to treat "that *F*" as a quantifier by treating the means by which its *referent* is determined, namely, by the

> *application of F to the referent of "that"*, as a general condition to be met by way of a definite description. But the fact that it must appeal to an independent means for *reference determination* shows that it is a counterfeit of the hard coin. The same work is being done twice over, but less well the second time around. The *application of F to the referent of "that"* itself secures the *referent of "that F"*. It would be pointless to go on to try to secure it a second time by means of the matrix *"x is identical to that"*.'

Since Gödelian descriptions are the only ones in the running for complex demonstratives, complex demonstratives are probably not synonymous with descriptions of any kind. But what are complex demonstratives, if not disguised descriptions? As suggested above, they are what they seem to be at face value: non-quantificational terms that refer and describe, *descriptive designators*, I dub them. On this view, `that F' refers to * iff `that' refers to * and `F' applies to *, and the literal content of `that F' is something along the lines of <*, F-ness> (see Burge, 1974; Richard, 1993; Devitt and Sterelny, 1999; Dever, 2001 for comparable proposals).

Note that the descriptive designator view adapts very well to the source of the constraints on description theories discussed in section 2. For, it does not entail ambiguities or content indeterminacy unless nominals trigger them. Furthermore, it avoids implausible modal, epistemic, and psychological consequences. And, it elucidates, in a theoretically satisfying way, how the meaning of a complex demonstrative depends on the meanings of its parts. In sum, the descriptive designator view appears to conserve what is right and dispense with what is wrong with the Gödelian theory.

5. Concluding Remarks

In this essay, I argued for three main points: (i) that the Gödelian theory is the best synonymy theory of complex demonstratives; (ii) that P&P syntax does not force us to see complex demonstratives as synonymous with Gödelian descriptions; and (iii) that on methodological grounds we should reject the Gödelian theory and adopt the descriptive designator alternative.

At the outset, I framed my discussion in terms of the contribution the nominal makes to the literal content of complex demonstratives, claiming that this contribution should not be understood via definite descriptions. One might have thought that this choice of framing was somewhat unorthodox, since arguably the main thrust of description theories of complex demonstratives was never the nominal *per se*, which is given by the complex demonstrative itself, but rather *the something we know not what* that helps to pick out the referent from the available candidates satisfying the nominal in the context of the utterance. To some, this amounts to the idea that description theories of complex demonstratives are primarily theories of nominal *restriction* or nominal *completion* rather than theories of nominal contribution *per se*.

In the face of the explanatory dispensability of associated descriptions to the content of bare demonstratives, however, the only plausible explanatory role left for associated descriptions to play with respect to the content of complex demonstratives is *that their nominals make a contribution*. Hence the Gödelian proposal, with its suspicious recourse to the idlest of all relations, the identity relation. But we do not need associated descriptions to explain *that* the nominal makes a contribution. Nominal application is sufficient. Thus, Gödelian descriptions are dispensable posits, danglers in our overall epistemic picture of demonstrative content.

So, to the question `are complex demonstratives synonymous with descriptions?' the answer, it seems to me, is `probably not'. And to the question, `are there terms in natural language that are both referential and descriptive without being quantificational?' the answer, it seems to me, is `probably yes'. Complex demonstratives are among them.[44]

[44] Examples arguably include descriptive names (e.g. `Carnegie Hall'), complex pronouns (e.g. `you oboists'), and referential descriptions (e.g. `the concert last night'). After all, why should describing with a (singular) term always imply quantifying?

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Essay 3

Referring and Describing: Complex Demonstratives and Referential Descriptions

1. Introduction

Singular complex demonstratives in English are expressions of the form `that F' and `this F', where `F', the *nominal* of the demonstrative, is a common noun frequently modified by other expressions. Singular definite descriptions in English are expressions of the form `the F'. In this paper, I will start from the assumption that both expressions have a referential meaning, a meaning in virtue of which the object the speaker has in mind in uttering them is part of their literal content in the context of the utterance (see e.g. Devitt, 2008).[45,46] In what follows, I will call singular referential complex demonstratives

[45] In countenancing referential descriptions, I subscribe to Ambiguity, the thesis that definite descriptions are referential-attributive ambiguous. This thesis is by no means uncontroversial. Elsewhere, I have tried to add to its case by removing an important concern with it, namely the concern about ambiguities being reproduced independently in other languages (see e.g. Bach, 2004 for a version of this concern and my 2008 for a reply). As I see it, the core case *for* Ambiguity is the following sequence of arguments: (i) definite descriptions are used referentially very frequently, in fact so much so that the referential use is the most common use of the expression, in which case it would be very odd if referential uses were not a symptom of a (semantic) referential convention for these expressions (Devitt, 2008); (ii) definite descriptions may be replaced by complex demonstratives with the same nominal in a wide variety of contexts without much strain (Devitt, 2004; compare Burge, 1974; Kripke, 1977; Levinson, 1983; Schiffer, 1995; Ramachandran, 1996); (iii) definite descriptions used referentially express truths in situations where speakers could not complete them (compare Wettstein, 1981; Wilson, 1995; Schiffer, 1995; Soames, 2002; Devitt, 2004); (iv) in contexts where the referential use of a definite description is clear to the audience, tagging a bare demonstrative to the description produces redundancy (viz. `the

`complex demonstratives' and singular referential definite descriptions `referential descriptions'.

In the philosophical literature, the debate around the semantics of complex demonstratives and referential descriptions has become to a significant extent polarized. For, these expressions are very often said to be either `directly referential', in the sense that they only contribute their actual extensions to literal content, or else quantifiers, in the sense that they only contribute a condition on possible extensions to literal content, a condition containing the content of their nominals.

In the background of this polarization is a working hypothesis about the semantic partitioning of natural language terms.[47] This hypothesis says, in brief, that every term in natural language is either referential or quantificational, where referential terms are semantically simple and rigid, whereas quantificational terms are semantically complex and typically non-rigid (see Neale, 1993; Dever, 2001; compare Russell, 1918). Against

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concert last night, *that*, was great, wasn't it?), which is best explained by the existence of a referential convention for definite descriptions. In fact, I believe that claims (i-iv) constitute a promising *Ambiguity Test*, which seems to correctly separate cases of definite descriptions and complex demonstratives – which are, on my view, cases of true ambiguity – from cases of merely *apparent* ambiguity, exemplified by `scalar quantifiers' like `some' and `few', which convey, but do not seem to literally express, <not all>. See Essay 1, section 5, for a criticism of the idea that these quantifiers are ambiguous.

[46] I equate literal content with semantic content, i.e. the proposition semantically expressed in the context of the utterance.

[47] I understand `term' as any expression occurring in argument position, and take an argument position to be the position exemplified by grammatical subject or object (compare Dever, 2001: 271).

this background, complex demonstratives and referential descriptions are assimilated to either of two semantic paradigms: the paradigm of the bare demonstrative or the paradigm of the quantifier.[48]

I think this polarization overlooks an important contender: complex demonstratives and referential descriptions are both referential and descriptive without being quantificational. In short, they are what I call *descriptive designators*. Indeed, I will urge that this contender is methodologically superior to its rivals. Since it covers the empirical ground the rivals cover, we should endorse it.

The breakdown of this essay is as follows. In section 2, I will argue that complex demonstratives have nominals that are `fully significant' semantically, in the sense that they help to determine reference and contribute the properties they describe to literal content. In section 3, I will extend these arguments to referential descriptions and suggest, following Michael Devitt (2004), that in light of the usage similarities between complex demonstratives and referential descriptions both expressions have a similar

[48] This may strike one as oversimplified, since a number of theorists in the `direct reference' tradition hold that nominals in complex demonstratives play an active role in reference determination – in *prima facie* disanalogy with bare demonstratives, which do not have any nominals (although there is room for disagreement here, since direct reference theorists could always propose that the reference of bare `that' or `this' is determined via the application, in the context of the utterance, of a syntactically null nominal with the semantic import of `thing' or `entity'). Be this as it may, when I speak of `an assimilation' of the semantics of referential descriptions and complex demonstratives to the two semantic paradigms above my main concern is *literal content* (i.e. the proposition expressed).

semantics (see also Burge, 1974 and Ramachandran, 1996 for analogous arguments). I will then provisionally hypothesize that the paradigm of the descriptive designator does a very good job in capturing this semantics. In section 4, I will consider two objections to this proposal and argue that both are inconclusive. In section 5, I will turn to the above hypothesis about the semantic partitioning of natural language terms and argue that it is dubious. I will then briefly articulate what I take descriptive designators to be, and, at last, recommend on methodological grounds that complex demonstratives and referential descriptions be understood as descriptive designators.

2. Nominal Relevance

In this section, I will primarily address the following two questions: `does a complex demonstrative nominal help to determine the reference of its tokens?' and `does a complex demonstrative nominal contribute the property (or properties) it represents to the literal content of its tokens?' In 2.1, I will present two arguments for a positive answer to the first question. In 2.2, I will present five arguments for a positive answer to the second.

2.1 Reference Determination

The first argument for nominals playing a role in reference determination starts from the fact that complex demonstratives are very frequently, indeed preponderantly, used by speakers to refer to particular objects speakers think, and intend their audiences to think, satisfy their nominals. In other words, speakers very frequently refer to these objects *as* satisfiers of these nominals. There are at least four aspects to this usage frequency.

The first is mere *token frequency*. The sheer number of complex demonstrative tokens used by speakers to refer to particular things they think, and intend their audiences to think, satisfy their nominals strongly suggests that nominals are relevant to reference determination.

The second aspect is *positional frequency*. Complex demonstratives in all term positions (subject, direct object, indirect object, and object of preposition) are very frequently used to refer to particular things that speakers think and intend their audiences to think satisfy their nominals.

The third aspect is *speech act frequency*. Under all types of speech acts, complex demonstratives are very frequently used to refer to particular things speakers think and intend their audiences to think satisfy their nominals. Thus, in `representatives' (`that glass you are holding is cracked.'), in `directives' (`shut that door!'), in `commissives' (`I promise this carburetor will be fixed.'), in `expressives' (`I am sorry for that broken vase.'), and in `declarations' (`That science project is worth an A.').

And the fourth aspect is *cross-linguistic frequency*. In numerous languages, complex demonstratives are very frequently used to refer to particular things that speakers think and intend their audiences to think satisfy their nominals. In fact, it is probable that in *all* languages that have complex demonstratives they are frequently used in this way.

To those who think that linguistic items have the semantic properties they have in virtue of frequent cooperative use constrained by syntax, it would be rather odd, on the face of it, if the usage facts just described were not symptomatic of the relevance of nominals to reference determination. For, let us assume that nominals in complex demonstratives *started out* as mere pragmatic appendices, uttered merely to help audiences to focus on the right object the speaker has in mind in uttering a complex demonstrative. With time and widespread use in the community, why would not this fact *become* semantically relevant? In other words, why would not it constitute a *convention* of using nominals to determine the referents of complex demonstrative tokens?

Another piece of evidence confirming the relevance of nominals to reference determination involves the phenomenon of `quantifying into' the nominal of a complex demonstrative. Consider the following example, adapted from Ernest Lepore and Kirk Ludwig (2000):

(0) Each woman in this room admires that man on stage she is winking at.

Suppose there are exactly two women in the room, and that each is nearby the same portion of a stage (the only stage in the room). Suppose that exactly two men, both well-known theater actors, occupy the stage. And suppose that each woman in the room is winking at the same man on stage, the actor to which they happen to be nearest. Last, suppose speaker and audience are not too far from the stage, but not too close either; they can *see* each woman in the room winking at a particular man on stage, although from their position it would be practically impossible for the speaker to use a pointing gesture or a glance to single out a man on stage.

In this scenario, the speaker may utter (0) to express the idea that each woman in the room admires a *particular* man on stage, namely the one she is winking at, as speaker and audience can *see*. In fact, this referential reading of (0) appears to be preferred in the present scenario.

Now, this reading requires the semantic contribution of the nominal. For, if the nominal were entirely inert semantically, (0) would be read as `each woman in this room admires *him'*, where `him' would (presumably) refer to one man on stage. Yet, there are two men on stage, and the speaker is not sufficiently close to the stage so that a pointing gesture (or a glance in the direction of the relevant man) would settle the referent. Thus, without the semantic contribution of the nominal an utterance of (0) would lack the reading it has in this context. The question then becomes: *what* semantic role does the nominal play in this context?

At face value, there are two options: the nominal is part of literal content or it merely determines reference. In the first case, the referent of the demonstrative occurrence would have to be a man on stage and winked at by each woman *in the world of evaluation*, the world where the literal content of the utterance receives a truth-value. In the second case, the referent would have to be a man on stage and winked at by each woman *in the context of the utterance*, regardless of what this man *is* in the world of evaluation (see Salmon, 2008: 271). Which option should we choose?

It is not easy to answer this. Nonetheless, for the purposes of the present discussion the key point about quantifying into the nominal is this: in scenarios like the one above the nominal apparently plays a role at least in reference determination.

At this juncture, one may protest that the occurrence of `that man on stage she is winking at' in (0) is not *really* an occurrence of a complex demonstrative, being instead a `stylistically altered definite description' (Salmon, 2006: 446), in which case (0) does not add to the case for the significance of the nominal in reference determination for *complex demonstratives*.

One important problem with this line of argument, however, is that it appears to contain an unsupported premise, which may be expressed as follows: the existence of a bound pronoun *inside* the nominal of a complex demonstrative is conclusive evidence that this expression *as a whole* is a definite description in disguise (i.e. semantically equivalent to a definite description, here understood as a quantifier) (see e.g. Neale, 2008b). Certainly, there is nothing *incoherent* with the idea of a bound value of a pronoun inside the nominal of a complex demonstrative collaborating with the value of the rest of the nominal to determine the *reference* of the complex demonstrative (Salmon, 2006). Since it has not been shown that this idea is not true, the above protest is inconclusive.

Moreover, *if* the occurrence of `that man on stage she is winking at' in (0) *were* a `stylistically altered definite description', it would seem to follow, given the Russellian quantificational analysis for definite descriptions, that `that F' – the linguistic form – is `referential-attributive' ambiguous, having a referential meaning and also an attributive quantificational meaning (viz. the meaning of a definite description in its attributive use) (see King, 2008: 113 for an analogous point). Now, given the similarities in use between complex demonstratives and definite descriptions, it is unclear *why definite descriptions would not be referential-attributive ambiguous, too*. For, what would be the principled basis for denying this of definite descriptions once we accept it of their demonstrative siblings? Note, moreover, that the relative frequency of *referential uses of definite descriptions* appears to be significantly greater than the relative frequency of *attributive uses of complex demonstratives*, in which case it would be rather odd to claim that complex demonstratives have an attributive meaning while definite descriptions lack a referential meaning. So, to suggest that `that man on stage she is winking at' in (0) has the semantic import of a definite description – as several theorists currently do – generates significant tension with the idea that *definite descriptions* have only one (attributive, quantificational) meaning – an idea that is dear to these same theorists.

To conclude: quantifying into the nominal of a complex demonstrative appears to provide positive evidence for the hypothesis that nominals play an active role in reference determination. For, without this hypothesis, we do not seem to have a satisfactory explanation of the intuitive referential readings examples like (0) have.

2.2 Literal Content

Having argued for the significance of the nominal to reference determination, I now turn to the contribution the nominal makes to literal content. (To express this idea in a pre-theoretic way, I will often speak of the nominal as `being part of' literal content.)[49] I will concentrate on five reasons.

2.2.1 Redundancy

One important piece of evidence in favor of nominals being part of literal content involves redundancy. When we use the nominal of a complex demonstrative as the predicate of a sentence that has this complex demonstrative as its subject, we induce redundancy. For example: an utterance of `that table is a table' is redundant. A very good explanation for this is that the nominal `table' is part of the literal content of `that table'.

2.2.2 Clefts

In a so-called `cleft' sentence, the word order is such that a constituent of the sentence is `promoted to the foreground while the remainder of the sentence is backgrounded'

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[49] This way of putting things should not imply that I am committed to the existence of *Russellian structured propositions*, n-tuples of objects, properties, and relations that go proxy for literal or semantic contents. Being `part of literal content' in my sense is making a contribution to the truth conditions of the relevant sentence tokens, such that the truth or falsity of these tokens directly depends on the application of the nominal to the intended referent in the world of evaluation. See section 5.2 for further discussion.

(Haegeman, 2006: 85). This promoted constituent expresses the `focus' or the `highlight' of what is said. A standard way of achieving this effect is by adding `it is […]' (or `as for […]') to the target constituent, and moving it to the front of the sentence. Consider the following:

(1) John bought the last copy of Bill's book.
(1') It was *John* who bought the last copy of Bill's book.
(1'') As for *John*, he bought the last copy of Bill's book.

On the plausible assumption that clefted sentences are equivalent in literal content to their non-clefted counterparts, and that clefted constituents are part of literal content in cleft sentences, if terms within nominals of complex demonstratives are `cleftable', nominals of complex of demonstratives are part of literal content (see Richard, 1993: 218). Thus, consider the following examples:

(2) That book by Tom has a green cover.
(2') As for *Tom*, that book by him has a green cover.

(3) That book Tom wrote has a green cover.
(3') As for *Tom*, that book he wrote has a green cover.

Since the pairs (2)/(2') and (3)/(3') are plausibly equivalent in literal content, and the clefted constituents are part of the literal content in (2') and (3'), the complex demonstrative nominals in (2) and (3) are part of literal content.

2.2.3 Narrow Scope

Another piece of evidence in favor of nominals being part of literal content involves the scope of complex demonstratives in relation to attitude verbs. Consider the following scenario, due to Jeffrey King:

> "Suppose we are at a party where evil and vindictive Alan has just been named CEO of the Chanticleer toy company. Some of the guests are aware of this, some are not. Sherry, a Chanticleer executive, has long believed that Alan despises her. She has just heard the bad news about him being named CEO. Sherry believes that as CEO Alan will make her life miserable. She is moping around saying she must quit her job. Someone asks me what is wrong with Sherry. Pointing at Alan, I say: [(4)] Sherry believes that that guy who was just named CEO of Chanticleer hates her." (King, 2001: 110).

King argues that the complex demonstrative occurrence in (4) must be read with narrow scope if his utterance of (4) is to explain Sherry's behavior. For, if the complex demonstrative were read with wide scope instead, (4)'s utterance would not ascribe to Sherry the belief that Alan was just named CEO. Yet, this belief is central to the explanation of Sherry's despondent behavior at the party. After all, she has long believed that Alan despises her. Thus, the fact that (4) explains Sherry's depressed behavior at the party justifies the complex demonstrative's being read with narrow scope in the context of utterance.

In a recent article, Stephen Neale (2008a) challenges King's point. Briefly, Neale's main claim appears to be that a narrow scope reading of the complex demonstrative in (4) is not required to explain Sherry's behavior. For, on the plausible assumption that (4) is interpreted with the demonstrative with wide scope, in tandem with the fact that the demonstrative nominal is cooperatively uttered by the speaker, King's utterance may very well *pragmatically imply without literally expressing* the proposition that Sherry believes Alan has just been named CEO. And by pragmatically implying this, King's utterance of (4) explains Sherry's behavior. After all, the fact that an *utterance* explains a person's behavior need not be an exclusive matter of *what* the utterance *literally expresses* (compare Neale, 2008a: 122–3).

I think Neale is right to suggest that a reading of (4) where the complex demonstrative has narrow scope is not *required* to explain Sherry's behavior. But there are two important facts that a narrow scope reading helps to explain, both apparently overlooked by Neale. First, speakers *very frequently* use complex demonstratives in attitude contexts to communicate narrow scope interpretations of the demonstratives they utter. A very good explanation for this is that complex demonstratives *have* narrow scope *readings* in these contexts. Second, very often when we are inclined to think that a narrow scope interpretation of a complex demonstrative occurrence within the scope of `believes' is forthcoming we can directly attribute the property described by the demonstrative nominal to the demonstrative referent without much communicative strain. In other words, we can *replace* the original sentence by another one in which the property represented by the nominal is directly attributed to the demonstrative referent, all this without much strain. Consider the following examples, with the original Sherry scenario in mind: "Why is Sherry behaving so despondently," you ask. Glancing at Alan, I utter,

(5) She believes that that guy who was just named CEO hates her. [King's (4)]

(5') She believes that that guy was just named CEO and hates her.

(5'') She believes that he was just named CEO and hates her.

Neale can explain the fact that sentences like (5) are frequently used to communicate narrow scope interpretations without claiming these interpretations are part of what is literally expressed. And he can also explain why (5') and (5'') literally express what they in fact do. Yet, apparently he cannot explain why (5), (5'), (5'') seems to be intersubstitutable without significant communicative change (in the relevant context). On Neale's view, this would seem to be a brute fact about human communication. The champion of narrow scope readings, in contrast, has a promising explanation: (5), (5') and (5'') *are equivalent in literal content*. Since explanatory unification is a core desideratum of philosophical methodology, we are justified in countenancing narrow scope readings for complex demonstratives in attitude contexts, which confirms the hypothesis that nominals are part of literal content in complex demonstratives.

2.2.4 Intersubstitution

Another piece of evidence in favor of the contribution of nominals to literal content is the acceptability of substitutions of sentences of the form `that F is G' for `that, which is F, is G'. (This carries over to other languages.) Consider the following example:

(6) That table looks expensive.

(6') That, which is a table, looks expensive.

(6'') That is a table and it looks expensive.

In normal circumstances, an utterance of (6') would carry the assumption by the speaker that the audience does not know, or does not believe, that the intended referent is a table, whereas an utterance of (6) appears to be free from such an assumption. Commonly, however, whenever (6) can be uttered, (6') can also – and arguably (6'') as well. Note that these substitutions appear to go through with complex demonstratives in other term positions, especially when the demonstrative pronoun receives stress. Thus, consider the following, where the caps represent stress on the demonstrative morpheme:

(7) My grandmother wants to buy that table.

(7') My grandmother wants to buy THAT, which is a table.

(8) I left your book on that table.

(8') I left your book on THAT, which is a table.

(9) I will give that table a coat of paint.

(9') I will give THAT, which is a table, a coat of paint.

One very good explanation for the acceptability of these substitutions is that nominals in complex demonstratives are part of their literal content.

2.2.5 Inferential Dispositions

English speakers are disposed to infer sentences of the form \`something is F' from sentences of the form \`that F is G', and similarly \`some F is G' from \`that F is G'. A promising explanation is that the nominal of the complex demonstrative is part of its literal content. For, in this case, \`that F is G' is plausibly equivalent to \`that is F and G', and from the latter it follows that *something is F* and *some F is G*.

We should note, nonetheless, that theorists who believe that nominals do not contribute to the literal content of complex demonstratives, yet do contribute to their reference determination (e.g. David Braun (1994) and Emma Borg (2000)), have an explanation of the inferential dispositions just mentioned. So, if the existence of these dispositions is to count in favor of nominals being part of literal content, we need to say why their proposal is unappealing.

In intensional logic, argument validity is often elucidated along the following lines: for all models M, and all worlds w $\in$ *W* in M, if the premises of an argument are true *in w*, its conclusion is also true in w (see e.g. Gamut, 1991: 53). David Kaplan (1989) suggests an alternative for arguments containing \`indexicals': for all suitable models *S* and all *contexts* c ∈ C in S, if the premises of an argument are true *in c*, the conclusion of the argument is also true *in c*.

Armed with this Kaplanian notion of validity, one can produce an account of the intuitive validity of arguments like \`that F is G' ∴ \`some F is G' *insofar as one requires the nominal of a complex demonstrative to determine its reference in the context of the utterance*. For, then, in every context in which \`that F is G' is true, \`some F is G' will also be true. In this way, one can account for the mentioned inferential dispositions without subscribing to nominals's being part of literal content. The question then becomes: *which* account of the mentioned inferential dispositions is better. Should we invoke tradition or should we follow Kaplan?

I think we have reason to invoke tradition. For, we would need independent evidence for the Kaplanian explanation in these cases. Furthermore, referential expressions similar to complex demonstratives, for example complex pronouns (e.g. personal pronouns adjoined to common nouns), constitute similarly valid inferences. Thus, from, say, \`we musicians enjoy silence', we readily infer \`some musicians enjoy silence'. This is so very plausibly because the nominal of \`we musicians' is part of its literal content. Witness the blatant contradiction in: \`we musicians are not musicians'! But, then, we must ask why things should be relevantly different with complex demonstratives, which on the face of it are special cases of complex pronouns, cases where the pronoun is demonstrative. Since there does not seem to be a convincing explanation for an alleged difference, unification suggests that in both cases the inferences should be explained in the same, traditional way.[50]

In sum, we have good reason to think nominals play a role in reference determination and are part of literal content. Therefore, we have good reason to think nominals are *fully significant semantically*. In this way, an account of the semantics of complex demonstratives that assimilates them to the paradigm of the bare demonstrative appears to be mistaken.

3. Extending the Argument to Referential Descriptions

The first aim of the present section is to propose that nominals in *referential descriptions* are fully significant semantically. This can be done briefly because there are arguments that mirror those for the full semantic significance of nominals in complex demonstratives.

First, speakers very frequently use `the F' to refer to objects they think, and intend their audiences to think, are F. Second, we can quantify into the nominal of referential

[50] Similarly valid arguments involving referential descriptions call for a traditional explanation. See e.g. Salmon, 1982: 42.

descriptions. Third, utterances of sentences of the form `the F is F' are redundant. Fourth, we can `cleft' positions inside nominals of referential descriptions. Fifth, there are narrow scope readings of referential descriptions in attitude contexts. And sixth, we are disposed to infer `some F is G' and `something is F' from referential `the F is G'.

The second aim of this section is to hypothesize (provisionally) that referential descriptions are *descriptive designators*, non-quantificational terms that refer and describe. Two key premises to this proposal are: (i) complex demonstratives are descriptive designators and (ii) complex demonstratives and referential descriptions are very commonly used similarly (see Burge, 1974; Ramachandran, 1996; Devitt, 2004). In what follows, I will focus on this second premise.

To add to the case for its truth, I put together a matrix of perceptual uses of complex demonstratives combining their term positions with each speech act type in which they are produced.[51] For each cell of the matrix, and starting with a perceptually used complex demonstrative, we can very often substitute a referential description with the same nominal without much disturbance:

[51] A perceptual use of a complex demonstrative is a use according to which the speaker perceives the intended referent in the context of the utterance.

	Representatives	Directives	Commissives	Expressives	Declarations
Subject	1	2	3	4	5
Direct Object	6	7	8	9	10
Indirect Object	11	12	13	14	15
Object of Preposition	16	17	18	19	20

[Interlocutor holding only one vase]

1a. That vase you're holding is cracked. Be careful.

1b. The vase you're holding is cracked. Be careful.

[Only one woman in a red dress in focus]

2a. Did that woman wearing a red dress just wink at you?

2b. Did the woman wearing a red dress just wink at you?

[After technician fixes my DVD player]

3a. This DVD player should work now.

3b. The DVD player should work now.

[Speaker congratulating hearer, after a concert, for executing a musical passage with great insight]

4a. That cadenza in the second movement was brilliantly performed. Congratulations.

4b. The cadenza in the second movement was brilliantly performed. Congratulations.

[Teacher telling student]

5a. I will not change your grade. This presentation is really worth a C.

5b. I will not change your grade. The/your presentation is really worth a C.

[Only one door in focus]

6a. She left that door open again. I cannot believe this.

6b. She left the door open again. I cannot believe this.

[Only one door in the context]

7a. Shut that door!

7b. Shut the door!

[Only one door in focus]

8a. I promise I will not leave that door open again.

8b. I promise I will not leave the door open again.

[Only one door in focus]

9a. Thanks for shutting that door!

9b. Thanks for shutting the door!

[Manager at a meeting about an unprofitable project]

10a. That’s it. I am junking this MTV project.

10b. That's it. I am junking the MTV project.

[Only one woman in blue in the context]

11a. Silvio bought that woman in blue a house in Sardinia.

11b. Silvio bought the woman in blue a house in Sardinia.

[Speaker ordering his assistant; woman in question has fainted]

12a. You should get that woman a glass of water.

12b. You should get the woman a glass of water.

[Assistant committing to helping the woman]

13a. Ok. I will get that woman some water.

13b. Ok. I will get the woman some water.

[At a business meeting]

14a. I guarantee these investors good profit.

14b. I guarantee the/our investors good profit.

15a. I grant this student a pass.

15b. I grant the student a pass.

[Only one woman in blue in the context]

16a. Silvio bought a house in Sardinia for that woman in blue.

16b. Silvio bought a house in Sardinia for the woman in blue.

[Speaker ordering his assistant; woman in question has fainted]

17a. You should get a glass of water for that woman.

17b. You should get a glass of water for the woman.

[Assistant committing to helping the woman]

18a. Ok. I will get some water for that woman.

18b. Ok. I will get some water for the woman.

[At a business meeting]

19a. I guarantee good profit for these investors.

19b. I guarantee good profit for the/our investors.

[Only one woman in black on the podium]

20a. I bequeath my Raphael to that woman in black on the podium.

20b. I bequeath my Raphael to the woman in black on the podium.[52]

The acceptability of these substitutions, coupled with the independently motivated full semantic significance of nominals in both expressions, constitutes a strong argument that referential descriptions and complex demonstratives have a similar referential meaning, a

[52] Example due to Stephen Levinson (1983).

meaning according to which the F-object the speaker has in mind is part of literal content (Devitt, 2004: 288).

Moreover, `conversational implicatures' induced with the help of complex demonstratives are typically preserved when we substitute referential descriptions with the same nominal. To use Grice's terminology (1989), the implicatures do not `detach' when the substitutions are performed, a very plausible explanation for which being that both expressions express the same literal content. This adds to the case that the expressions have a very similar referential meaning. Consider the following scenario:

> "As I am talking to a friend while he is doing the dishes, I notice that the glass he just stopped rinsing (still in his hand) is a bit soapy. Noticing he has not noticed this, and knowing how much importance he gives to cleaning his glasses, I interrupt what I am saying and utter the following with the intention of conversationally implicating he should give that particular glass another rinse: "Joe, *that glass* you are holding is still a bit soapy." Based on my uttering what I uttered, the literal content of my utterance and assumptions Joe and I plausibly share about the character of conversations, Joe would probably grasp the intended conversational implicature. Yet, he would have

grasped the same implicature had I uttered the following instead: "Joe, *the glass* you're holding is still a bit soapy."

Note, in addition, that the very fact that the substitutions go through in a variety of situations calls for an explanation. Postulating that referential descriptions and complex demonstratives have a similar meaning unifies (and hence explains) this convergence in usage. So, we have further reason for the idea that referential descriptions and complex demonstratives have a similar meaning.

Now, if we hypothesize that complex demonstratives are descriptive designators, non-quantificational terms that refer and describe, we capture very neatly the following three facts about the meaning of complex demonstratives: (i) their nominals are relevant to reference determination, (ii) their nominals are part of literal content and (iii) the object the speaker has in mind in uttering them (i.e. the object the speaker refers to) is also part of literal content. On the descriptive designator view, `that F' refers to * iff `that' refers to * and `F' applies to *, and `that F is G' is true iff `G' applies to the referent of `that F'.[53] Nothing else is required (compare Burge, 1974; Richard, 1993; Devitt and Sterelny, 1999; Dever, 2001).

[53] Speaker reference may be partly elucidated via a `causal-perceptual link' between speaker/token and object. See section 5.2 for further discussion.

Given the widespread similarities in use between complex demonstratives and referential descriptions, we should infer the same about referential descriptions. Thus, referential `the F' refers to * iff the speaker of `the F' refers to * and `F' applies to *, and `the F is G' is true iff `G' applies to the referent of `the F'. Again, nothing else is required.

In section 5, I will return to this point and argue that this way of viewing things is preferable to its best rival, the `Gödelian quantifier' view. But first let me turn to two immediate objections to the argument of this section.

4. Blocking the Substitutions

When the usage similarities between complex demonstratives and referential descriptions are brought up in philosophical discussion, one often encounters significant resistance against the idea that they allow us to draw positive conclusions about the semantics of definite descriptions. I will discuss two sources of concern in this respect, and argue that both are inconclusive.

4.1 Ostensive Gestures, Stress, and Contrast[54]

When the speaker needs to make an ostensive gesture to make his demonstrative reference clear, and the nominal of the demonstrative radically underdetermines its intended referent, substitutions for referential descriptions are typically disallowed. Consider the following scenario:

> "[…] if Diane is on a ski lift looking down at a ski run filled with male skiers and she points at a skier and says 'I wish I could ski like that man', there is nothing odd about her remark. But if she had said instead 'I wish I could ski like the man', there certainly would be something odd about her remark." (King, 2001: 67)

If this point were sufficiently general, if the cases of substitution block exemplified by it were overwhelmingly greater than the cases that allow the substitutions, there would be a strong presumption against the similarities in use between complex demonstratives and referential descriptions constituting an argument for their membership in the same semantic kind – the kind I have called `descriptive designators'. Yet, the problem, I think, is that the point does not seem to be sufficiently general.

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[54] For present purposes, an ostensive gesture is exemplified by the following: pointing with a finger, waving in the direction of something, grabbing something, embracing something etc. Glancing at something or subtly nodding at it are not, in my view, examples of ostensive gestures.

The sort of case King describes very often involves the speaker intending to communicate a *contrast* between the intended referent and the other objects of the same kind available to perception. Evidence for this is that in such cases we very often find stress on the demonstrative pronoun, and ostensive gestures accompany the utterance, both conspiring to the effective communication of the intended contrast: `THAT man [pointing to the guy with index finger] is an awesome skier' – as opposed to the other men in the ski run. Now, it is unclear (at least to me) whether complex demonstratives are used *mostly* in this way, where ostensive gestures, word stress, and communicative contrast are present.

In addition, speakers very often use complex demonstratives to refer to objects that are not present in the context of the utterance (see Devitt, 2004: 290–1). Thus, consider `memory' uses of complex demonstratives, where the uttered demonstrative refers to an object speaker and audience can identify by memory: `that trip to Chile last year was great, wasn't it', where the speaker and the audience know which particular trip is being talked about (because it was memorable). In these cases, there is no question of an ostensive gesture to single out an intended referent, and stress and contrast are often absent too.[55] Note, moreover, that memory uses are usually welcoming to the substitutions for referential descriptions, for if the audience is capable of grasping the referential content of a memory demonstrative in a given context, very often it already has sufficient means to understand the utterance when a referential description occurs instead.

Furthermore, complex demonstratives are not typically used to refer to things with the help of ostensive gestures (or counterparts thereof) in written media. And neither do they seem to preponderantly involve stress and contrast in such cases. This suggests a presumption for the felicity of the substitutions for referential descriptions. Likewise in more formal oral contexts, where politeness rules dictate a tendency for more describing and less gesturing.

In this way, it seems to me disputable that the case described in King's passage is significantly more common than the cases that allow the substitutions. And if this is right, and I think it is, the mentioned substitution blocks, which undoubtedly exist, do not irrevocably undermine the argument of the last section.

[55] Stress and contrast do at times surface in cases where the intended referent is not around to be gestured at. Many of these cases, however, seem to involve anaphora. Consider the following dialogue. A: `That trip to Chile last year was great, wasn't it?' B: `Which one? The one with your sister?' A: `No, the one with your brother.' B: `Oh, *that* one. I agree.'

4.2 The `that-that' Cases

Another potential problem involving the alleged usage similarities between complex demonstratives and definite descriptions involves uses of complex demonstratives in close succession to refer to different objects in mind. Thus, consider the following example: `that wine glass [speaker pointing to one glass] is way more durable than that wine glass [speaker pointing to another glass]'. This sort of utterance is felicitous. Yet, apparently, one cannot felicitously utter `the wine glass is way more durable than the wine glass'.

In light of this, one may hypothesize that the role speaker intention plays in the semantics of the two expressions explains the superficial differences: speaker intentions are relevant to the semantics of complex demonstratives but irrelevant to the semantics of definite descriptions (King, 2001: 67–78). And, if this were right, complex demonstratives and referential descriptions *could not* be both descriptive designators, for there would not be such a thing as a referential description (a definite description whose meaning is partly constituted by the object the speaker intends to refer to). So, the argument of the last section collapses.

However, there is a problem with the evidence adduced. For, we need to distinguish sharply two evidential claims: (a) definite descriptions of the same form (and used referentially) are *never* uttered in close succession to felicitously express content about two objects in mind; (b) definite descriptions of the same form (and used referentially) are *not often* uttered in close succession to felicitously express content about two objects in mind. It seems to me that it is (a) rather than (b) that justifies the strong conclusion that the semantics of definite descriptions is not properly explained by means of speaker intention (and hence should not be elucidated via the semantics of complex demonstratives). Yet, (a) is false. Consider this nice example due to Stephen Neale:

> "At the end of a boxing match between a Russian and a Swede I might say to you, upon hearing that the panel of eleven international judges has declared the Swede the winner by ten votes to one, 'I know why it wasn't unanimous.' 'Why?' you ask? I reply with: 'the Russian voted for the Russian'." (Neale, 2004: 123)

It is hard to see how the felicity of the last utterance could be explained without recourse to speaker intention. And on the assumption that the utterance is literally true, and that the speaker intends to express content about two different persons in mind, speaker intention is very plausibly part of the semantics of definite descriptions used referentially. Thus, the fact that definite descriptions are not commonly used in close succession to express content about two objects in mind is insufficient to establish that there are no referential descriptions.

Furthermore, the fact that we cannot usually substitute referential descriptions for complex demonstratives when the latter are uttered in close succession does not show that referential descriptions do not have a referential semantics. For, these close succession uses of complex demonstratives do not seem preponderant. Thus, the substitution blocks they involve appear to be quantitatively insufficient to undermine the claim that complex demonstratives and referential descriptions are commonly used in the same way.

To conclude: the argument of section 3 appears to stand. Given the similarity in use between complex demonstratives and referential descriptions, and the full semantic significance of their nominals, which was argued for independently, a very plausible working hypothesis is that both expressions are descriptive designators, non-quantificational terms that refer and describe.

5. The Term Hypothesis and Descriptive Designators

The fate of the thesis that complex demonstratives and referential descriptions are descriptive designators depends significantly on the status of what I will call `the term hypothesis': *every term in natural language is either referential or quantificational*, where referential terms are semantically simple and rigid, while quantificational terms are semantically complex and typically non-rigid (Neale, 1993; compare Dever, 2001; Neale, 2008b).

The first aim of this section is to show that, as understood, the term hypothesis is dubious. Thus, we are free to endorse the descriptive designator view about complex demonstratives and referential descriptions. The second aim of this section is to outline the descriptive designator view. And the third (and last) aim of this section is to show that there are theoretical grounds *for* the descriptive designator view. Since it covers the empirical ground covered by its rivals, we should endorse it.

5.1 The Term Hypothesis

The term hypothesis describes a clean divide in natural language terms. There are the *referential* terms on one side and the *quantificational* ones on the other. No term is both.[56] Proper names (e.g. \`Aristotle'), indexicals (e.g. \`I'), and bare demonstratives (e.g. \`that') are said to populate the referential side. Complex terms like \`every man', \`most journalists', and \`the present King of France' are said to populate the quantificational side.

[56] That is how I read the hypothesis, at least. If the intended meaning of the \`or' were inclusive, why state it using the form \`*either* … or …'?

On one interpretation – perhaps the strongest one – the term hypothesis implies that all referential terms possess three features: they are *semantically simple*, they induce *object-dependence* on the level of literal content, and they are (de jure) *rigid*.[57] Quantificational terms, in contrast, are supposed to lack these features: they are *semantically complex*, they are *object-independent*, and they are not (de jure) *rigid* (see Dever, 2001: 271–2).[58]

As understood, I think the term hypothesis is dubious. Consider *semantic simplicity*. To say that a term is semantically simple is *inter alia* to say that its extension is not determined by the meaning of its proper parts (Neale, 2008b: 294; compare Russell, 1918: 200; 244). Thus, take the proper name \`Aristotle' to refer to the great Greek philosopher. That \`Aristotle' refers to Aristotle is plausibly independent of the meaning of its proper parts. For, \`Aristotle' does not have any meaningful proper parts.

This is fine as far as it goes, but problems lurk. One apparent problem is that it is unclear whether bare demonstratives – stock examples of referential terms – are semantically simple in this sense. Several linguists have argued that \`this' and \`that' have meaningful components, a \`th' component and a locational component, represented by \`at' and \`is' in English (see e.g. Leu, 2008; compare Elbourne, 2008).

[57] According to Kripke, an expression is \`*de jure* rigid' when its \`reference […] is *stipulated* to be a single object' (1980: 21, fn. 21).

[58] Neale (1993; 2008b) does not include object-dependence on his list. Dever (2001) does.

Moreover, a proper name like `Saul Kripke' plausibly *has* its extension determined by the meaning of its proper parts, namely by the meaning of `Saul' and by the meaning of `Kripke'. For one thing, `Saul' and `Kripke' are different words; evidence for this is that they can (and do) occur without one another. For another thing, when the words occur without one another, they have meaning (e.g. `I just saw Saul in the elevator'; `I just saw Kripke in the elevator'). Given that `Saul Kripke' is a referential term, referential terms need not be semantically simple.

Next, consider *`object-dependence'*. According to the term hypothesis, referential terms induce object-dependence on the level of literal content, in the sense that (i) no complete proposition or literal content is expressed if the referential term has no extension and (ii) nothing constitutes understanding the whole proposition or literal content (expressed) if the referential term has no extension (compare Evans, 1982: 42–63). However, even though object-dependence is plausibly a necessary feature of referential terms, it does not seem to be a sufficient one.

One good reason is that so-called `Gödelian definite descriptions' – attributive descriptions of the form `the F identical to that' – induce object-dependence on the level of literal content.[59] Consider an utterance of `the man who is identical to that is a brilliant musician', uttered by me to refer to a man in my (and in my interlocutor's) visual field. Suppose the man is Alan Gilbert, the new music director of the New York Philharmonic. Have I literally expressed an object-dependent proposition in uttering what I uttered? It seems to me that I have because the literal content of `that' in the restrictive relative clause composing the Gödelian description depends on Alan Gilbert. So, the content literally expressed depends on him. If no one had been in my visual field (e.g. if I had been hallucinating), nothing would constitute understanding it fully.

Now, is the Gödelian description I uttered a referential term? On the standard hypothesis that the definite article from which it is projected receives a Russellian interpretation, the answer is `probably not'. For, the description is a quantifier, and quantifiers are not referential terms (according to the term hypothesis, at least). The fact that the Gödelian description *contains* a referential term is arguably insufficient to *make* it referential (compare Neale, 2008b: 307). Another way of expressing this point is to say that quantifiers like `the' express *relations between properties*. And nothing precludes one of these properties from being (or comprising) the property of being identical to an

[59] On my usage, and following Stephen Neale, `Gödelian descriptions' are descriptions of `the sort used in spelling out Gödel's slingshot argument' (Neale, 2004: 171). As I construe it, a Gödelian theory of a given (singular) term is a theory according to which this term is synonymous with a Gödelian description.

object, the sort of property some metaphysicians have called *a haecceity*. Thus, we have reason to think that a term can be both quantificational and object-dependent without being referential. Gödelian descriptions are very good candidates.

And, last, consider *rigidity*. One often hears that `truly' referential terms must be rigid in the sense that they refer to the same object in all possible worlds in which this object exists (and refer to nothing else in worlds in which it does not exist).[60] But one is never given a convincing argument for this blanket assertion about rigidity. One is often presented with intuitions about rigidity, which constitute one source of evidence, and arguably a very good one with respect to proper names, indexicals, and bare demonstratives. But intuitions about rigidity are much less firm when it comes to complex demonstratives and referential descriptions. Furthermore, once we become hesitant about the alleged semantic simplicity of all referential terms, the case for their rigidity starts to look disputable. Thus, it is probably better to suspend judgment (at this point) about the hypothesis that all referential terms are rigid.

In sum, terms that are very plausibly referential appear to lack certain features the term hypothesis suggests they have. And terms that are plausibly quantificational appear

[60] Sometimes the claim is stronger, i.e. that a term is rigid iff it refers to the same object in all possible worlds *simpliciter*. We can overlook this second sense without damage to the argument.

to have features the term hypothesis suggests they lack. Thus, the term hypothesis – at least as understood – is dubious.

5.2. What are Descriptive Designators?

If the term hypothesis is dubious, we can endorse the descriptive designator view. And I think we should endorse it. But before saying why, I should first outline what I take the view to be.

It is customary in semantics to set out to explain the literal contents of natural language sentences by means of some type of truth-theoretic fact about them. One such approach hypothesizes that to give the literal contents of sentences is to specify their truth conditions, given certain constraints on these specifications.[61] One such constraint, perhaps the most important one, says that the truth conditions of the sentences should be constituted by the reference conditions of their parts, along with rules for their

[61] There at least two important motivations to this sort of approach in semantics: (a) it provides an account of *how* the content of natural language sentences depends on the contents of their parts, a provision that supports the independently motivated hypothesis that natural languages are *learned* on the basis of a finite list of expressions and recursive rules to compose them; (b) it provides an account of the *entailment* relations between sentences of the language, entailment being understood in terms of the necessary *preservation of truth* from one sentence to another.

composition.[62] So, the explanation of the literal content of sentences should proceed via the explanation of the referential properties of their parts.

Within this approach, we may provide the following characterization of reference and truth for descriptive designators, where `ψ' is a predicate, `δ' is a descriptive designator, `ε' is a descriptive element in `δ', `Σ' is a sentence formed by the concatenation of the predicate `ψ' with the descriptive designator `δ', and * is an object (see Burge, 1974; and Devitt, 2004 for comparable proposals):

[Application] For all tokens of `ψ', `ψ' applies to * iff * **is** ψ.

[Descriptive Reference] For all tokens of a descriptive designator `δ', containing a descriptive element `ε', `δ' refers to * iff **the speaker refers** to * and `ε' **applies** to *.

[Truth] For all tokens of the sentence `Σ', `Σ' is true iff `Σ' **applies** to the object to which `δ' **refers**.

A brief elucidation of the notion of speaker reference is called for. As a first pass, let us say that a speaker refers to an object * by tokening a descriptive designator partly because the speaker stands in a `causal-perceptual' relation to * (Devitt, 2004: 290 and also Bach,

[62] This is not the only constraint, of course. Another important one is *simplicity*. Other things being equal, the simpler statement of reference conditions is preferable.

1994: 19–23). It is not easy to determine what else is required to a fully sufficient condition on speaker reference, and I have no theory to offer here. Kent Bach (e.g. 2006) has forcefully argued that the speaker's expectation or presumption that the audience is capable of retrieving what the speaker has in mind is also necessary for speaker reference. I am sympathetic to Bach's claim because I tend to think that speaker reference is a mode of communication, and communication, I tend to think, is plausibly constituted by the speaker's expectation that the audience is capable of retrieving what the speaker wishes to communicate (Grice, 1989). Be this as it may, for the purposes of the present discussion, elucidating speaker reference via `causal-perceptual' links will suffice.[63]

Applying the reference and truth principles above to complex demonstratives, it follows that a token of `that table is covered with books', for example, is true iff the object * to which the speaker refers is a table and is covered with books. [64] So, very plausibly, what is literally expressed by this token (i.e. its literal content) is that * is a

[63] Note that this sort of account of speaker reference may be extended to *memory* uses of descriptive designators, where the object * is not available to perception (or if it is so available, it does not determine the speaker's referential intentions). In this case, we would need to invoke memory links between * and the token, where a memory link may be seen as a compound of a causal-perceptual link, the storage of a percept in memory, and its retrieval by memory, storage and retrieval understood causally.

[64] The descriptive reference principle for descriptive designators, when applied to complex demonstratives, may be stated in the following alternative (yet equivalent) way: for all tokens of that `that F', `that F' refers to * iff `that' refers to * and `F' applies to *. A reference principle for `that', in its turn, would entail that `that' refers to * iff the speaker refers to *.

table and is covered with books – the contribution of `that table' being the object * and the property of being a table, and the contribution of `is covered with books' being the property of being covered with books. Similarly with referential descriptions – and arguably, too, with third-person pronouns. For example, a token of `the violinist wants to order Kobe' is true iff the particular person $ to which the speaker refers is a violinist and wants to order Kobe. So, very plausibly, what is literally expressed by this token is that $ is a violinist and wants to order Kobe.[65]

In contrast to this, on a `direct-reference' sort of approach to complex demonstratives, referential descriptions, and third-person pronouns, the following set of reference and truth principles may be provided (see Donnellan, 1966 for a comparable proposal about referential descriptions; Larson and Segal, 1995: 211 for a comparable proposal about complex demonstratives; and Schiffer, 1995: 116–126 for a comparable proposal about third-person pronouns and referential descriptions):

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[65] One may urge that theoretical semantics should invoke propositions *directly* in the explanation of literal content. One such approach employs *Russellian structured propositions*, structured n-tuples of objects, properties, and relations that `go proxy' for literal content. If this turns out to be desirable and feasible – as Scott Soames (2009) has argued it is – the descriptive designator view will imply that the literal content of `that F is G' (or `the F is G'), uttered in a particular context, is a structured proposition composed of (i) the object * to which the speaker refers in that context, (ii) the property F-ness expressed by the descriptive element of the descriptive designator, (iii) the property G-ness expressed by the predicate of the sentence. This proposition may be represented by the following set-theoretic construction: <<F-ness, *>, G-ness>.

[Direct reference] For all tokens `θ' of a directly referential term containing a descriptive element `ε', `θ' refers to * iff **the speaker refers** to *.

[Truth] For all tokens `Σ' of sentences formed by the concatenation of `ψ' and a directly referential term `θ', `Σ' is true iff `θ' **refers** to * and `ψ' **applies** to *.

On this sort of view, for any token `θ' of a complex demonstrative, referential description or third-person pronoun, `θ' refers to an object * iff the speaker refers to * – in which case the descriptive element `ε' in `θ' is semantically inert. This descriptive element plays a pragmatic role only – we are told – helping the audience to zone in on the object the speaker has in mind. Thus, on the present view, a token of the sentence `that conductor is Hungarian', for example, will be true iff the person * to which the speaker refers has the property of being Hungarian, regardless of whether this person is also a conductor. Thus, very plausibly, what is literally expressed by the (token) sentence is that * is Hungarian.[66] In sharp contrast to this, the descriptive designator view has it that a token

[66] I should note here that there is a second (and less austere) kind of direct reference view, according to which the descriptive element in a directly referential term plays a role in reference determination only, making no contribution to the literal content of the token sentence (i.e. the proposition expressed). This duo of semantic claims appears to be inconsistent. To explain away this appearance, direct reference theorists have proposed a sharp distinction between the *context of the utterance* and the *world* where the utterance is evaluated for truth and falsity, *the world of evaluation* (Kaplan, 1989). In outline, and informally put, this implementation of the direct reference approach would entail that a directly referential term `θ' refers to * **in** a world **w** (the world of evaluation) iff the speaker refers to * **in c** (the context of utterance) and the descriptive element `ε' in `θ' applies to * **in c** (the context of the utterance), *where w, the world of evaluation, may be different from the context of the*

of the same sentence is true iff the person * to which the speaker refers is a conductor and Hungarian. Thus, the literal content of the token is that * is a conductor and Hungarian.[67]

Now, in light of the arguments in section two in favor of the full semantic significance of nominals in complex demonstratives and referential descriptions, I think we are justified in favoring the descriptive designator view over a direct reference approach.

To conclude: on the descriptive designator view, complex demonstratives and referential descriptions have the following three features: (i) they contribute objects to literal content; (ii) their descriptive elements contribute to literal content; (iii) and the mechanisms by which these contributions are made involve no more than (singular)

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utterance. A sentence token `θ is ψ' is then said to be true *in w* iff the referent of `θ' *in w* is ψ *in w*. In this way, what is literally expressed by the token sentence is merely that * is ψ, `ε' playing a role in reference determination only. In sharp contrast to this, the descriptive designator view, suitably extended to a possible worlds framework, would have it that the descriptive element `ε' in `θ' *makes* a semantic contribution *both* in the context of the utterance (reference determination) *and* in the world of evaluation (evaluation of truth and falsity), in which case the literal content (i.e. the proposition expressed) by means of a token sentence of `θ is ψ' will contain the property expressed by the descriptive element `ε' in `θ'. See n. 65 above.

[67] One may protest that the direct reference approach preserves the intuitive idea that the literal content expressed by sentences containing complex demonstratives, referential descriptions, and third-person pronouns is *singular* whereas the descriptive designator view fails to preserve this idea. I find this claim debatable. If one *defines* `singularity' in a way that *any* contribution to literal content by descriptive elements in complex demonstratives, referential descriptions, and third-person pronouns is disallowed, then, of course, the issue is settled in favor of direct reference. From my point of view, however, the interesting question is *whether* we should define `singularity' in this way. I see no compelling explanation for why we should. For, the content ** is F and G*, where * is an object, seems to me just as singular as the content ** is G*.

reference and *application*. This, it seems to me, is a very simple basis on which to give the literal contents of sentences containing complex demonstratives and referential descriptions. Thus, it is *prima facie* appealing.

5.3 Why Descriptive Designators?

But why – one may press – *should* we endorse the descriptive designator view? We should endorse it, I believe, because we have good methodological reason to do so. It is simpler than its best rival.

First, given that nominals in *complex demonstratives* are fully significant semantically, and given that the object the speaker has in mind or refers to in uttering a complex demonstrative contributes to its literal content, we will probably have to choose – from a very high level of abstraction – between either of two options for the semantics of complex demonstratives: *the Gödelian description view*, according to which `that F' is synonymous with a Gödelian description `[the x: x is F and x = that]' or *the descriptive designator view*, sketched in the previous subsection. Now, Gödelian descriptions play no distinctive semantic role in the semantics of complex demonstratives. In particular, the quantifier `[the x]', the variables it binds, and the identity relation are here employed merely to redescribe the truly efficacious mechanisms underlying the semantics of `that

F', namely (singular) reference and nominal application. Since the descriptive designator view is in essence a statement of these mechanisms and nothing else, it is simpler than its rival. Since it covers the empirical ground the rival covers, it is epistemically superior.

Second, the Gödelian description view suggests more complex *semantic representations* for `that F' than those suggested by the descriptive designator view. For according to the former, the semantic representations of `that F' are arguably composed by the counterparts of `the', `F', and `=that' (arranged in the relevant ways), whereas the semantic representations provided by the descriptive designator view are composed by the counterparts of `that' and `F' only (arranged in the relevant ways). On the assumption that understanding language involves computing semantic representations, the descriptive designator view is superior because less expensive cognitively (a fact that dovetails nicely with the early emergence of complex demonstratives in speech) (compare Schiffer, 2005: 1176).

Similar considerations apply to referential descriptions. *Vis-à-vis* the descriptive designator view, the Gödelian view is methodologically less appealing; the `identical to that' restriction on the description nominal plays no significant semantic role. Furthermore, the Gödelian description view suggests more complex semantic representations than the descriptive designator alternative does. The `=that' item in a

Gödelian description will probably have a counterpart in the semantic representation of referential `the F'. On the assumption that understanding language involves computing semantic representations, the descriptive designator view is superior because less expensive cognitively (a fact that also dovetails nicely with the early emergence of referential descriptions in speech).

Note, moreover, that the concept of a descriptive designator promises to unify other types of terms, terms that never really fit the quantificational mold very comfortably. Among these are complex pronouns (viz. combinations of personal pronouns and common nouns as in `them kids' and `you oboists'). On the face of it, these terms are not quantifiers. For, why would a pronoun *become* a quantifier once descriptive material is appended to it? An explanation of these terms's semantics by means of the descriptive designator paradigm provides further, albeit indirect, evidence for the thesis that complex demonstratives and referential descriptions are descriptive designators.

In sum, we have good methodological reason to think that the descriptive designator thesis is a promising thesis about the literal content (or meaning) of complex demonstratives and referential descriptions.

6. Conclusion

In this paper, I have proposed three main claims: (i) that complex demonstratives and referential descriptions have nominals that are fully significant semantically; (ii) that complex demonstratives and referential descriptions are likely to be descriptive designators; (iii) and that the `term hypothesis' does not significantly undermine the descriptive designator thesis. In fact, on methodological grounds, we should endorse this thesis.

At the outset, I mentioned a polarization in the debate around the semantics of complex demonstratives and referential descriptions. On one side, there are those who assimilate these expressions to the paradigm of the bare demonstrative. On the other side, there are those who assimilate them to the paradigm of the quantifier. In my opinion, this polarization manifests an undue idealization of the purpose of natural language terms. For, given our epistemic condition, which implies vast ignorance of the particular objects we encounter in our daily lives and often inclines us to error, it is indeed very useful to have a class of terms that conventionally pick out particular objects we may have in mind without any descriptive commitments (Follesdal, 1986; compare Neale, 1993). On the other hand, it is also very useful to have a class of terms that conventionally represent objects merely descriptively, either because we have not experienced these objects before or because this experience, however extensive, is beside the point of our communicative intentions. But this by no means excludes the usefulness of another class of terms, namely those that pick out objects in mind *while describing them*. These devices clearly help our interlocutors to focus on our intended referents, and their use surely facilitates our discussing these referents *as having the relevant properties*, round here and now. To such ends, quantifying over a very large set of objects would appear to be unnecessary.

If this is right, the polarization above overlooks a better partitioning of natural language terms, a partitioning that encompasses the class of terms that refer and describe without quantifying, complex demonstratives and referential descriptions being exemplars.

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