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Millianism, Relationism and Attitude Ascriptions

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Abstract: In this paper, I discuss Kit Fine's Relationist solution to Frege's puzzle. Although I endorse Relationism, I disagree with Fine's proposed solution. Fine thinks that two types of semantic relations are needed to solve the puzzle: intra and inter-discourse relations. I argue that (a), appealing to inter-discourse relations in the way Fine proposes leads to severe and perhaps insoluble problems; and (b), contrary to what Fine holds, it is plausible that appealing to intra-discourse semantic relations is enough to make headway into Frege's puzzle. In addition, I discuss and respond to a criticism of Relationism raised by Scott Soames.

KEYWORDS: Reference, Frege's Puzzle, Coreference, Relationism, Kit Fine

1. Introduction

Millianism is the thesis that the meaning of a proper name is exhausted by its referent. One of the main challenges for the Millian lies in trying to solve a cluster of problems articulated by Gottlob Frege (1892) over one hundred years ago. We will be focusing

here on what may be the most challenging of these problems, a problem that is often referred to as 'Frege's puzzle'. Frege's puzzle concerns the presumed failure of substitutivity, *salva veritate*, of co-referring names in attitude contexts. Millianism seems to be committed to the idea that such names are indeed so substitutable, contrary to our intuitions. To be sure, there are Millians who reject substitutivity, but there are others who accept it. I will often refer to the latter group as 'Traditional Millians'.[1]

Kit Fine (2003a; 2007) has proposed a "Relationist" solution to Frege's puzzle that is consistent with Millianism. It is important to note from the start that Relationism is not a theory that is motivated only by its potential to solve Frege's puzzle. Kit Fine (2003b), for instance, argues that the approach can account for the semantic role of variables. In addition, I have argued that Relationism can be motivated by simply focusing on our ordinary capacity to keep referring to the same object in a discourse (Pinillos 2006; 2011). Nonetheless, it is not difficult to see how Relationism can help solve the classic problems for the Millian. In fact, most of Fine's *Semantic Relationism* is devoted to addressing various versions of Frege's puzzle. In what follows, I discuss some of this work and conclude that Fine's attempt to introduce inter-discourse semantic relations into the semantics of mental state attributions is problematic. Furthermore, I argue that we can make headway into Frege's puzzle by invoking intra-discourse (but not inter-discourse) relations.

2. Relationism and coordination within the scope of an attitude ascription

[1] Mark Crimmins and John Perry 1989 belong to the former camp (at least in the sense that for non-extensional constructions, proper names contribute just their referents and not any descriptive element). Nathan Salmon 1986 and Scott Soames 2002 belong to the latter camp.

Lois Lane thinks of Superman in two ways. She thinks of him as the caped hero from the planet Krypton and as the guy named 'Clark Kent' who is the klutzy reporter for *The Daily Planet*. She does not recognize that the reporter is the caped hero. Assuming this familiar scenario, (1) is intuitively true, but (2) is intuitively false:

(1) Lois Lane believes that Superman is Superman.
(2) Lois Lane believes that Superman is Clark Kent.

This is a well know problem for Millians. According to them. 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent' are synonymous. Together with standard assumptions about compositionality and the logical form of attitude ascriptions, their view entails that (1) and (2) mean the same thing, and hence must have the same truth values. But this is counter-intuitive.

The Relationist has a principled solution to this problem. Relationists will predict that (1) and (2) have different truth-values in a manner consistent with Millianism. I will now explain this.

The core idea for the Relationist is that the meaning facts concerning a discourse may involve semantic relations between representations. Following Kit Fine, I will say that certain representations may be 'coordinated'.

Let us look at an example to see how this is supposed to work. Consider a trivial use of 'Superman is Superman'. The two occurrences of 'Superman' are coordinated. In contrast, a non-trivial use of 'Superman is Clark Kent' will not involve coordination between the occurrence of 'Superman' and the occurrence of 'Clark Kent'. Since

coordination is a semantic relation, the two sentence uses will mean different things. In fact, since coordination is realized at the level of semantic content, the propositions expressed will be distinct. This is now already going beyond the traditional Millian. For the traditional Millian, those sentence uses mean the same thing and express the same proposition. The Relationist rejects this, although she is ready to accept that the semantic content of a proper name, taken on its own, is exhausted by its referent. Hence, she is a type of Millian.

Now, since uses of 'Superman is Superman' and 'Superman is Clark Kent' express distinct propositions for the Relationist (only the former is coordinated), (1) and (2) may have distinct truth values. This is because the 'that'-clauses will denote distinct propositions. In other words, (1) and (2) differ in that they ascribe to Lois Lane distinct beliefs. One consequence of this is that coordination has clear truth-conditional import.

Kit Fine (2007, 39-40) explains that the phenomenon of coordination can be understood at the intuitive level. Here's one way of bringing this out. In 'Superman is Superman', the referents of the occurrences are represented *as the same*. In 'Superman is Clark Kent' however, where there is no coordination, the referents are merely represented *to be* the same.

We can ask two further questions about coordination. First, how is coordination to be analyzed? Second, how does coordination relate to linguistic competence?

Concerning the first question, Fine (2007, 43-45) holds that coordination for referential terms is analyzed as coreference that is *semantically required* (for a

language).[2] The notion of a fact being semantically required is not further analyzed, but it can be glossed as demarcating the "pure" semantic facts. According to Fine, the pure semantic facts are those that are consequential on the meaning of expressions but are not also consequential on some further facts of a different sort. For example, the fact that 'snow is white' is true is consequential on some fact about the meaning of the English sentence 'snow is white' *plus* the further non-semantic fact that snow is white (a "worldly" fact). So the fact that 'Snow is white' is true is not a pure semantic fact. It follows that the fact is not semantically required. In contrast, the fact that 'Barack Obama' refers to Barack Obama will be a pure semantic fact (for the Millian). The fact is consequential on the meaning of 'Barack Obama' but not also on some further fact of a different sort. Hence, it is a semantic requirement that 'Barack Obama' refers to Barack Obama.

Let us now turn to the second question (concerning the connection between competence and coordination). We just said that for Fine, coordination (for referring expressions) is semantically required coreference. How does this connect up with linguistic competence? The semantically required facts for a language will be the ones that are grasped by competent users of the language, in virtue of being competent users of the language. Consider, for example, a trivial use of 'Superman is Superman'. A competent agent who understands that use of the sentence will have to grasp that the occurrences of 'Superman' refer to the same thing. This is predicted on the idea that coreference is semantically required. On the other hand, a competent agent who understands 'Superman is Clark Kent' need not see that the occurrences refer to the

[2] Henceforth, I will omit the qualification that meaning facts concern particular languages.

same thing. One can very well understand that sentence use without also believing that it is true.

The Relationist need not follow Fine in analyzing coordination as semantically required coreference. I defend a different account (Pinillos 2006; 2011). I think that coordination is a primitive relation (p-linking). So in my view, 'Hesperus is Hesperus' will involve coordination between the expression occurrences. But this will be *because* the expression occurrences are p-linked. It will not be because coreference in that case is semantically required. Furthermore, the p-linking relation is "non-factive" in that it does not require that the terms it links actually refer.

The difference between these approaches is important. Consider a typical use of 'Santa Claus wears red and he brings presents' (where 'Santa Claus' does not refer). At the intuitive level, there is coordination between 'Santa Claus' and 'he', but coreference is not semantically required. The reason is that the terms do not even refer. However, there is no problem saying that the terms are p-linked since the relation does not require successful reference to an object in the world. Fine (2010a, 498-499) accounts for the non-referring cases by saying that cases of "coordination" for non-referring terms must be analyzed in terms of the notion of semantically required coreference: as *it being taken* that there is semantically required coreference.

There are two issues with this approach. One problem arises with attitude ascriptions. Suppose, for example, we embed the "Santa Claus" sentence in a belief context in the following manner: 'Little Timmy believes that Santa Claus wears red and he brings presents'. I can utter this "coordinated" sentence. However, I certainly *do not*

take it to be that there is semantically required coreference. This is because I reject that 'Santa Claus' and 'he' corefer in the first place (since I know the terms do not even refer). Moreover, no one has to take it that the occurrences are semantically required to corefer, not even Little Timmy. Little Timmy need not even possess the name 'Santa Claus' for the ascription to be true--he may speak a different language or no language at all. Furthermore, the ascription could be false.

Another problem for Fine's account can be brought out by reflecting on the following sentence use: 'When we got evidence that Hesperus was Phosphorus, we immediately sent ships to that planet.' (Pinillos 2011). Intuitively, 'Hesperus' and 'that planet' are coordinated and so are 'Phosphorus' and 'that planet'. But 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus' are not coordinated. Now if the members of the first pair are semantically required to corefer and the members of the second pair are also semantically required to corefer, competent agents should be able to deduce, upon coming to understand the sentence, that 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus' corefer. But this doesn't seem right. It seems like one can understand that sentence (in its intended sense) without accepting that 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus' corefer.

My approach avoids this last problem. The solution makes use of two notions. First, I claim that p-linking is not a transitive relation. Second, I endorse the following connection between p-linking and competence: When two occurrences are p-linked, what is known by competent speakers is the following conditional proposition. *The occurrences corefer if they refer at all (if they both refer)*.[3] Now return to our example.

[3] Using Fine's terminology, what is semantically required is that if the terms in question refer at all, then the terms corefer.

Suppose, as a hearer, I have doubts about whether ‘Hesperus’ corefers with ‘Phosphorus’. I could still know, in our example, that ‘Hesperus’ corefers with ‘that planet’ if both occurrences refer at all. And I could also know that ‘Phosphorus’ corefers with ‘that planet’ if both occurrences refer at all. From this, I cannot deduce that ‘Hesperus’ corefers with ‘Phosphorus’ if both occurrences refer at all. The inference would go through only if I know that ‘that planet’ has a referent. But I won’t know that, if I have doubts that ‘Hesperus’ and ‘Phosphorus’ corefer. This is because there would be something defective about the use of ‘that planet’ if it had two antecedents with distinct referents. So my view can better account for the coordination pattern seen in the sentence in question since it does not predict that competent agents (who understand the sentence) will grasp that ‘Hesperus’ and ‘Phosphorus’ corefer. For these and other reasons I discuss in my ‘Coreference and Meaning’, I believe that coordination is best explained in terms of p-linking.

I have provided a brief introduction to Relationism, and have indicated how the theory has the resources to explain at least one manifestation of Frege’s puzzle. As we will see, however, other versions of the puzzle will be much more difficult to handle.

3. Coordination across attitude ascriptions

A natural objection to Relationism is that it cannot give special treatment to attitude ascriptions that contain a single occurrence of a name or referring expression. Don’t you need at least two occurrences to have coordination? Consider the following, which is intuitively not true on its *de dicto* reading.

(3) Lois Lane believes Clark Kent can fly.

Given the characterization of Relationism so far, Relationism can be seen as traditional Millianism *plus* coordination. But since there is no coordination in (3), Relationism should make the same prediction about (3) as the traditional Millian. The prediction may be that it is true. But this seems wrong. (3) is intuitively not true (on its *de dicto* reading).

Now, Kit Fine (2007; 2010b) explains that indeed there are discourses where (3) appears and Relationism correctly predicts it is not true. Consider the following discourse where, again, the sentences are understood *de dicto*:

(D1) Here are some things Lois Lane believes. She believes that Clark Kent is a bumbling fool and (3) she believes that Clark Kent can fly.

This discourse (D1) contains sentences where the 'Clark Kent' occurrences are coordinated. According to Kit Fine, for each of the coordinated reports be true (or correct),[4] Lois Lane has to have certain beliefs which themselves are coordinated in the 'Clark Kent' "position". That is, she must have beliefs expressing the coordinated (in the subject position) set of singular propositions <**Superman/Clark Kent**, is a bumbling fool> and <**Superman/Clark Kent**, can fly> (bold here indicates coordination). Since she fails to have such coordinated beliefs, each of the belief reports in (D1) is not true

[4] Although my concern here is with the truth or falsehood of sentence (uses), Fine sometimes speaks of the "truth or correctness" of sentence (uses) when discussing these topics. I will sometimes add this qualification so as to not misrepresent him.

(when understood as being part of the larger discourse). Hence, we get the desired result that (3) will not be true after all.

According to Relationism then, the truth of a sentence can vary depending on whether the sentence appears on its own or whether it appears with other sentences. Is this problematic? In reality, there is really nothing unusual about the general idea. Consider sentences with anaphoric expressions. The interpretation of a sentence uttered at a time will often depend on which sentences were uttered previously in the conversation. For example, an utterance of 'He is bringing beer' will vary in its interpretation depending on whether it is preceded by 'Bob is coming', by 'Juan is coming' or by nothing at all.

Let us be clear about this. We have to distinguish, semantically, a sentence appearing on its own versus a sentence appearing together with other sentences. When a sentence appears with other sentences, its correctness or truth value may be different from when it appears on its own (or with different sentences). When (3) appears together with other sentences such as those in (D1), it will not be true. Hence Relationism can explain how sometimes (3) may be not true.

Scott Soames (2010) points out that there may be discourses where sentences like (3) are intuitively not true, but there are no other statements asserted or presupposed such that the right coordination scheme is in place to assure the non-truth of (3). If this objection is right, then it looks like intra-discourse coordination is not enough to account for Frege's puzzle. Let us call this objection to Relationism: 'the intra-discourse coordination is not enough' (IDCNE) objection.

In Kit Fine's (2010b) response to Soames, Fine concedes the objection (though he was aware of the objection when he wrote *Semantic Relationism*). He then goes on to give a semantic account of attitude ascriptions which involves a different type of coordination relation: inter-discourse coordination. In the next section, I discuss Fine's new account and argue that it is problematic. In Section 5, I argue that Fine need not have moved to inter-discourse coordination, since the IDCNE objection is not successful. Intra-discourse coordination may be enough to solve Frege's puzzle.

4. Fine, inter-discourse coordination and *de dicto* attributions

According to Fine, a *de dicto* reading of 'Albert believes that Hesperus is a planet' will involve inter-discourse coordination.[5] On that reading, the sentence is true just in case (i) Albert has the belief with the traditional Millian content given in the that-clause of the sentence, *and* (ii), the name in the sentence is coordinated with the subject position of A's belief.[6] The key idea is that (ii) requires a notion of inter-discourse coordination which links uses of words and mental states.[7]

Fine agrees that this strategy is problematic. Focusing on (ii), the truth conditions of the proposition expressed by the sentence (on its *de dicto* reading) directly invoke the words that appear in the sentence itself. It may be thought implausible that the truth conditions of the proposition expressed by the sentence make reference to the words

[5] On Fine's account, there are two types of *de dicto* readings. The reading we are concerned with now (and which we are simply calling '*de dicto*') he calls 'strict *de dicto*'. The reading that is sensitive only to coordination occurring within 'that' clauses of attitude ascriptions he calls 'weak *de dicto*'.
[6] 'Belief' here is understood as a mental state, not a proposition (content).
[7] Fine does not specify how coordination between the words of an agent and the mental state of some other agent may arise. But we should not assume that the coordination here is just the result of a causal-historical chain along Kripkean lines. It may simply be the result of an intention to coordinate.

used to make the report in the first place. Kit Fine (2007) acknowledges this difficulty. It is not until his (2010b) response to Scott Soames that he gives a solution. We now turn to that.

Fine's new system posits three different kinds propositional content. The first type of content includes uncoordinated propositions along the lines of what a traditional Millian would accept. The second type of content includes coordinated and uncoordinated propositions. This is where Relationism comes in. Yet a third kind of content features *token* propositions. This is the new idea which Fine uses to solve the problem at hand. According to Fine, a *de dicto* use of 'Albert believes that Hesperus is a planet' (involving inter-discourse coordination) will express a *token* proposition in a universal *body* of token propositions. Here's what these notions mean. Each token proposition in the universal body of token propositions must be intrinsically identical to some Russellian proposition (understood as the second type of content) expressed by an agent at a particular time (as a result of forming a propositional attitude, performing a speech act etc.); and every Russellian proposition expressed by an agent at a particular time (again, understood as the second type of content) must be intrinsically identical to a token proposition in the universal body of propositions. Distinct proposition tokens in the universal body of propositions may be linked to each other. For example, if I say 'Hesperus is bright' and then follow up with 'Hesperus is beautiful', then there will be two token propositions in the body of propositions intrinsically identical to the Russellian propositions (of the second type) typically associated with those sentences. What is

novel here is that those token propositions will be coordinated in the “Hesperus” positions.

Now, if I also utter ‘Phosphorus is beautiful’ (which will not be coordinated with the first two utterances), the sentence will express yet another token proposition which will be numerically distinct from the previous two token propositions. However, this token proposition will be intrinsically identical to the token proposition expressed earlier by ‘Hesperus is beautiful’. On the other hand, if I were to repeat, ‘Hesperus is beautiful’, I would not be expressing yet a fourth token proposition. The token proposition I express is numerically identical to the one that I expressed earlier with those very words. What this suggests is that token propositions are individuated in part by their intrinsic features and in part by their relations to other tokens in the universal body of token propositions.

Token propositions will have token constituents. And these will also be individuated in part by their relations to other token constituents. Here is Fine:

> Just as we may differentiate a proposition into various token propositions with the universal body of propositions, we may differentiate an individual into various token individuals. For to each occurrence of an individual in a token proposition will correspond a token individual, as given by the class of all those occurrences of the individual with which it is coordinated....Any token proposition will involve a certain predicative content and certain token individuals; and it will be possible to uniquely determine the token proposition from its content and its token individuals. Token individuals are a little like ‘guises’ or individual concepts, but

> there is no special descriptive content or mode of presentation with which they must be associated (Fine 2010b, 479-480)

On this conception, a token individual may be the propositional contribution (on the third conception of content) of a use of a proper name. The token individual is individuated in part by its coordinative links. In this way, the content of an expression will be distinguished by what it is linked to (as well as other intrinsic properties). Fine seems to have solved the problem at hand. He is able to specify the proposition token expressed (on the third kind of content) by *de dicto* uses of sentences like 'Albert believes that Hesperus is a planet' (which will be a different from the token proposition normally expressed by 'Albert believes that Phosphorus is a planet') and presumably its truth conditions, without having to say that the proposition expressed (or its truth conditions) is about the words used in the report.

I do not believe the solution will work. The following example brings this out.[8] Suppose that person *A* utters 'Hesperus is a planet' at *t1*. Let us call this utterance '*At1*'. Person *A* utters the same sentence a little while later at *t2*. Let us call this second utterance '*At2*'. There is no funny business going on. For example, *A* does not have a "fractured" use of the name 'Hesperus'. Now the proposition tokens expressed by *At1* and *At2* must be numerically identical. There is nothing to distinguish them relationally or intrinsically so if any two utterances ever express the same token propositions, these will. But now suppose that person *B*, being a credulous person, overhears *At1* and comes to accept it right away because he fully trusts *A*. He reports it thus: 'I believe that

[8] An example with some similarities to the one presented here appears in Fine 2007, 106-107.

Hesperus is a planet' in a sense, copying *A*'s words in the that-clause. Let us call this utterance '*Bt3*'. The embedded that-clause will denote the same token proposition as what *At1/At2* expresses. This is because (a), intuitively, the that-clause expressed by *Bt3* is coordinated (in all positions) with what *At1*/*At2* expresses. And (b), the that-clause expresses a proposition intrinsically identical to what *At1/At2* expresses. Now, a little bit later, *B* overhears *At2*. Just as credulous as before, *B* comes to believe it. However, he is neutral as to whether this is the same "Hesperus" as before.[9] He reports his belief in the following manner: 'I believe that Hesperus is a planet'. Let us call this utterance '*Bt4*'. In this situation, the embedded clause will denote the same token proposition as what *At2* expresses. The explanation is the same as the reason the that-clause in *Bt3* expresses the same token proposition as what *At1* expresses. But now we have a problem since the that-clause in *Bt3* and *Bt4* denote the same token proposition. This is the same token proposition expressed by *At1*/*At2*. The problem arises because intuitively, those reports (*Bt3* and *Bt4*) report on distinct beliefs. Even our agent *B* will not take these reports to be reporting on the same belief. And this suggests that the individuating account Fine has put forward is not on the right track. At the very least, the example shows that Fine's new proposal does not meet his own standards. *Bt3* and *Bt4* are not intuitively coordinated (since *B* could raise a question as to whether the 'Hesperus' occurrences refer to the same thing), so they should not express the same token proposition.

It is not clear that the strategy could be fixed to get around this problem. Fine's core idea is to replace information about the pattern of coordination with a theoretical

[9] For *B*, there might be two planets named 'Hesperus'.

object (a "token" propositional constituent). But such a replacement is likely to fail if the coordination relation does not yield an equivalence class. And it won't if the relation is not transitive. The example just discussed shows that the coordination relation is not transitive. For related reasons, Fine rejects the transitivity of coordination for inter-discourse relation.[10] But if I am right, failure of transitivity dooms Fine's new approach.

5. Intra-discourse coordination and presupposition

The IDCNE objection assumes that some (non-true) *de dicto* uses of (3) can arise in discourses where there are no accompanying attitude attributions (which may then be coordinated with (3) in a manner that the Relationist can exploit). We saw that Kit Fine accepted this objection. To overcome this problem, Fine appealed to a semantic framework which invokes proposition tokens and inter-discourse relations. I argued that his system is subject to some difficulties. In this section, I argue that the assumption of IDCNE can be challenged. I will argue that *de dicto* uses of sentences like (3) are always accompanied, often implicitly, by other mental state attributions. And this may be enough for the Relationist to account for *de dicto* uses of (3) and Frege's puzzle.

To begin, let us start with Scott Soames' (2002) account of a *de dicto* use of (3) ('Lois Lane believes that Clark Kent can fly'). Recall that a central difficulty for traditional Millians is that they predict that (3) semantically expresses something true (on any reading), contrary to the intuition that its *de dicto* reading is false.

[10] Though he does not reject transitivity for the intra-discourse coordination relation. As we saw earlier, I reject it.

Soames' solution is that an utterance of (3), understood *de dicto*, will result in the assertion of a descriptively enriched proposition along the lines of (P1), which is false:

(P1) Lois Lane believes that [the x: (x is a bumbling reporter for *The Daily Planet* and x=Clark Kent)] can fly.

Crucially for Soames, and to preserve Millianism, the descriptively enriched proposition (P1) is *not* what is semantically expressed by (3). Rather, (P1) is one of the propositions asserted by the agent in a *de dicto* use of (3). In this manner, the *appearance* that the use of (3) is false is explained. Although, Soames still holds that what (3) semantically expresses is true.

I will not argue here for Soames' position. Soames defends the view at length in his 2002 book. Rather, I will use the view as a springboard to motivate a Relationist account of (3). If we think of the discourse associated with (3) as including not just what is semantically expressed by (3) but also what is asserted, then we may appeal to Relationism to account why (3) is not true. In particular, (3) semantically expresses a proposition (3)* in the discourse that is coordinated with the asserted (P1):

(3)* Lois Lane believes <**Clark Kent**, can fly>.

(P1) Lois Lane believes <[the x: (x is a bumbling reporter for *The Daily Planet* and x=**Clark Kent**)], can fly>.

Applying Fine's idea concerning the truth conditions of reports which accompany other reports, (3) in this discourse will be true only if Lois Lane has the following set of coordinated beliefs: {< **Clark Kent**, can fly>, <[the x: (x is a bumbling reporter for *The Daily Planet* and x=**Clark Kent**)], can fly>}. Lois Lane fails to have the coordinated set of beliefs. Hence, (3) in the discourse is not true, as predicted.

I agree with Soames that a sincere *de dicto* use of (3) may result in an assertion of a descriptive proposition such as (P1). Yet, it seems that the explanation for how one can assert (P1) with an utterance of (3) will turn on the idea that conversational participants must somehow already come into the conversation believing that Lois Lane thinks of Clark Kent in at least one way: as the bumbling reporter from *The Daily Planet* (or something similar).

To see this, consider a situation where *A* utters (3) ('Lois Lane thinks Clark Kent can fly') intending to use it in the *de dicto* sense (*A* hasn't read the Superman stories carefully). However, suppose that another conversational participant, *B*, rejects the idea that Lois Lane thinks of Clark Kent/Superman as the bumbling reporter from *The Daily Planet*. Suppose, for example, that *B* thinks that Lois Lane has only met Clark Kent/Superman when he was dressed in his superhero outfit. *B* understands fully what *A* is trying to communicate and that *A*'s utterance is supposed to be understood *de dicto*. However, *B*'s natural response to (3) would not be to say 'that is false', but rather to reject the assumption that Lois Lane even thinks of Clark Kent/Superman in the "Clark Kent" way. *B* would say something like 'Hey, wait a minute, back up, Lois Lane does not even think of that man as the bumbling reporter from *The Daily Planet*' (or

something similar). So there is a case to be made that the *de dicto* use of (3) *presupposes* that Lois Lane thinks of Superman/Clark Kent as the bumbling reporter from *The Daily Planet*.[11]

Further evidence for the "presupposition" idea comes from considering an utterance of the negation of (3) again understood *de dicto*: 'Lois Lane doesn't think Clark Kent can fly'. Here too, our conversational participant *B* would not respond to this utterance by saying 'False'. Rather, it is more natural for *B* to deny the assumption that Lois Lane thinks of Clark Kent as the reporter from *The Daily Planet*.

Here's our working hypothesis:

Presupposition Hypothesis (Version 1): A use of 'A V's that P' where 'P' contains a *de dicto* use of a name *N* which refers to *X* and 'V' is an attitude verb, will presuppose that *A thinks of X as D*.

I will not say much about how 'D' is specified. In the case we just saw (3), 'D' will be the description associated with the name ('Clark Kent') which enters into the proposition asserted (but not semantically expressed by (3)) on Soames' framework. If we follow Soames, it is these descriptions that enter into the presuppositions in the present system. However, we can accept the hypothesis without endorsing Soames' theory. In fact, the intuitive considerations I presented above in favor of the Presupposition Hypothesis (Version 1) are independent of Soames' theory.

[11] Of course, there are many accounts of presuppositions. I remain neutral between them. See Mandy Simons 2006 for an overview of some foundational issues.

The Presupposition Hypothesis (Version 1) together with the familiar (by now) Relationist idea gives us another way to account for the non-truth of (3). The discourse accompanying a *de dicto* use of (3) will now include what is semantically expressed by (3) (which is just (3)*) and the presupposition PR(3). These propositions are coordinated in the discourse:

(3)*: Lois Lane believes <**Clark Kent**, can fly>.

PR(3): Lois Lane thinks of **Clark Kent** as the bumbling reporter of *The Daily Planet*.

Following Kit Fine, (3) (in the discourse) will be true only if Lois Lane has the following coordinated set of beliefs {<**Clark Kent**, can fly>, <**Clark Kent**, the bumbling reporter of *The Daily Planet*>}. Since Lois Lane fails to have the coordinated set of beliefs, (3) will fail to be true. And this is in accordance with our intuitions. It is worth noting that the presupposition is not, strictly speaking, the same as the belief ascription whose content appears in the set above. The presupposition is the claim that Lois Lane thinks of Clark Kent as the reporter from *The Daily Planet*. This is not the same as the belief report which says that Lois Lane believes that Clark Kent is the reporter from *The Daily Planet*. However, the former transparently entails the latter. It is plausible then that the belief report is also presupposed.

The account proposed here makes the right prediction since the *de dicto* use of (3) will not be true. An advantage of this proposal over Soames' account is that on his

view, what is semantically expressed by (3) is still true (contrary to intuition). On the present view, what (3) semantically expresses is not true, so long as we treat what (3) semantically expresses not in isolation but as part of the discourse. Furthermore, the solution I developed does not appeal to inter-discourse relations, which we saw were problematic.

The strategy just outlined requires that in *de dicto* attitude ascriptions involving names, a definite description be available to the participants which specifies one way the agent of the attitude is thinking of the object in question. Although most cases may fit this model, not all cases follow this pattern.

Consider a situation where you overhear someone say 'Jones thinks that Sally is coming to dinner' and you are explicitly told this is a *de dicto* reading. You know very little about Sally or Jones, but you can understand the sentence and you can easily accept it as true. But later on (if you trust your source), you can report Jones' thought in a different conversation using the same sentence. And you can do this without having the faintest notion of how Jones is thinking of Sally.[12] However, since you are intending to make a *de dicto* report, you are assuming that Jones is thinking of Sally in some particular way and you intend your report to invoke that way.

If this is right, then your *de dicto* report may very well presuppose that Jones thinks of Sally in way C. Here, 'C' may be thought as a directly referential term for Jones' conception of Sally operative in the report. To be more precise, what is presupposed is the proposition semantically expressed by an instance of the schema

[12] Note that we cannot even say that Jones thinks of Sally as the person named "Sally". Nothing in the *de dicto* ascription requires that Jones even possess the name "Sally".

⌜Jones thinks of Sally in way C⌝ in which 'C' is replaced by a directly referential term. Crucially, this is not the same as an existentially generalized proposition to the effect that there is some way Jones thinks of Sally. Although, that may be presupposed too.

Also note that I am not assuming much about the nature of the conception or way of thinking we are designating with 'C'. I am neutral about this. The conception itself may be a descriptive content, a symbol in the language of thought, a mental file or something else altogether. I will not assume any particular account of what conceptions are. What is important for our purposes is that conceptions or "ways of thinking" of an object are themselves representations of objects. So a conception of Superman, for example, represents Clark Kent/Superman. This will be important in what follows.

We are now ready to state the revised version of the Presupposition Hypothesis, which takes into account the situation where no descriptive element is available in the sense just indicated.

Presupposition Hypothesis (Version 2): A use of 'A V's that P' where 'P' contains a *de dicto* use of a name *N* which refers to *X* and 'V' is an attitude verb, will presuppose that *A thinks of X as D* or presuppose that *A thinks of X in way C*.

'D' is as before, that is a stand-in for a definite description. 'C', as explained, is a stand-in for a conception of the object in question.

We now have the resources to handle the case we were just investigating where a person utters the *de dicto* 'Jones thinks Sally is coming to dinner' in a situation in

which the person cannot identify, via a definite description (which enters into the presupposition at issue), the way Jones thinks of Sally. What is presupposed is the proposition that Jones thinks of Sally in way C.

Modifying the previous model, the utterance will be true only if the semantic content of the utterance and the presupposition are both true, when understood as appropriately coordinated. In other words and simplifying a bit, the utterance will be true only if the proposition expressed by the following is true: 'Jones thinks **Sally** will come to dinner, where Jones is thinking of **Sally** (in that thought) in way **C**.' Here, the terms in bold signify that the corresponding propositional constituents are coordinated.[13] And that proposition will be true only if Jones has a belief that Sally will come to dinner where this belief (understood as a mental state not a content) has C as a component. In this manner, we may explain how the *de dicto* reading arises. This is what we were interested in understanding.

This account achieves the same effect as Fine's inter-discourse relations without invoking that problematic notion. On Fine's original view, a *de dicto* reading of 'Jones thinks Sally will come to dinner' will be true only if 'Sally' in that sentence use is coordinated with Jones' conception of Sally. On the view I am advocating, a related necessary condition is operative except that we are able to state it without mentioning the words used to make the report in the first place. The effect is achieved by directly invoking conceptions into the discourse as constituents of what is presupposed. And

[13] That Jones thinks of Sally under *C* may not be equivalent to Jones thinking some particular proposition. Hence, unlike the case from section 4, we do not assess the reports as true by comparing them to a set of coordinated propositions (which give the content of the beliefs).

these constituents are coordinated with the propositional components of the proposition expressed by the original utterance.

6. Conclusion

In this paper I have discussed Kit Fine's strategy of leveraging Relationism to solve some versions of Frege's puzzle. I have argued that his attempts to solve the puzzle by appealing to inter-discourse relations lead to serious difficulties. I have sketched a modification of the theory which appeals only to intra-discourse relations. Although I have not come close to giving a full account of the new theory here, I hope I have said enough to make the idea plausible and worthy of further investigation.

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