Is Superman a sense or a superhero?

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the puzzle introduced by Jennifer Saul, which involves swapping coreferential proper names in simple sentences such as (1) Benito dresses as Clark Kent, and (1*) Benito dresses as Superman. While the traditional Frege's puzzle suggests that such substitutions do not change the truth value of a sentence, Saul's puzzle suggests otherwise. My paper explains Saul's proposed solution based on conversational implicatures and argues against it. Then I introduce a different solution called the *Shifty-Fregean solution*, which states that proper names in some contexts refer to their senses rather than the reference. The paper argues that this solution is better than Saul's and outlines a new approach to Saul's puzzle. The paper is divided into three sections. First, I will provide an overview of Saul's puzzle and Frege's puzzle. Second, I will discuss Saul's solution and its rejection. Finally, I will develop the Shifty-Fregean solution.

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GENERAL AUDIENCE ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the puzzle introduced by Jennifer Saul, which involves swapping coreferential proper names (i.e. names that refer to the same object) in simple sentences such as (1) Benito dresses as Clark Kent, and (1*) Benito dresses as Superman. While the traditional Frege's puzzle suggests that such substitutions do not change the truth value of a sentence, Saul's puzzle suggests that they do. My paper explains Saul's proposed solution based on conversational implicatures (i.e. inferences that speakers make based on the literal meaning and the context of the conversation) and argues against it. Then I introduce a different solution called the *Shifty-Fregean solution*, which states that proper names in some contexts refer to their senses rather than the reference. The paper argues that this solution is better than Saul's and outlines a new approach to Saul's puzzle. The paper is divided into three sections. First, I will provide an overview of Saul's puzzle and Frege's puzzle. Second, I will discuss Saul's solution and its rejection. Finally, I will develop the Shifty-Fregean solution.

Dedication: To my hard-working mom

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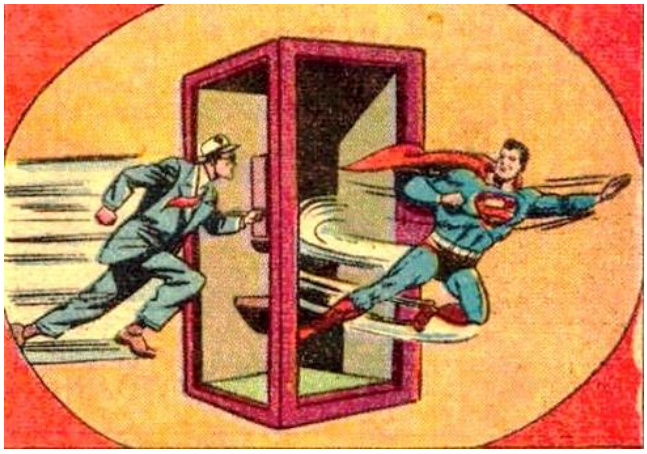
INTRODUCTION

Consider the situation depicted in this image:



Now, consider the following two statements:

a. Clark Kent went into the phone booth, and Superman came out.

b. Superman went into the phone booth, and Clark Kent came out.

(a) seems to describe the situation. However, you would not use (b) to describe the situation in question, since doing so would describe a different one: a guy with a superhero costume went into the phone booth and a guy with a suit came out. Nevertheless, since Superman *is* Clark Kent, using (b) should not be problematic. What this shows is that our intuitions about the truth of (a) and (b) change when we substitute coreferential proper names – i.e. names that refer to the same individual such as 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent.'

In *Substitution and Simple Sentences,* Jennifer Saul (1997) introduces this clever puzzle as an extension of Frege's puzzle[1]. Comparing sentences like 'Hesperus is Phosphorus' and 'Hesperus is Hesperus,' Frege argues that swapping coreferring terms in such simple sentences can change the cognitive significance of a sentence, but not the truth value.

[1] I explain this in further detail below; see also Saul 1999, 2007

(Frege allows for a change of truth-value in non-simple sentences – e.g. sentences with attitude reports – but the present case involves only simple sentences.) Unlike Frege's puzzle, Saul's puzzle seems to show that swapping coreferring terms can change not just the cognitive significance in these sentences, but also their truth values. That is surprising. On all standard accounts, swapping coreferring terms in simple sentences does not change the truth values.

On Saul's preferred solution, sentences like (a) and (b) do have the same truth values, and our intuitions about substituting coreferring terms in simple sentences are mistaken. According to Saul, these mistaken intuitions can be explained by pragmatics, i.e. a phenomenon beyond the literal meaning of the sentences. I want to consider and tentatively defend a different solution, which I will call *the Shifty-Fregean solution*. This solution uses different ingredients from Frege to endorse the view that proper names such as 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent', in some contexts, do not refer to the same object but instead refer to their senses i.e. a mode of presentation.

I will argue for two main ideas in this paper. First, I think that Saul's tentative solution is wrong. Saul appeals to conversational implicatures — i.e. inferences that speakers make based on the literal meaning and the context of the conversation — to explain our intuitions. She claims that (a) and (b) express the same information in the same context but both sentences have different conversational implicatures. Nonetheless, as conversational implicatures consist of the literal meaning and the context of the conversation, sentences (a) and (b) cannot have different conversational implicatures. Further, even if we accept her solution, I argue that Saul has to accept certain Fregean assumptions that lead to asserting that senses are the sort of things that go into phone

booths. Second, I will take seriously the Shifty-Fregean account in order to see how far I can take it. Saul rejects the Shifty-Fregean solution because senses are not the sort of things that go into phone booths. Actually, senses are abstract entities. I will follow this reasoning and claim that senses, to some extent, can be the sort of things that go into phone booths. Although I am not fully on board with this account, I will argue it is a better solution than Saul's.

This paper will be divided into three sections. In Section I, I will explain Saul's puzzle and Frege's puzzle. In Section II, I will describe Saul's preferred objection and explain how she uses conversational implicatures to explain our intuitions about substituting correfering proper names. Then, I will reject her solution. I think that two sentences have different conversational implicatures only if they express different information. In Section III, I will give the Shifty-Fregean account the best defense I can and leave the door open for a possible solution to the puzzle.

SECTION I: SAUL'S PUZZLE AND FREGE'S PUZZLE

Saul's puzzle

The following puzzle is what I called 'Saul's puzzle'. Take a look at these pair of simple sentences i.e. sentences that contain no attitudes, modal, or quotation marks:

(1) Clark Kent went into the phone booth, and Superman came out.

(1*) Clark Kent went into the phone booth, and Clark Kent came out.

(2) Superman was more successful with women than Clark Kent.

(2*) Superman was more successful with women than Superman.

(3) Benito dresses as Clark Kent.

(3*) Benito dresses as Superman.

Any pair of sentences, x and x*, above is puzzling. I think the best way to understand the puzzle is by showing the inconsistency between the following four claims:

Compositionality: The truth condition of a sentence is a function of the semantic value of its constituents and its syntactic structure.

Coreference: 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent' are coreferential.

Millianism: A name's semantic value is exhausted by its referent.

Heteronomy: (x) and (x*) can have different truth values and, thus, different truth conditions.

I will use sentences (3) and (3*) to explain the inconsistency between the four claims. However, any pair of sentences listed above can be used to generate the same inconsistency. Let's suppose that *Compositionality, Coreference,* and *Millianism* are true. If two sentences (3) and (3*) share the same values of their constituents and the same structure, they have the same truth conditions [*Compositionality*]. (3) and (3*) are identical except for the names 'Clark Kent' and 'Superman.' Also, 'Clark Kent' and 'Superman' refer to the same individual [*Coreference*], and both names have the same semantic values because they are coreferential [*Millianism*]. Therefore, (3) and (3*) must have the same truth value. However, this contradicts *Heteronomy.* Our intuitions tell us that (3) is true but (3*) is false. You might utter (3) if you see Benito with glasses and a suit, but you might utter (3*) if you see Benito with a red cape.

To solve the puzzle and pick which claim to reject, I am going to assess how plausible each of the four claims are.

The *Compositionality* principle is the least attractive to reject since it is a strong principle presupposed by philosophers and linguists in most of their works in semantics. Any non-trivial language must contain meaningful expressions built up from their meaningful parts (Szabó, 2008).

Coreference is also fairly obvious. 'Clark Kent' and 'Superman' refer to the same person.

Millianism is also well supported. After *Naming and Necessity* (1980), the view that the semantic value of a proper name is determined by the referent of that name in all possible situations ('worlds') became increasingly prevalent. There is nothing over and above the referent for the semantic value of proper names. To put it another way, you can refer to a

person without knowing anything about them. If I point out Benito, you can understand the sentence ‘Benito is crossing the street’ without knowing anything about Benito. Also, you can make claims about Benito. The contribution of the name to the whole sentence is the individual. The features of Benito are not relevant to the semantic value of proper names.

Finally, our intuitions support *Heteronomy*. It seems that (1), (2), and (3) have different truth values than (1*), (2*), and (3*), respectively. A semantic theory should give us an explanation of our conventional uses of linguistic expressions and of how those uses allow us to communicate with each other. It is important for semantic theories to be consistent with the speaker's intuition about the truth conditions that sentences have. For instance, the simplest way to explain why we are uncomfortable with (2*) is that it is false.

Now that I have explained the puzzle, you might notice two things. First, in order to solve the puzzle, we have to reject at least one of the four claims explained above. Second, this puzzle is similar to Frege’s puzzle, but not identical. Let’s see what Frege’s puzzle looks like.

Frege’s puzzle

There are two versions of Frege's puzzle: one involves identity claims while the second one involves propositional attitudes reports. I will explain the second puzzle because their truth values can differ when we substitute corefering proper names in sentences like (4) and (4*), unlike the first one.

(4) Benito believes that Superman is Clark Kent.

(4*) Benito believes that Superman is Superman.

Once again, we can understand the puzzle by showing the tension between the four claims as I explained above: *Compositionality, Coreference, Millianism,* and *Heteronomy*. Let's suppose that *Compositionality, Coreference,* and *Millianism* are true. If two sentences (4) and (4*) share the same values of their constituents and the same structure, they have the same truth conditions [*Compositionality*]. Both sentences are identical except for the names 'Clark Kent' and 'Superman,' which refer to the same individual [*Coreference*]. By *Millianism*, 'Clark Kent' and 'Superman' have the same semantic value because they have the same referent. Therefore, (4) and (4*) have the same truth conditions. This is contrary to *Heteronomy.* In actuality, (4) may be false while (4*) is true.

Frege, particularly, rejects *Coreference* and *Millianism* but accepts *Heteronomy*. According to Frege (1960), linguistic expressions have two semantic values: sense and reference. While the sense is how the object is presented (the mode of presentation), the reference is the object that is referred to. For example, the expressions 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent' refer to the same object, but they express different senses. While 'Superman' might express *the strongest superhero in Gotham City,* 'Clark Kent' might express *the journalist who is in love with Lois.* According to Frege, when an expression occurs in a propositional attitude report, the occurrence refers to the sense of the expression. For example, the occurrence of 'Superman is Clark Kent' embedded in (4) refers to the customary sense of the sentence, which is a thought. For Frege, propositional

attitude expressions connect a subject – e.g. Benito – and a thought – e.g. the sense of the sentence. Since there are different relations in (4) and (4*), they can have different truth values. Let me explain why (4) and (4*) convey different relations. In (4), the occurrence of 'believe' takes Benito (subject) and the thought that *the strongest superhero in Gotham City is the journalist who is in love with Lois*. In (4*), the occurrence of 'believe' take Benito and a different thought *the strongest superhero in Gotham City is the strongest superhero in Gotham City*. The occurrences of 'Superman is Clark Kent' and 'Superman is Superman' are able to express different thoughts because 'Clark Kent' and 'Superman' contributes different information to the sentences. Thus, since Benito believes different thoughts, (4) and (4*) can have different truth values.

Saul extends Frege's puzzle for propositional attitudes reports to simple sentences. However, unlike Frege's puzzle, it is not obvious how we can appeal to senses in these cases because there are no propositional attitudes directed toward propositions (i.e. thoughts). In the following two sections, I will explain how we can overcome the puzzle. To solve the puzzle, we have to reject at least one of the four claims explained above. While I take for granted that *Compositionality* is true, the dispute will be focused on *Coreference, Millianism,* and *Heteronomy*. In Section II, I will explain Saul's solution that rejects *Heteronomy*. In Section III, I will explain the Shifty-Fregean solution that rejects *Coreference* and *Millianism*.

SECTION II: SAUL'S SOLUTION AND OBJECTION

Saul's solution

Saul suggests that we can solve her puzzle by saying that (1) and (1*) have different conversational implicatures, and that is responsible for the intuitive difference in truth values and truth conditions.

(1) Clark went into the phone booth, and Superman came out.

(1*) Clark went into the phone booth, and Clark Kent came out.

If the implicature arising from (1*) is false, while the conversational implicature arising from (1) is true, then that might account for the fact that (1*) strikes us as misleading even if, in fact, both sentences are true.

Objection to Saul's solution

The problem with this solution is that two sentences that have the same literal meaning should have the same conversational implicatures when used in the same context, at least according to standard Gricean accounts of implicature (I will explain why in a moment). Moreover, since Saul has rejected the Shifty-Fregean solution, she is committed to saying that (1) and (1*) do have the same truth conditions and therefore the same literal meaning — since (1*) is obtained from (1) by substituting a coreferential term. But if that is right, then (1) and (1*) should have the same implicatures as well, and so Saul's way of explaining the contrast cannot get off the ground.

To understand why sentences with the same meaning cannot generate different conversational implicatures in the same context, let me explain how conversational implicature is typically taken to work. Conversational implicatures are generated by a combination of the literal meaning of the sentence and features of the context e.g. context of the conversation, the beliefs of the listener, and the beliefs of the speaker. So, if two synonymous sentences are uttered in the same context, then their implicatures will be the same — this feature of conversational implicatures is called *non-detachability* (Grice, 1989).

Here is an example to make this clear. Suppose your friend has asked you to come to his party. Here are two different ways you could respond. The first response is "I'm not into parties" and the second is "I don't like parties." Even though these sentences use different words, they have the same implicature: *I will not go to the party*. This is no coincidence: the two sentences mean the same thing, and so license the listener to make the same inferences. In general, conversational implicatures are generally understood to be inferences the listener makes on the basis of the literal meaning of the sentence uttered along with what they know about the features of the context e.g. the beliefs of the speakers. So, if two sentences are uttered in the same context and the sentences express the same literal meaning, the wording of the sentence should not typically make any difference to those inferences[2].

[2] There are particular cases also known as 'implicatures of manner' that are exceptions to this principle. See Blome-Tillmann (2013) and Rett (2020)

Now that we understand non-detachability, let us revisit (1) and (1*):

(1) Clark Kent went into the phone booth, and Superman came out.

(1*) Clark Kent went into the phone booth, and Clark Kent came out.

The only difference between (1) and (1*) is the substitution of the name "Clark" for the coreferential name "Superman". Further, if the semantic value of a name just is its referent [*Millianism*], and the semantic value of the sentence is a function of the values of its components [*Compositionality*], then it follows that (1) and (1*) have the same truth conditions or they express the same proposition. Consequently, they ought to have the same conversational implicatures as well, just as in the case above.

In a nutshell:

P1) If two proper names are coreferential, they have the same semantic value. [*Milianism*]

P2) If two sentences share the same values of their constituents and the same structure, then they express the same propositions. [*Compositionality*]

C1) (1) and (1*) express the same proposition. [From P1 and P2]

P3) If two sentences express the same proposition in the same context, they have the same conversational implicatures. [*Non-detachability*]

C2: (1) and (1*) have the same implicature. [from C1 and P3]

Or, to look at it in a different way, suppose Saul is right and (1) and (1*) really do have different conversational implicatures. Then it follows from non-detachability and Saul's other commitments that "Clark" and "Superman" are not coreferential names after all. By non-detachability, if two sentences have different implicatures, then they express different propositions. So, (1) and (1*) would have to express different propositions. From *Compositionality*, it would follow that "Superman" and "Clark" have different semantic values. And, finally, by *Millianism*, this would imply that "Superman" and "Clark" after all have different referents (at least as the names are used in (1) and (1*)) because the semantic value of a proper name is its referent. Hence, it looks like Saul ends up with something uncomfortably close to the Shifty-Fregean account after all.

In a nutshell,

P1) (1) and (1*) have different implicatures [Assumption: Saul is right]

P2) If two sentences have different implicatures, then they express different propositions in the same context [*Non-detachability*]

C1) (1) and (1*) express different propositions. [From P1 and P2]

P3) If two sentences express different propositions, they don't share the same values of their constituents and the same structure. [*Compositionality*]

C2) (1) and (1*) don't share the same values of their constituents i.e. 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent' don't have the same value [From C1 and P3].

P4) If two proper names have different semantic values, they are not coreferential [*Milianism*]

C3) 'Clark Kent' and 'Superman' are not coreferential after all [From C2 and P4].

One possible way for Saul to avoid the conclusion is to say that *Non-Detachability* does not apply to her examples. As Grice (1989) notices, there is an exception to the *Non-Detachability*: the conversational implicatures of *manner*. Such implicatures are not generated by what the speaker says (the literal meaning) but rather by the unusual wording employed. Here is an example to make this clear. Suppose you are with your

partner at a family meeting, and you are craving ice cream. You know that your little nephews will freak out if you say the word 'ice cream'. Then, instead of saying 'we should go for *ice cream*', you say to your partner 'we should go for *helado*,' since only your partner knows that '*helado'* means *ice cream* in Spanish. Unlike the former sentences, the latter sentence implies that *we should go for ice cream without the kids noticing*. This is a case where two sentences that express the very same proposition can have different implicatures based on the wording or the manner in which words are uttered[3].

Saul can argue that sentences like (1-3*), which involve coreferential terms, trigger implicatures of Manner. There is something about the manner in which the sentences are conveyed when we substitute coreferential terms. For instance, if we replace (1) with (1he), the implicature is not triggered.

(1) Clark Kent went into the phone booth, and Superman came out.

(1he) Clark Kent went into the phone booth, and he came out.

The fact that we are using different names referring to the same person might change the manner in which we are communicating information just like in the ice cream-helado case. As a result, two sentences expressing the same proposition may have different implicatures based on the wording or manner in which they are uttered.

Nonetheless, Saul cannot appeal to the implicatures of manner since her examples are clearly different. What triggers the manner implicature is flouting the following maxim:

[3] See Rett (2020) for a more detailed explanation of the implicatures of manner.

be perspicuous (Grice, 1989). In our example, since you do not want your nephews to know that you will go to get ice cream, you are unclear or obscure with the wording: you said 'helado' instead of 'ice cream' so they do not understand. However, if you utter (1) instead of (1*), you are not unclear using the names 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent.' Actually, it is common knowledge that Superman is Clark Kent. Also, using 'Clark Kent' or 'Superman', it is clear that we relate different features of the same person: we think of a man with a suit and the superhero with a red cape, respectively.

Another possibility for Saul to resist the argument would be to give up *Millianism* and save *Heteronomy*. For instance, she might adopt a contemporary Fregean account of names such as Chalmers' account (2002, 2006). From this point of view, sentences like (1) and (1*) can have the same truth value, but express different propositions, which might make a pragmatic difference.

However, there are some issues with this. First, suppose that the senses of 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent' fix different referents in different epistemically possible situations (as in Chalmers' account). There is still an issue of how these different situations make a pragmatic difference when is common knowledge that these situations are not the case. In our context, people know that Superman and Clark Kent are the same person, and they know that (1) entails (1*) and (1*) entails (1). Then, both co-entailing sentences must have the same implicature in our context. Second, as Saul herself notes, it seems desirable to keep Saul's puzzle solution uniform with Frege's original puzzle solution. In both propositional attitude reports and Saul's cases, our intuitions about the truth value of these sentences change. In principle, one solution should work for both puzzles given that Saul's puzzle is an extension of Frege's puzzle.

Since neither escape appears particularly promising, we are forced to conclude that Saul's pragmatic solution is wrong. As I showed, it is not easy to accept a difference in pragmatic implicature between (1) and (1*) while saving *Coreference.* Actually, a difference in conversational implicatures between (1) and (1*) still gives good reason to take seriously the possibility that 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent' may have different referents in the relevant contexts. Briefly, let me explain it to you. Remember, conversational implicatures are generated by the literal meaning (proposition) and the features of the context. As the features of the context are the same, the implicatures of (1) and (1*) must be generated by the propositions that they express. Only the names differ between the two sentences, which means the implicatures must be generated by the semantic value of the names. The semantic value of the names cannot be the individual since (1) and (1*) would generate the same implicature. So, the names must refer to something other than the individual to generate the implicature (denying *Coreference*). However, whatever it is, it has to go into the phone booth but does not come out. In the end, Saul has to say that something concrete goes and a different thing comes out from the phone booth. In the next section, I will explain in more detail this option using Fregean tools.

SECTION III: SHIFTY-FREGEAN ATTEMPT

Let us take that possibility seriously. Suppose 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent' do have different referents. This means we could extend Frege's way of accounting for the truth value change in belief reports (4) and (4*) to account for Saul-style examples like (1) - (3*) as well. What if we explain the difference in truth value by claiming that, in sentences like (1) - (3*), the proper names shift their referent and they actually refer to

their senses? I will call this the *Shifty-Fregean solution* to Saul's problem. It is Fregean in that it extends Frege's strategy for substitutions in belief reports, and it is shifty because it proposes to shift the referent of the name. Saul considers this possible solution and quickly discards it because, according to her, it is nonsensical. However, I will take it seriously and see how far we can take this.

Shifty-Fregean Attempt

The Shifty-Fregean rejects *Coreference* and *Millianism* and embraces *Heteronomy* and *Compositionality*. That is, 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent' do not refer to the same object [*Coreference*], and a name's semantic value is not exhausted by its referent [*Millianism*]. However, the Shifty-Fregean account nevertheless contends that our intuitions in sentences like the following are correct [*Heteronomy*]

(2) Superman was more successful with women than Clark Kent.

(2*) Superman was more successful with women than Superman.

Just as expressions shift their referent when they refer, in propositional contexts, the Shifty-Fregean can say that the occurrences of 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent' also shift their referent. Instead of referring to their customary referent — the individual — they instead refer to their customary senses — the mode of presentation of 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent', respectively. This shift in referent explains why (2) is true and (2*) is false. Thus, according to Saul, the Shifty-Fregean would say that proper names in some simple sentences like (2) and (2*) refer to their customary sense.

How does this solution work? We can interpret (2) and (2*) shifting the referent of 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent' in (2) and (2*):

(2_1) The mode of presentation of Superman was more successful with women than the mode of presentation of Clark Kent.

(2^*_1) The mode of presentation of Superman was more successful with women than the mode of presentation of Superman.

In (2_1) and (2^*_1), we are not talking about the individual, but about senses.

We can summarize these three competing views as follows:

	Saul's view	Shifty-Fregean view	Contemporary Fregean
Compositionality	✓	✓	✓
Millianism	✓	X	X
Coreference	✓	X	✓
Heteronomy	X	✓	X

Saul's objection to the Shifty-Fregean view

Saul (1997) objects to the Shifty-Fregean view because she thinks that senses are not the sort of thing that can go into phone booths or have varying degrees of romantic success with other people. Rather, *individuals* are the sorts of things that can go into phone

booths and have varying degrees of romantic success with other people. This means that there is no way for (2_1) or (2_1*) to be true. Rather, In both cases, the statements would always be false because senses are not more successful with women than other senses, and senses are not more successful than themselves. Therefore, the Shifty-Fregean view has not explained why (2) is true but (2*) is false. Instead, the predictions it delivers are different: (2) and (2*) are always false. Saul concludes that if this Shifty-Fregean view is correct, then advocates of it will have to reject *Heteronomy* because our intuitions would be false.

Seeing how far we can take the Shifty-Fregean view: response to Saul's objection

Can we salvage the Shifty-Fregean view as a response to Saul's puzzle? For the solution to work, senses would have to be concrete entities, which can enter and exit phone booths and which may be more and less attractive to people. While I will not take a definite stance here on what exactly these concrete entities are, the metaphysical literature supplies a range of entities that could potentially play the role of concrete senses. For example, senses might be aspects of objects, spatiotemporal parts of objects[4] or *qua-objects*[5]. In this paper, I will not endorse any particular candidate, but I want you to notice that there are different options that are available for this proposal. Further, even if we grant that the Shifty-Fregean account is a radical view, I will show that it is nevertheless still better than Saul's preferred solution.

Here is how I am going to explain why we should prefer the Shifty-Fregean view to Saul's view. Let's first suppose that senses can be interpreted as *aspects of objects*. I

[4] Sider (1996)
[5] Fine (1999), Baxter (1999), Asher (2006), Loets (2021)

think, in this way, the mode of presentation of 'Superman' might be more successful with women than the mode of presentation of 'Clark Kent.' 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent' express different ways of presenting the same person i.e. different aspects of a person. That is why people's beliefs about Clark Kent might be different or why different properties of the same object may be more attractive than others. For instance, suppose that you are talking with a person, *Benito*. Benito presents himself in two different ways: as the most annoying co-worker in the company and as the funniest friend in the Bachata club. I think that one could reasonably think that Benito's friendly presentation is more attractive than Benito's annoying presentation.[6] Note that this does not mean that Benito is a different person in different situations. Instead, it means that the way Benito presents himself is different.

Applying this reasoning to (2), it follows that:

(2_2) Clark Kent's superhero presentation was more successful with women than Clark Kent's journalist presentation.

One way to interpret (2_2) is that a way of dressing might make you more attractive than another way of dressing. Another intuitive interpretation is that being the strongest superhero makes you more attractive than being a journalist. Women can be more attracted to specific features of Clark Kent when he is in his Superhero's presentation and that is why Superman was more successful with women than Clark Kent. However, we should be careful with this characterization. Not every aspect of objects would be

[6] This intuition is also noted by Forbes (1997). He claimed that the mode of presentation is something like a way of presenting oneself to others. He came to this thought by sentences with the expression 'so-attired'. For example, Superman, so-attired, was more successful with women than Clark Kent, so-attired.

considered a new mode of presentation. If Superman cut his hair, we would not say that there is a new mode of presentation. It seems there are fixed sets of aspects that make a mode of presentations. For example, being a superhero, wearing a cap, wearing a blue costume, having super human strength, etc.

This solution may have some merit, but it does not solve Saul's puzzle. Specifically, there are some further issues that must first be addressed.

The phone booth case: I have guided your intuitions to understand modes of presentations as concrete rather than abstract entities because, in (2) and (2*), it seems that we don't mean that an abstract entity is more successful with women, but a concrete one. However, (1) and (1*) are even more problematic cases:

(1) Clark Kent went into the phone booth, and Superman came out.

(1*) Clark Kent went into the phone booth, and Clark Kent came out.

In (1) and (1*), we have to say that a sense went into the phone booth, and another sense came out. This result seems intuitively odd. Nevertheless, if we want to develop the Shifty Fregean account, we have to find some way of making plausible the thought that senses actually go into phone booths. Here is how we might do this. Remember that 'sense' is a term of art. It is not an ordinary English concept. So, what these examples might show is that we need a conception of senses as concrete rather than abstract objects after all, and we have some candidates as I mentioned above: aspects of objects, spatiotemporal parts of objects or *qua*-objects.

Let me explain how we can use the phone booth example to appeal to the senses as *qua-objects*[7]. *Qua-objects* consist of some *matter* — clay, wool, person, etc — in a particular *form* — properties or relations structuring the matter (Fine, 1982, 1999; Loets, 2021). A bit more formally, the *qua object* are entities that consist of *a* (matter) together with a property or relation *F* (form), which can be repressed by '*a* qua *F*' or '*a/F*.' Like ordinary objects, they are bearers of properties. However, unlike ordinary objects, they are objects under descriptions — the objects include these descriptions. Let me introduce a helpful distinction by Baxter (1999). An object considered unqualified (an ordinary object) is, for example, a lump of clay. An object considered qualified is, for example, a clay statue or a clay *qua* statue. Despite being materially identical, a clay *qua* lump and a clay *qua* statue differ in their properties. Therefore, the clay *qua* lump and the clay *qua* statue are different entities[8]. What is particularly interesting about these cases is that we can naturally phrase *qua-objects* with expressions like "insofar as," "as," or "to the extent that." For example, we say sentences like 'The clay *as a statue* is elegant, but *as clay* it is not' or 'Benito *as immigrant* is oppressed, but Benito *as men* is not oppressed.'

Let's apply senses as *qua-objects* to Saul's puzzle. We can analyze sentences (1) and (1*) as follows:

[7] *Qua-objects* have been used in multiple metaphysical debates, such as the paradox of coincident objects, material composition, social roles, composition as identity, and others.

[8] Some philosophers, such as Baxter (1999), argue that the base object and the derivative *qua objects* are numerically identical. Others, such as Fine (1986, 1999), argue that they are different. It is possible that the base object exists in a possible world w, while the *qua-object* does not. For example, it is possible for Benito to exist in *w* while Benito *qua immigrant* cannot — since being an immigrant is contingent on Benito.

(1-qua) Clark Kent *qua journalist* went into the phone booth, and Superman *qua superhero* came out.

(1*-qua) Clark Kent *qua journalist* went into the phone booth, and Clark Kent *qua superhero* came out.

By doing so, we not only explain how we can individuate senses but also block the anti-substitution intuitions that sentences like (1*), (2*), and (3*) raise. Also, it is important to highlight that Clark Kent *qua journalist* and Superman *qua superhero* are different entities. While Clark Kent *qua journalist,* who occupies a specific role in the comic (i.e. being the Daily Planet's best journalist), went into the phone booth, another entity, Clark Kent *qua superhero,* who occupies the role of superhero, came out.

Notwithstanding, one concern that arises is whether or not concrete senses play the same theoretical role as abstract senses play. I think that, even though Frege considers senses as abstract entities that belong to a different realm, there are no significant theoretical roles that stop us from treating senses as *qua-objects* or concrete objects in general. On the contrary, there are some ways in which a concrete sense plays the role that Frege wants senses to play. Frege rejected that senses are mental or subjective because senses are not private and we can share them with other people (Frege, 1956). Also, he wants senses to be objective in nature. Senses do not depend on people's perspectives: they are stable and shareable. Senses, understood as aspects of objects, are compatible with both: they are non-mental and objective[9]. Further, there are some theoretical advantages if we consider senses as concrete objects. Treating senses as abstract entities comes with plenty of

[9] There might be some further theoretical worries about senses such as senses determining reference, or speakers must know senses in order to use competently an expression

headaches. For instance, since thoughts are abstract objects and they belong to a third realm, how do we come to know about abstract senses? One response is that we grasp them, but what is this mysterious grasping relationship? Nonetheless, if senses are concrete, then we will not have this problem because we can be in contact with senses. We can directly perceive them and have beliefs about them.

Ambiguity problem: Another issue that arises is if proper names can refer to their customary referent and to their senses, how is it that in the sentence 'Superman is Clark Kent' both names refer to the same individual and not to different senses? What is the rule that tells us when the referent must be shifted? There is no clear demarcation for simple sentences where proper names refer to their customary references or their senses. This issue, however, does not appear to be a knockdown objection. I think the fact that proper names might refer to their customary references or to their senses counts as a case of ambiguity. For example, 'I'm going to the bank' can be interpreted in two different ways because 'bank' can refer to a building or to a sloping raised land. Similarly, sometimes 'Superman' refer to the individual and sometimes refer to its sense. There is no rule for that. It is a general problem of semantic theorizing. Whereas in 'Superman is Clark Kent', it is obvious that both names refer to an individual, in 'Superman is more attractive than Clark Kent,' the names refer to their senses.

CONCLUSION

We have discussed Saul's puzzle about simple sentences. I construed the puzzle by the inconsistency of the four following claims:

Compositionality: The truth condition of a sentence is a function of the semantic value of its constituents and its syntactic structure.

Coreference: 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent' are coreferential.

Millianism: A name's semantic value is exhausted by its referent

Heteronomy: (x) and (x*) can have different truth values.

In this paper, I rejected Saul's preferred solution and argued for the Shifty-Fregean view. While Saul rejects *Heteronomy,* I embrace *Heteronomy,* and reject *Coreference* and *Millianism*. In Section II, I argued that Saul's solution does not work by relying on *Non-Detachability:* two sentences cannot have different implicatures if they express the same proposition. Then, in section III, I argued that we have to take the Shifty-Fregean attempt seriously and leave the door open for it as a viable solution to Saul's puzzle. Although the Shifty-Fregean account is not without its flaws, I do think that it is better than the pragmatic approach that Saul endorses. This is because Saul's solution actually ends up suffering from the same problems she raised for the Shifty-Fregean account. As I showed, if we accept Saul's solution, then we have to say that 'Superman' and 'Clark Kent' are not coreferential, some concrete entities – that are not individuals – go into and come out of phone booths.

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