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Article

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INTENTION AND RESPONSIBILITY IN DEMONSTRATIVE REFERENCE. A VIEW FROM THE SPEECH ACT THEORY[1]

SUMMARY: Korta and Perry (2011) argue that the object a speaker refers to with a demonstrative expression combined with a pointing gesture is determined by her directing intention rather than by her demonstration. They acknowledge that our use of the ordinary concept of "what is said" is affected by our judgements about the speaker's responsibility for the results of her careless pointing; however, they claim that the effects are perlocutionary and have no bearing on determining the referential content of the speaker's act.

I argue that the consequences of careless pointing are illocutionary and play a role in determining demonstrative reference. I also distinguish between two types of referential content which are attributable to the speaker's utterance and shape its discursive behaviour: what is intended, which is determined by the speaker's directing intention, and what is public, which depends on what she can legitimately be held responsible for.

KEYWORDS: demonstrative reference, demonstrative gestures, directing intentions, responsibilism, locution, illocution, perlocution.

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1. Introduction

In *Critical Pragmatics*, Kepa Korta and John Perry (2011) offer an original approach to pragmatics which results from integrating three theoretical perspectives: John L. Austin's (1975) idea of language use as action, Paul H. Grice's (1989) model of communication as the practice of expressing and recognizing communicative intentions, and John Perry's (2001) distinction between reflexive and referential truth-conditions. They use the resulting framework to develop a comprehensive account of reference and communication. In particular, they examine cases of demonstrative reference and argue that the object a speaker refers to with a demonstrative expression accompanied by a pointing gesture is determined by her directing intention rather than by her demonstration. Following David Kaplan (1979; cf. Bach 1992a; 1992b; Reimer 1991a; 1991b; 1992), they consider cases in which the object pointed to or otherwise demonstrated by the speaker is not the one she intends to refer to; they argue that it is the latter, not the former, that contributes to the referential content of her act. Korta and Perry acknowledge that the way we use the ordinary concept of "what is said" is affected by our judgements about the speaker's responsibility for the unintended results of her pointing; however, they claim that the effects are perlocutionary and have no bearing on determining reference.

My aim in this paper is to use the framework of the Austinian theory of speech acts (Austin, 1975; 2013; Sbisà, 2002; 2007; 2009; 2013a; 2013b; Witek, 2015c; 2021; 2022) to develop and motivate a speech act-oriented perspective on demonstrative reference, i.e., on situations in which a speaker uses a demonstrative expression, e.g., "this", "that", "this *F*", or "that *F*", to refer to the object she points to or otherwise demonstrates. In making my argument, I adopt the responsibilist approach to actions in general (Hart, 1946; Paprzycka, 2014) and speech acts in particular (Navarro-Reyes, 2010; 2014; Sbisà, 2007); that is to say, I take it that the purpose of action sentences of the form "*A* does/did φ" is to attribute responsibility for producing certain outcomes to *A* "on the basis of generally accepted rules of conduct" (Paprzycka, 2014, p. 328). *Pace* Korta and Perry, I argue that the consequences of inept or careless pointing are illocutionary and play a role in determining demonstrative reference. More specifically, I distinguish between two types of referential content which are attributable to the speaker's utterance and shape its discursive behaviour: *what is intended*, which is determined by the speaker's directing intention, and *what is public*, which depends on what she is held responsible for in the light of how competent hearers understand her act. In my view, these two notions are complementary rather than alternative to each other; we need both of them to account for discourse dynamics.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. In Section 2, I offer a short presentation of key elements of both the speech act theoretical framework and the responsibilist or Hartian perspective on actions as adopted in this paper. In Section 3, I discuss David Kaplan's (1979; 1989) famous dilemma regarding demonstrative reference and, next, in Section 4, I present Kepa Korta and John

Perry's (2011) solution to it. In Section 5, I focus on cases of demonstrative reference that involve inept or careless pointing and discuss what Korta and Perry call the "forensic element" affecting our common notion of "what is said". In Section 6, I introduce and motivate the notion of unintended, albeit felicitous acts of demonstrative reference. In Section 7, I draw a distinction between *what is intended* and *what is public* construed as two types of referential content and, next, I use it to account for the coherence and dynamics of a few dialogues. In Section 8, I discuss some objections that might be raised against the proposed model of demonstrative reference and demonstrative acts. Finally, in Section 9, I provide a short summary of the results achieved.

Before I proceed to details, however, I would like to make three general remarks. First, my main focus in this paper is the prospect of developing a speech act-based model of demonstrative reference which would do justice to the conflicting intuitions underlying the dilemma posed by Kaplan. To this end, I critically examine Korta and Perry's (2011) attempt to account for demonstrative reference with the help of elements of speech act theoretical framework and argue that it fails to do justice to how the illocutionary aspect of an utterance contributes to the determination of its referential content. Second, what I call the Austinian approach (Navarro-Reyes, 2010; 2014; Sbisà, 2002; 2006; 2007; 2009; Witek, 2015c; 2021; 2022) should be distinguished from Austin's (1975) original theory of speech acts. The former is inspired by the latter and can be best understood as a metatheoretical perspective putting constraints on our theorising on different phenomena characteristic of linguistic practice. The account offered in this paper results from adopting the Austinian approach as well as the Hartian perspective inherent in it to the phenomenon of demonstrative reference. Third, to keep the length of this paper within reasonable limits, I leave aside the extensive literature on the topic of demonstrative reference that has appeared over the last 30 years, but focus instead on the classical presentation or the intention/demonstration dilemma originally posed by Kaplan and further elaborated by Marga Reimer (1991a; 1991b; 1992) and Kent Bach (1992a; 1992b), as well as on some relevant recent works (Bach, 2017; Ciecierski, Makowski, 2022; Heck, 2014; Leth, 2020; 2021; Mount, 2008; Smit, 2012; 2018).

2. The Speech Act Theoretical Framework and the Hartian Perspective on Action

Austin famously distinguished between three aspects of what he called "the total speech-act in the total speech-situation" (Austin, 1975, p. 148): the locutionary act, the illocutionary act, and the perlocutionary act. They are three different speech actions individuated and defined by reference to how they affect the context in which they are performed. *Locutionary acts* produce *locutions* understood as linguistic representations of worldly states; in short, they are defined by reference to their *representational effects*. *Illocutionary acts* bring about changes in the domain of deontic facts construed as commitments, obligations,

rights, and entitlements of the participants in conversation and possibly other relevant social agents (Austin, 1075, p. 117; c.f. Sbisà, 2002; 2007; 2009; 2013a; Witek, 2015c; 2021); in other words, different types of illocutionary acts—and, by the same token, different *illocutionary forces*—are defined in terms of their *normative effects*. *Perlocutionary acts*, in turn, "produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience, or of the speaker, or of other persons" (Austin, 1975, p. 101); utterances described as perlocutionary acts, then, are defined by reference to their *consequential* rather than *normative effects*.

By way of illustration, let us consider a situation in which Ann utters the following words:

(1) Peter is a friend.

In uttering sentence (1), Ann produces a linguistic representation of a certain worldly state. In other words, she performs the locutionary act of saying that Peter is a friend and the locution she thereby creates has a certain *meaning* which involves a more or less definite *sense*, a more or less definite *reference*, and a certain *illocutionary act potential* (Austin, 1975, p. 93; cf. Forguson, 1973; Witek, 2015b). The sense and reference of her words, which constitute the so-called rhetic content of her act, are determined by what Austin (2013, p. 5) called descriptive and demonstrative conventions, respectively. The illocutionary potential of sentence (1), in turn, is an aspect of its phatic meaning which is determined by the rules of the grammar, i.e., the syntax-cum-semantics, of the language Ann speaks. Taking into account the illocutionary potential of sentence (1), Ann can be legitimately taken to perform the direct and literal act of ranking Peter as a friend, provided the current topic under discussion is the question of who Peter is, or that of giving an example of a friend, provided the currently discussed topic is the question of who is a friend.

Ranking and giving examples are illocutionary acts. The illocutionary act is the act of uttering certain words or, more precisely, of using a certain locution with a certain more or less definite *force*. The force of an act can be defined by reference to its normative or conventional effect. Roughly speaking, in uttering (1) Ann performs a verdictive (Austin, 1975) or assertive (Searle, 1979) act that takes effect by bringing about her responsibility for the truth of the proposition that Peter is a friend. More specifically, in uttering (1), Ann puts constraints on the range of subsequent conversational moves she and her interlocutors can appropriately make; for instance, it would be inappropriate for her to say at some latter point of the conversation that Peter cannot be regarded as a friend or that there are no friends. What is more, part of the normative effect of her act of ranking Peter as a friend or her act of giving an example of a friend is the fact that her interlocutors are entitled to believe and claim in appropriate conversational contexts that Peter can be regarded as a friend and that Peter is an example of a friend. As Mary Kate McGowan (2019, pp. 21–13) would put it, illocutionary

acts enact new conversational and practical norms that are registered by the score of conversation. In sum, in making a felicitous illocutionary act, the speaker modifies the network of normative relations between her and her interlocutors (Heal, 2013); the relations are normative because they are best described in terms of commitments, responsibilities, rights, and entitlements.

Marina Sbisà (2007; 2009) notes that the normative effect of an illocutionary act—and, by the same token, its force—is conventional in that it exists by virtue of a tacit agreement between the conversing agents. The agreement can be reached either by default or through the process of interactional negotiation (Sbisà, 2013b; cf. Witek, in press). Roughly speaking, there are two factors that play key roles in negotiating the actual force of an act: the speaker's illocutionary intention, i.e., her intention to utter certain words with a certain more of less definite force, and the hearer's uptake, i.e., the way they read the speaker's utterance in the light of its *illocutionary physiognomy* (Sbisà, 2006, p. 153) understood as a cluster of its lexical, grammatical, prosodic, gestural, and situational features which can function as indicative devices of the illocutionary force (for a discussion, see Austin, 1975, pp. 73–77). Following Navarro-Reyes (2010; 2014), we can say that the elements of the illocutionary physiognomy of an act are reliable though defeasible criteria that the hearer uses to attribute a certain illocutionary intention to the speaker.

In uttering (1), Ann can also convince her interlocutors that Peter can be regarded as a friend. She can also calm them down or surprise them. Convincing, calming, and surprising are perlocutionary acts which are defined by reference to their characteristic consequential effects. It is instructive to note that some perlocutionary effects of an act can be distinguished as its "perlocutionary objects" (Austin, 1975, p. 118; cf. Sbisà, 2013a, p. 36) or responses it invites "by convention" (Austin, 1975, p. 117; cf. Witek, 2015a). For instance, the fact that Ann's interlocutors come to believe that Peter is a friend is a perlocutionary object of the illocutionary act she makes in uttering (1); their being surprised by what they hear, by contrast, is a merely perlocutionary effect of her words. In sum, getting one's interlocutors to believe that *p* is a perlocutionary act standardly associated with asserting that *p*; by contrast, calming down, surprising, amusing, and so on, produce merely perlocutionary consequences of an utterance.

In short, locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts are three different ways, as Austin (1975) would put it, of doing things with words. We distinguish between them by taking into account three different outcomes for the production of which the speaker can legitimately be held responsible: representational, normative, and consequential, respectively. In short, locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts are not so much *recognized* as *attributed* along the lines posited by the Hartian theory of action. According to Herbert L. A. Hart (1946) and his followers (Paprzycka, 2014), the purpose of action sentences of the form "*A* does/did *φ*" is to attribute "responsibility for certain events to [*A*] on the basis of generally accepted rules of conduct" (Paprzycka, 2014, p. 328). Hart distinguishes between *positive conditions* under which one can legitimately attribute

responsibility for producing a certain outcome to an agent, and *negative conditions* that defeat the prima facie appropriateness of that attribution. In short, to define a certain type of action is to specify positive and negative conditions of attributing responsibility for producing its characteristic effect. For instance, John's arm moving in such a way as to knock a glass off the table is a positive condition under which he can legitimately be attributed responsibility for breaking the glass; his arm moving as a result of a spasm, in turn, is a negative condition that defeats the prima facie appropriateness of that attribution.[2] Analogously, Ann's utterance of (1) in a certain context is a positive condition of attributing to her responsibility for giving her interlocutors a reason to think that Peter is a friend; if she uttered (1) under duress, however, the attribution in question would be defeated. In general, ascriptions of responsibility are defeasible, i.e., "are subject to termination" (Hart, 1946, p. 175) in a number of defeating or negative conditions, the common feature of which is that in one way or another they "affect the agent's control of an activity" (Paprzycka, 2014, p. 331). Likewise, Sbisà (2007, p. 465) argues that the ascription of a certain illocutionary force to an utterance is defeasible, i.e., it is "liable to turning out null and void under certain conditions". In short, responsibilism about action seems to be inherent in some Austin-inspired theories of speech acts, e.g., the normative account proposed by Marina Sbisà (2007; cf. Witek, 2015c; 2021; 2022) and the externalist model developed by Jesús Navarro-Reyes (2010; 2014).[3]

As Katarzyna Paprzycka (2014, p. 330) notes, to adopt the Hartian perspective is not to reject the notion of intentional action but, rather, to claim that it is conceptually posterior to the notion of publicly attributable action.[4] The same holds for the Austin-inspired theories of speech acts mentioned in the previous paragraph. For instance, Navarro-Reyes (2010; 2014) argues that normally the words the speaker utters in a certain context are reliable criteria we use in attributing a certain illocutionary intention-in-action to her; he adds, however, that the attribution is defeasible and in some circumstances we have to acknowledge that the illocutionary act legitimately attributed to the speaker, though felicitous and successful, has been performed unintentionally. Analogously, in Section 6 below I argue that normally the speaker's demonstrative gesture is a reliable criterion for her directing intention, i.e., the intention that directs her act of demonstrative reference; this criterion, however, is defeasible and, under some circumstances, we have to acknowledge that a pointing gesture made by the speaker constitutes

[2] I borrow this example from Katarzyna Paprzycka (2014, p. 328).

[3] For a discussion of the relationship between Hart's legal theory and Austin's theory of speech acts, see Matczak, 2019.

[4] In a similar vein, Palle Leth (2021) claims that to reject the intentionalist perspective on meaning-constitution is not to "diminish the fundamental role of speaker intentions in interpretation". He argues, rather, that "in most cases nothing will be a reasonable interpretation unless it corresponds to what the hearer had good reasons to take as the speaker's intended meaning" (Leth, 2021, p. 295).

a successful albeit unintended act of demonstration, where "successful" means "contributing the demonstrated object to the referential content of the speaker's act".

Of course more could be done to present the Austinian approach to speech acts and the Hartian perspective on action in a comprehensive manner. It is worth stressing, however, that my aim in this section is to set the stage for the subsequent discussion, i.e., to introduce those elements of the Austinian and Hartian frameworks which can be useful in the discussion offered in the remaining part of this paper. In what follows, then, I use the above-characterized notions of locution, illocution, perlocution, illocutionary physiognomy, and defeasible action-attributions to develop a speech act-based account of demonstrative reference and acts of demonstration.

3. Kaplan's Dilemma

In "Dthat", David Kaplan (1979) considers a hypothetical situation in which he points behind himself and says:

(2) Dthat is a picture of one of the greatest philosophers of the twentieth century.[5]

He is unaware that someone has just replaced the portrait of Rudolf Carnap, which hung at the wall behind him, with a portrait of Spiro Agnew. Intuitively, Kaplan says something false of the object he refers to. He intends to refer to the picture of Carnap, which is the object he has in mind, but his demonstration seems to override this intention and it is the picture of Agnew that gets secured as the referent.

Kaplan uses example (2) to argue that the object the speaker refers to with a demonstrative expression combined with a pointing is determined by her gesture. In "Afterthoughts", however, he claims that demonstrative reference is determined by the speaker's directing intention "to point at a perceived individual on whom he has focused" (1989, p. 582). He argues that demonstrative gestures do not determine reference, but merely help hearers to identify what speakers refer to; in short, they are of pragmatic rather than semantic importance. He also suggests that the Carnap-Agnew case is atypical and as such should be ignored.

Kaplan's discussion of the Carnap-Agnew case has given rise to the following dilemma: either demonstrative reference is determined by the speaker's pointing gesture, or it is fixed by her directing intention. According to Marga Reimer (1991a; 1991b), the former is the case; she discusses a number of cases in which the demonstrated object, although it is not what the speaker intends to

[5] Kaplan introduces the expression „Dthat" to represent the demonstrative use of "that". It is worth stressing that Kaplan (1989, p. 528) focuses on what he calls "perceptual demonstratives". According to Reimer (1991, p. 189), what he has in mind are "expressions traditionally classed as demonstratives ('this', 'that', 'this *F*', 'that *F*', 'he', 'she', etc.), which are used to 'pick out' objects or individuals within the perceptual field of the speaker and audience". I thank one of the reviewers for suggesting that I make this point.

refer to, gets secured as the referent of the relevant demonstrative expression.[6] By contrast, Kent Bach (1992b, p. 295) argues that "[n]ot just any intention to refer to something is a specifically referential intention". According to his version of the directing intention theory (1992a; 1992b), demonstrative reference is determined by the speaker's directing intention which is part of her *reflexive* communicative intention: the intention whose "fulfilment consists in *its* recognition" (Bach, Harnish, 1979, p. 15). He claims that the speaker's demonstrative reference is determined by her reflexive intention to get the hearer to identify a certain individual by getting them to think of it as the object she points at. Viewed from this perspective, then, the object determined by Kaplan's directing intention behind his utterance of (2) is the portrait of Agnew, although what he has in mind is the portrait of Carnap. In general—Bach (1992b, p. 300) argues—acts of demonstration do not override directing intentions, but are incorporated in them.

4. Korta and Perry's Solution to Kaplan's Dilemma

In *Critical Pragmatics*, Korta and Perry (2011, pp. 46–58) offer an original variant of the directing intention theory. They claim that the reference-determining intention is the speaker's directing "intention to refer to the object [her] motivating belief is about, by using an expression, or some other intention-indicating device, or a combination, that is associated, naturally or conventionally, with some cognitive fix [she] has on that object" (Korta, Perry, 2011, p. 42) or, in other words, with a role it plays in her life. For instance, the speaker who utters (2)—that is, Kaplan from the hypothetical scenario discussed in "Dthat" (Kaplan, 1979)—wants to make the audience believe that Carnap is one of the greatest philosophers of the twentieth century. As part of his referential plan he is convinced that the picture behind him—which he wrongly takes to depict Carnap—plays a certain role in his life, i.e., it is the object he can point at. He also believes that the meaning of "that" makes its utterance a way of identifying the object that plays this role. Therefore, he utters (2) with the directing intention to get the audience to recognize that he intends to identify the object that plays this "exploited" role. He also believes that the picture behind him plays a certain "target" role in the hearers' lives—i.e., that it is the object they can see—and that by thinking of the picture in that way they are likely to come to believe that Carnap is one of the greatest philosophers of the twentieth century. As a result, he has a further target intention to make the hearers recognize that he intends them to think of the portrait as playing this role.

Like Bach, Korta and Perry conclude that the object fixed by Kaplan's directing intention is the very object he points at. Unlike Bach, however, they assume that in

[6] It is worth noting that in her paper, titled *Three Views of Demonstrative Reference*, Reimer (1992) argues for a view she calls "quasi-intentional". According to quasi-intentionalism, both contextual features and intentions contribute to the determination of demonstrative reference. I am grateful to one of the reviewers for drawing my attention to this shift in Reimer's views.

forming his directing intention Kaplan represents the referent not as the object he points at, but as the object he can draw the audience's attention to by pointing.[7]

5. Careless Pointing and the Forensic Element

Korta and Perry discuss a modified version of the Carnap-Agnew case. They consider a situation in which a professor of philosophy is standing in a lecture hall and knows that there are two portraits hanging on the wall behind him: one of Rudolf Carnap, which is closer to the podium, and the other of Dick Cheney. His plan is to demonstrate the former and say:

(3) That is a painting of the greatest philosopher of the twentieth century.

However, his pointing gesture is careless and the "line drawn from his shoulder through his forefinger and beyond" (Korta, Perry, 2011, p. 48) hits the portrait of Cheney rather than that of Carnap. According to Bach's model, the object fixed by the professor's directing intention would be the picture of Cheney. According to Korta and Perry, by contrast, what gets secured as the referent is the picture of Carnap; they maintain, namely, that the professor intends to make the audience recognize his intention of identifying the object he can draw their attention to by pointing; the fact that, as a result of his carelessness, he points at the picture of Cheney, has no bearing on determining the referential or, as Korta and Perry call it, "locutionary" content of utterance (3). In my view, however, it would be better to call it the "intended *rhetic* content" of utterance (3) or, for short, "what is intended". According to the Austinian perspective, the locutionary meaning of an act involves two elements: its rhetic meaning, which is composed of a more or less definite sense and a more or less definite reference, and its grammatically or linguistically determined illocutionary force potential (Section 2 above). For the purpose of the present paper, then, I use the phrase "what is intended" to refer to what Korta and Perry call "what is locuted", i.e., to the intended referential content of an act.

Korta and Perry (2011, p. 49) consider also a situation in which the careless professor is an eye-witness in a court case. There are two defendants: one seated in the middle of the table and the other next to him. The professor is asked to tell which of them is the culprit. He intends to point at the man in the middle, but instead points at the co-defendant and says:

(4) I saw that man do it.

[7] Like Bach (1992a, 1992b; cf. Section 3 above), Korta and Perry posit that the speaker who performs the act of demonstrative reference has a number of beliefs and intentions that motivate and guide her communicative behaviour. Palle Leth (2021, p. 287) notes, however, that "[t]he multiplicity of intentions is plausible, but in the absence of any argument as to why it is precisely the […] intention [to refer to the object which is demonstrated] which is determinative the strategy does not really solve the intentionalist's problem".

According to Korta and Perry, it is the man occupying the middle seat, not the co-defendant, who becomes secured as the referent and contributes to the referential content of utterance (4): he plays the exploited role "the man the speaker can see and can draw the hearer's attention to by pointing" which is associated with the demonstrative phrase "that man".

By way of analogy, let us consider the following case discussed by Reimer (1991a, pp. 190–191). She enters her shared office and finds her desk occupied by her officemate. She can see her set of keys lying on the desk alongside her officemate's keys. As a result of her carelessness, however, she grabs her officemate's keys and says:

(5) These are mine.

According to Bach's model, the object fixed by Reimer's intention is the set of keys she grabbed. Korta and Perry would say, by contrast, that she has managed to refer to her set of keys, because it played the exploited role "the objects the speaker can see and demonstrate" associated with the demonstrative "these".

According to Korta and Perry, cases of inept or careless pointing give rise to what they call the *forensic element*. They claim, namely, that the way we use the ordinary concepts of "what is said" and "what is referred to" is affected by our judgements about the responsibilities speakers have for the unintended but foreseeable consequences of their careless utterances and awkward gestures. For instance, the careless professor is responsible for the fact that some of the students who were gathered in the lecture hall think that Cheney is the greatest philosopher of the twentieth century. By the same token, the professor who utters (4) in the courtroom is responsible for the fact that the jury members think that he refers to the co-defendant and says that he saw him committing the crime.

Korta and Perry make two claims which I find problematic: first, that the effects of careless pointing are perlocutionary and, second, that they have no bearing on determining the referential content of an utterance. I claim, by contrast, that the consequences of inept pointing affect the illocutionary aspect of the discourse dynamics. I also argue that there is a type of referential content—let us call it "public"—which, unlike what Korta and Perry call "locutionary content"—i.e., what is intended in my sense—is sensitive to the hearer's uptake or, more specifically, to how competent interlocutors interpret the speaker's words and gestures.

6. Unintended Effects of Careless Pointing

In my view, the discursive effects of inept or careless pointing are illocutionary rather than perlocutionary and as such they affect the conversational dynamics. As Korta and Perry (2011, p. 49) rightly note, a student who thinks that Cheney is the greatest philosopher came to form this belief "by a perfectly legitimate process". When challenged, then, he can reply, "with considerable justifi-

cation", that "professor so and so *said* he was". By the same token, the jury members are entitled to believe and assert that the eye-witness said that he had seen the co-defendant committing the crime. Analogously, the speaker of (5) is responsible for the way her utterance is read by her officemate, who is entitled to say:

(6) No, you are wrong. Those are not your keys; they are mine. (Reimer, 1991a, p. 191).

The effects of careless demonstrations discussed above are normative or, more specifically, illocutionary. Let us recall that illocutionary acts take effect by bringing about changes in the domain of commitments and entitlements of the conversing agents and thereby put constraints on the scope of appropriate conversational moves that can be subsequently made. As Marina Sbisà puts it, the characteristic effect of an illocutionary act

> consists of a change in the entitlements and obligations of the participants with respect to each other. This change is brought […] on the basis of an agreement among the relevant social participants: it is the conventional effect of an illocutionary act as opposed to mere reception or a perlocutionary consequence. (Sbisà, 2002, p. 433)

The agreement by virtue of which the normative effect of a speech act comes into existence is achieved through what Sbisà (2013b, p. 236) calls interactional negotiation between the speaker, the hearer, and other relevant social agents (for a more extensive discussion, see Witek, 2022; in press). The negotiation involves the interaction of at least two factors: the speaker's intention and the hearer's uptake. In formal language games—e.g., university lectures, court hearings, etc.—it is the latter that plays a decisive role. This is what happens in the cases of careless pointing discussed in Section 3.

Let us reconsider utterance (3). It will be instructive to stress that the utterance occurs during a university lecture. By virtue of the role the professor plays in this language game, he has a characteristic authority and a corresponding *responsibility* for the effects his words have on what his students are entitled to believe or, more specifically, on what the professor is legitimately taken to say according to the shared communicative standards. In sum, the professor's utterance combined with his inept gesture affects what can be called, following Jane Heal (2013, p. 140), the „nexus of second-personal normative relations" between the professor and his students; in short, it takes effect as an assertion that the portrait of Cheney depicts the greatest philosopher of the twentieth century. The illocutionary physiognomy of the professor's speech act, which involves his use of sentence (3), his pointing gesture, and the situation in which it is performed, is a positive condition under which one can attribute to him responsibility for giving his students a reason to think that Cheney is the greatest philosopher of the twentieth century; in particular, it is a reliable criterion that his directing intention is to refer to the portrait of Cheney. As Navarro-Reyes (2010; 2014) points

out, however, reliable criteria are defeasible. The students are entitled to believe that Cheney is the greatest philosopher of the twentieth century, and believe that this is what the professor has intended to say during his lecture. In spite of being reliable and formed through a perfectly legitimate process, however, these two beliefs are false.

Analogously, the eye-witness in a courtroom brings about the right of the jury members to believe and claim that he said he had seen the co-defendant committing the crime; as a result, utterance (4) constitutes a binding assertion or testimony to the effect that the co-defendant is the culprit. The same applies to utterance (5): it takes effect as an assertion that the keys Reimer has grabbed belong to her and, by the same token, invites the officemate's response (6).

In sum, what the careless speakers are responsible for are illocutionary effects of their awkward gestures. In some respects, the speech acts they perform, then, can be likened to what Navarro-Reyes (2014) calls "unintended illocutions". The actual force of an unintended illocutionary act is determined by the hearer's uptake rather than by the speaker's illocutionary intention;[8] in other words, it is reliably indicated by the illocutionary physiognomy of the speaker's utterance, where "reliably" does not mean "indefeasibly". As a result, the speaker who performs an unintended illocution is held responsible for what the physiognomy of her utterance reliably indicates. It will be instructive to stress, however, that the speech acts performed in uttering (3), (4) and (5) do not have unintended illocutionary forces. That is to say, it is not the case that their actual forces differ from the ones intended by their speakers. Rather, the crucial point is that their actual referential contents differ from what their speakers want to say. Recall that illocutionary acts are acts performed *in* saying something. As part of attributing to the speaker the act of *F*-ing that *p*, then, we attribute to them the act of locuting that *p*.

7. What Is Intended and What Is Public

The discussion in the previous section suggests a distinction between two types of referential content attributable to the speaker's utterance: *what is intended*, which is determined, as Korta and Perry propose, by her directing intention, and *what is public*, which is sensitive to the way competent hearers would interpret her words and gestures. Normally, the two contents coincide. However, sometimes they differ. At least in some cases the public content of an utterance differs from its intended rhetic meaning.

In short, there are two theoretically useful notions of referential content: "what is intended" and "what is public". We need both to account for the conversational dynamics.

[8] This idea plays a key role in a view that I call "externalism about illocutionary agency"; for a discussion, see Witek, 2015c, pp. 20–21.

By way of illustration, let us consider the interaction between Reimer and her officemate. Intuitively, utterances (5) and (6) constitute a coherent dialogue: as Nicolas Asher and Alex Lascarides (2003, pp. 345–61) would put it, its turns are rhetorically related to each other. More specifically, utterance (6) stands in the rhetorical relation of *Correction* to utterance (5) (for a discussion of the relation of *Correction*, see Asher, Lascarides, 2003, p. 345). This rhetorical link constrains our interpretation of the anaphoric expressions "those" and "they" used by the officemate: they are naturally taken to be co-referential with the demonstrative "these" used by Reimer. To account for the coherence of the dialogue under discussion, then, we have to identify the actual referential content of utterance (5) with its public rather than intended meaning.

However, it is possible to imagine a dialogue involving demonstratively used pronouns, that sounds natural and coherent, but involves a turn to which two contents are legitimately ascribed: what is intended and what is public. Imagine a situation in which we are talking about two men standing in front of us: Laurel to the left, and Hardy to the right. I say:

(7) a. Laurel fell.
b. He pushed him.

What I intend to convey in uttering (7b) is the proposition that Hardy pushed Laurel—let us call it "proposition *h*"—and thereby explain why the latter fell. To make you recognize the intended referential content of turn (7b), I accompany my utterances of "he" and "him" with appropriate pointing gestures which function as reliable criteria for my directing intentions and are, as such, elements of what can be called the *locutionary* physiognomy of my utterance. As the result of my ineptness, however, I point at the man on the left when uttering "he" and, next, point at the man on the right when uttering "him". You recognize my mistake and, as a result, identify proposition *h* as the one I want to convey. In response to my utterance (7), then, you say:

(8) a. That explains why Laurel fell.
b. But it is *he* who pushed *him*.

Your utterances of "he" and "him" are prosodically marked and accompanied with pointing gestures directed at Hardy and Laurel, respectively. The prosodically marked focus on "he" and "him" signals that the current topic under discussion addressed by your utterance (8b) is the question of *who* pushed *whom*; this issue has been activated by your recognition of my inept acts of pointing (for a discussion of the role of prosodically marked focus in indicating what question is under discussion, see Beaver et al., 2017; Roberts, 1996). What is more, according to the model of discourse proposed by Asher and Lascarides (2003, p. 346), we use prosodically marked focus to signal that our current utterance stands in the rhetorical relation of *Correction* to one of the previous contributions

to the discourse. This is exactly what happens in the case under discussion: you put stress on "he" and "him" to signal that the point behind your utterance (8b) is to correct my utterance (7b).

The crucial point here is that in uttering sentence (8a), you use "that" to refer to what is the intended referential content of my utterance (7b), i.e., to the content I intend to convey and thereby explain the event reported in my utterance (7a). That is to say, to account for the coherence of discourse (7), you assume that my utterance (7b) stands, by virtue of its *intended referential content*, in the rhetorical relation of *Explanation* to my utterance (7a) (for a discussion of the relation of *Explanation*, see Asher, Lascarides, 2003, p. 159). Your utterance (8b), however, stands in the relation of *Correction* to my utterance (7b) by virtue of the fact that the public content of the latter is the proposition that Laurel pushed Hardy (let us call it "proposition *l*"). In sum, to account for the coherence and dynamics of the discourse composed of segments (7) and (8), we have to ascribe two contents to my utterance (7b): proposition *h*, which is the *intended* content of my utterance, and proposition *l*, which is its *public* content.

In my view, the distinction between *what is intended* and *what is public* proves to be useful in explaining dialogues that involve no demonstrative reference, too. By way of illustration, let us consider the following variant of the "John is turning red" example discussed by Korta and Perry (2011, p. 119).

(9) *A*: a. I would like to talk to a communist.
B: b. John is turning red.
A: c. That is not true!
d. I talked to him this morning and must say he is an avowed anti-communist.
B: e. Oh, sorry! I mean that his face is turning red from eating a hot pepper.

After hearing *B*'s response, *A* is entitled to think that in issuing utterance (9b) her interlocutor means that John is becoming a communist. This interpretation enables her to maintain the default interpretation that *B* contributes to the development of a coherent discourse or, more specifically, that utterance (9b) is rhetorically linked to utterance (9a). It is natural to assume, namely, that the former stands in the relation of *Plan-Elaboration* to the latter or, more specifically, that utterance (9b) provides information that would help *A* to elaborate a plan for achieving her conversational goals (Asher, Lascarides, 2003, pp. 326, 410). Being a competent discourse participant, then, *A* ascribes the content "John is becoming a communist" to the utterance (9b). (Following Asher and Lascarides, I take *A*'s knowledge of the semantics of rhetorical relations to be part of her discursive competence). The way *A* reads *B*'s remark is manifested in her responses, i.e., in utterance (9c) followed by (9d): the former stands in the relation of *Correction* to utterance (9b), whereas the latter stands to it in the relation of

Counterevidence. In sum, the sequence of conversational turns from (9a) to (9d) can be regarded as forming a coherent discourse, provided we take *B* to mean that John is becoming a communist.

It turns out, however, that in making utterance (9b) *B* intended to say that John's face is turning red. The intended content of utterance (9b), then, differs from its publicly recognizable meaning. Note that utterance of (9e) is linked to utterance (9b) with the relation of *Clarification*. To make sense of this rhetorical link, however, we have to ascribe the content "John's face is changing its colour to red" to utterance (9b).

In sum, to account for the dynamics of discourse (9), we have to assume that its second turn has two referential contents: one public, which can be paraphrased as "John is becoming a communist", and the other intended, which can be expressed as "John's face is changing its colour to red". By virtue of the former, (9b) is rhetorically linked to contributions (9a), (9c) and (9d); due to the latter, in turn, it is rhetorically associated with contribution (9d).

So far I have argued that the proposed model, which distinguishes between *what is intended* and *what is public*, enables us to account for cases of demonstrative reference that involve inept or careless pointing. It is worth stressing, however, that it applies to normal and typical cases, too; that is to say, it allows us to explain situations in which there is no discrepancy between what the speaker intends to refer and the object she points to.[9] By way of illustration, let us consider a modified version of the careless professor case discussed in Section 6. Let us assume that the professor who utters (3) points to the portrait of Carnap, which is the object he intends to refer to. His gesture is a positive condition under which one can legitimately attribute to him the act of demonstrating the portrait of Carnap; by the same token, it is a reliable criterion (Navarro-Reyes, 2010; 2014) for the professor's directing intention, i.e., his intention to refer to the object that he can draw his audience's attention to by pointing. In fact, there is no divergence between the public content of his utterance and the singular proposition he intends to communicate.

8. Possible Objections

In this section I would like to discuss two objections that might be raised against the action-based model presented above. First, one may argue that (a) the contrast between *what is intended* and *what is public* simply mimics or even repackages Kripke's (1977; cf. Bach, 2017; Leth, 2020; Smit, 2012; 2018) famous distinction between speaker's reference and semantic reference. Second, one may point out that (b) the controversy between my account of the cases involving inept pointing discussed in Section 6 and the one offered by Korta and Perry is purely terminological.[10]

[9] I thank one of the reviewers for suggesting that I make this point.

[10] I thank one of the reviewers for raising these concerns.

My response to objection (a) rests on two ideas. The first one has been put forth and elaborated by a number of scholars (e.g., Bach, 2017, p. 65; Smit, 2012, p. 44) who have argued that demonstrative expressions do not have semantic referents;[11] if this is the case, and I believe it is, then the public content of the speaker's utterance cannot be identified with the semantically specified meaning of the sentence they utter. According the second idea, the proposed notion of what is public can be likened to what Lepore and Stone (2015, pp. 208–209) call the "grammatically specified meaning" of an utterance. More specifically, the public content of an utterance is registered by what Lepore and Stone, following Richmond H. Thomason (1990), dub the "conversational record": an abstract data structure that tracks publicly recognizable effects of conversational moves, i.e., recognizable by anyone who shares our conversational standards, norms and rules (Lepore, Stone, 2015, pp. 250–256; for a discussion, see Matczak, 2016; Witek, 2022, pp. 63–66). Lepore and Stone argue that the grammar responsible for determining the meaning of an utterance goes beyond the bare bones semantics and comprises rhetorical structure rules in Asher and Lascarides's (2003) sense, rules of appropriateness governing the use of presupposition triggers and anaphoric expressions, and rules of information structure responsible for the generation of scalar implicatures. I would like to go further and add that the resulting "extended" grammar (Witek, 2022) or, more accurately, our "socially constituted communicative competence" construed as a system of shared rules and norms of meaning-making[12] includes also socially accepted standards of action-attribution which can be described along the Hartian lines, i.e., in terms of positive and negative conditions. As competent communicators, we are able to use a "wide range of interpretive constraints over and above semantics as traditionally assumed" (Lepore, Stone, 2015, p. 87), i.e., over and above the rules of lexical and compositional semantics. Among other things, we are adept at using public standards of action-attribution, which rely on our cognitive skills to represent goals and means of their achievement (Tomasello, 1999).

It will be instructive to stress that my main concern in this paper is not so much with the meaning of demonstrative expressions, as with the role of the speaker's pointing gesture in determining the object that contributes to the referential content of their speech act. Like Ciecierski and Makowski (2022), I take demonstrations to constitute a subclass of communicative actions. The key idea

[11] Following Manuel García-Carpintero (1998), Richard G. Heck (2014) and Allyson Mount (2008), one may also add that demonstratives construed as referring expressions are linguistic devices designed to pick out contextually salient objects and that pointing is one of several available means for bringing an entity to salience. To say this, however, is not to suggest that demonstrative expressions can be ascribed semantic referents in Kripke's sense.

[12] To say that the shared rules, norms and standards of meaning-making are socially constituted is to assume that they are objects of what Michael Tomasello (2014) calls "collective intentionality"; they are public in that they are shared by "anyone who would be one of us" (Tomasello, 2014, p. 64).

behind the account proposed in this paper, however, is that the agentive nature of demonstrations can be best understood along the Hartian lines. In other words, I claim that what distinguishes an act of demonstrating an object from a mere bodily movement is not the alleged ontological fact that the former, unlike the latter, is caused by the speaker's directing intention, but the normative fact that the demonstrating agent can appropriately be held responsible for producing a certain outcome or, more specifically, for affecting the state of conversation in a certain way. Provided relevant positive conditions are fulfilled and no negative condition occurs, the speaker's pointing gesture constitutes a felicitous act of demonstration that takes effect by contributing the object pointed at to the referential content of the utterance. For instance, Ann's extending her arm in such a way that the line drawn from her shoulder through her index finger hits object *x* is one of the positive conditions under which her interlocutors may legitimately attribute to her the act of demonstrating *x*; her arm moving because of a spasm, in turn, is a negative condition that defeats the prima facie appropriateness of that attribution. In short, demonstrative gestures combined with uses of demonstrative expressions constitute sub-locutionary acts that contribute to the determination of what speakers refer to.

Interestingly, Smit (2018) introduces the idea of public reference and argues that it is an attractive alternative to the Kripkean category of semantic reference. He defines the public referent of a designator as "the object that best fits the relevant public evidence at the time of utterance as to the speaker's referent of the designator" (Smit, 2018, p. 135). In other words, he takes the notion of public reference to be parasitic on the notion of speaker's reference (p. 137). In my opinion, however, the opposite is the case. Following Paprzycka (2014), I would say that the concept of intention-in-action piggybacks off the notion of action. The notions of "speaker meaning" and "speaker reference" are defined along the Gricean lines: one speaker-means that *p* in uttering *u* only if one utters *u* with an appropriate communicative intention. Communicative intentions, in turn, are best understood as intentions-in-action (Lepore, Stone, 2015, p. 206). According to the Hartian perspective, however, the notion of intention-in-action is conceptually posterior to the notion of action: we use the latter to construct and define the former (Paprzycka, 2014, p. 330). Paraphrasing Smit's definition, then, I would say that *normally* the object that best fulfils the relevant conditions of being the public referent of a designator is taken *by default* to be its speaker referent. As Navarro-Reyes (2010; 2014) would put it, the conditions under discussion are reliable albeit defeasible criteria we use to attribute a certain referential intention-in-action to the speaker.

Appearances to the contrary, then, the proposed notion of *what is public* and the related category of *public referent* are not variants of the notions of *semantic content* and *semantic referent*, respectively. What I define as the *public content* of an utterance is an aspect of the illocutionary act legitimately attributed to the speaker, where "legitimately" means "by following the shared standards of action-attribution".

Let me move to discussing objection (b). In my view, the difference between the proposed account of cases involving inept pointing and the one offered by Korta and Perry is substantial rather than verbal. Viewed from the Austinian perspective, illocutionary effects, unlike perlocutionary ones, are normative; for this reason, I am reluctant to describe the normative effects of inept pointing in perlocutionary terms. Nevertheless, the argument presented in Section 6 relies on something more than the terminological convention according to which perlocutionary effects are consequential whereas illocutionary effects are normative. The key idea behind the proposed account of cases involving careless pointing is that in characterising the normative or illocutionary effect of an utterance we *normally* have to refer to its more or less definite referential content. Therefore, to classify a certain effect of an utterance as illocutionary rather than perlocutionary is to allow for the fact that it has a bearing on the utterance's locutionary content.

By way of illustration, let us reconsider Ann's utterance (1) discussed in Section 2.

(1) Peter is a friend.

Let us assume that in uttering (1) Ann performs an illocutionary act of ranking which belongs to what Mitchell S. Green (2009, p. 160) calls the assertive family of speech acts. To say so is to hold Ann responsible for what she says. More specifically, it is to attribute to her the responsibility for *how* the locuted proposition that Peter is a friend affects the state of conversation by putting certain normative constraint on what she and her interlocutors can subsequently think, say and do. In general, illocutionary acts are acts made *in* saying something or, more technically, *in* locuting something; in consequence, in attributing a certain illocutionary effect to one's utterance we ascribe to it a certain more or less definite locutionary content.

To argue that the effects I classify as illocutionary have no bearing on the semantic content of the utterance which gives rise to them, one may use the following example.[13] Ann comes to a party with her friend Paul. At some point Ann wants to introduce Paul, who she thinks is standing next to her, to some other person, Mark. As a matter of fact, however, she fails to notice that Paul has gone to the next table for a while to get his drink left there. Unaware of that, Ann points at the person who she thinks is Paul, but who actually happens to be John, and says:

(10) Mark, please meet my friend Paul.

One may conclude that Ann is clearly responsible for providing Mark with a reason to think that John is her friend Paul, but it says absolutely nothing about the semantics of proper names.

[13] I thank one of the reviewers for suggesting this example.

Even though I agree with this conclusion, I do not think that it speaks against the model of demonstrative acts presented in Section 6. In my view, Ann's utterance (10) combined with her pointing gesture takes effect as the illocutionary act of introducing Paul to Mark. In other words, she can legitimately be held responsible for providing Mark with a reason to think that the demonstrated person is named "Paul" and that he is Ann's friend. In short, Ann's pointing gesture takes effect as the act of demonstrating the person standing next to her, who happened to be John, and as such contributes to the determination of the public content of Ann's act of introducing her friend to Mark. I do agree that this demonstration has no bearing on what the token of "Paul" produced by Ann refers to. Nevertheless, it contributes to the determination of the publicly attributable referential content of her speech act.

9. Conclusions

By way of conclusion, let me make two points about demonstrative reference construed as a speech act.

First, demonstrative reference can be understood as a sub-rhetic or sub-locutionary act in that it contributes to the act of issuing an utterance "with a certain more or less definite 'sense' and a more or less definite 'reference'". (Austin, 1975, p. 93) Its referential content is subject to interactional negotiation and, depending on which of the two possible perspectives prevails—i.e., that of the speaker and her intentions or that of the linguistically competent hearer—it takes the form of an intended or public meaning, respectively.

Second, the notion of public content enables us to allow for unintended acts of demonstration. Consider, for instance, a situation in which the queen and her ministers are talking about possible locations of a new royal residence. At some point, the prime minister asks "Where should we build it?" and the queen accidently hits the map with her finger. Let us assume that the ministers take this gesture to express the queen's decision and she does nothing to oppose this interpretation. Although her gesture has no locutionary content, it can be attributed a definite public content and the queen is responsible for the results of her behaviour.

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