

Anscombe: 'I' does not refer to the speaker, or anything else.

Also Anscombe: Statements of the form "I am F"...

- i. have the syntactic form as "a is F"
- ii. are true iff the speaker is F

Of course we must accept the rule 'If X asserts something with "I" as subject, his assertion will be true if and only if what he asserts is true of X.' But ... the truth-condition of the whole sentence does not determine the meaning of the items within the sentence.

Simple Referentialism: 'I' is a term a speaker intentionally uses to refer to himself, *and this fully explains the meaning of 'I'*.

Why 'intentionally'? Example: When John Smith speaks of John Horatio Auberon Smith (named in a will), he refers to himself without intending to. This kind of self-reference doesn't count.

Nor can we explain the matter, as we might suppose, by saying "'I' is the word each one uses when he knowingly and intentionally speaks of himself.' For did not Smith knowingly and intentionally speak of Smith? Was not the person he intended to speak of—Smith? and so *was* not the person he intended to speak of—himself?

It may be said: 'Not in the relevant sense. We all know you can't substitute every designation of the object he intended to speak of and keep the statement about his intention true.' But that is not the answer unless the reflexive pronoun itself is a sufficient indication of the way the object is specified. And that is something the ordinary reflexive pronoun cannot be. Consider: 'Smith realizes (fails to realize) the identity of an object he calls "Smith" with himself' If the reflexive pronoun there is the ordinary one, then it specifies for us who frame or hear the sentence, an object whose identity with the object he calls 'Smith' Smith does or doesn't realize: namely the object designated by our subject word 'Smith'. But that does not tell us what identity Smith himself realizes (or fails to realize). For, as Frege held, there is no path back from reference to sense; any object has many ways of being specified, and in this case, through the peculiarity of the construction, we have succeeded in specifying an object (by means of the subject of our sentence) without specifying any conception under which *Smith's* mind is supposed to latch on to it. For we don't want to say 'Smith does not realize the identity of Smith with Smith'.

We only have to admit a failure of specification of the intended identity, if we persist in treating the reflexive in 'He doesn't realize the identity with himself' as the ordinary reflexive. In practice we have no difficulty at all. We know what we mean Smith doesn't realize. It is: 'I am Smith.' But if that is how we understand that reflexive, it is not the ordinary one. It is a special one which can be explained only in terms of the first person.

Key interpretive question: Is this the central problem for referentialism, or just for simple referentialism?

Sophisticated Referentialism: 'I' is a term a speaker intentionally uses to refer to himself, specified under a distinctive mode of presentation which gives the meaning of 'I'.

If that is right, the explanation of the word ‘I’ as “the word which each of us uses to speak of himself” is hardly an explanation!” At least, it is no explanation if that reflexive has in turn to be explained in terms of ‘I’; and if it is the ordinary reflexive, we are back to square one. We seem to need a sense to be specified for the quasi-name ‘I’. To repeat the Frege point: we haven’t got this sense just by being told which object a man will be speaking of, or whether he knows it or not, when he says ‘I’. ... [I]f ‘I’ expresses a way its object is reached by him, what Frege called an ‘Art des Gegebenseins’ [*mode of presentation*], we want to know what that way is and how it comes about that the only object reached in that way by anyone is identical with himself.

I read Anscombe as conceding that the circularity problem doesn’t apply to Sophisticated Referentialism, which she objects to on other grounds (immunity to error through misidentification, the conceivability of ‘I am not X’ for any object X, etc.) But then how to explain why, when I say ‘I am F’, what I say is true iff David Barnett is F?

There is a real question: with what object is my consciousness of action, posture, and movement [connected?], and are my intentions connected in such a fashion that *that* object must be standing up if I have the thought that I am standing up and my thought is true? And there is an answer to that: it is this object here.

‘I am this thing here’ is, then, a real proposition, but not a proposition of identity. It means: this thing here is the thing, the person ... of whose action *this* idea of an action is an idea, of whose movements *these* ideas of movement are ideas, of whose posture *this* idea of posture is the idea. And also of which *these* intended actions, if carried out, will be the actions.

It is a connection between the ideas of movement, etc. and DB that makes ‘I am F’ true iff DB is F. So why can’t these ideas serve as the mode of presentation that fixes the reference of ‘I’?

These conceptions are subjectless. That is, they do not involve the connection of what is understood by a predicate with a distinctly conceived subject. The (deeply rooted) grammatical illusion of a subject is what generates all the errors which we have been considering.

Can ordinary intentions be specified without a distinctive mode of presentation of oneself?

An intention to walk = an intention for *this person here* to walk (?)

An intention to wear a hat = an intention for *this person here* to have a hat on his head (?)

An intention to attend the CPA = an intention for *this person here* to be at the CPA (?)

If a mode of presentation of DB appears in ordinary intentions, this supports Sophisticated Referentialism, since it could give the meaning of ‘I’. But it might also support Simple Referentialism.

Where self-patting is the thing done by everyone who pats himself on the back, and self-referring the thing done by everyone who refers to himself:

An intention to pat myself on the back = an intention for *this person here* to self-pat.

≠ a subjectless intention for DB to be patted on the back

An intention to refer to myself = an intention for *this person here* to self-refer

≠ a subjectless intention for DB to be referred to