

TOWARDS STATEMENT IDENTITY

MITCHEL GINSBERG
Yale University

This paper will address the problem of individuating statements. Insofar as it presupposes *some* understanding of what it is for statements to differ from one another, it is not an entirely uncircular presentation. The kind of understanding it presupposes, however, is rather minimal: In particular, it assumes no theoretical or articulated understanding of what it is that allows for a differentiating between different statements, but only that we have *some* awareness of the fact that not all statement-tokens are instances of the same statement-type. The capacity to make such realizations themselves ("CR") is quite distinct from the capacity to articulate the grounds on which such realizations are based ("CA"). What I am trying to do is to refine conceptualizing about statements in a way which will provide for a precise formulation of how two statement-instances or -tokens do or do not differ from one another.

In addition to assuming capacity CR, I will assume an understanding of English, but again, not a capacity to articulate this understanding. Furthermore, I assume, for example, *some* understanding of what would follow logically from something's being the case. Not only are such assumptions as this made elsewhere in discussing statementhood and closely related topics¹ but formal reconstructions of such kinds of understanding are still forthcoming: in virtue of this it is pre-

¹ Cf. James Tomberlin "Statements and their Identity Conditions", *Logique et Analyse*, 11, (1968), pp. 512-515; and Edgar Page "Reference and Propositional Analysis", *The Philosophical Review*, No. 79 (1970), pp. 43-62.

mature to attempt to incorporate such a formalization into this articulation.

Lying behind this discussion is a set of questions having to do with translation theory. For those who accept the position that an adequate translation is statement-preserving,² the relevance of this paper to such theorizing is obvious. I believe that what I will propose here will be relevant in somewhat unexpected ways both to translation theory and to issues³ which some⁴ hold to rest on it, but I will not address that relevance here to any length.

It would, however, be desirable from the point of view of translation theory to be able to talk not only about statements, but also about questions, requests, orders, etc. For this I would like to extend the notion of a statement to that of a saying. Sayings would include not only statements but also questions and requests. Note that this would be the natural terminology in English if the verb 'say' were used not only for declaratives (e.g. 'He said she went to town last night') and for imperatives (e.g. 'Bill said for you to enjoy the hash Jim prepared'), but also for interrogatives (if, e.g. 'He said whether you were sleeping' with *some* appropriate intonation-stress pattern meant "He asked whether you were sleeping"). In this paper, however, I will not attempt to make this extension, and will deal here only with the narrower notion of a statement. Since I find the problems associated with the issue of statement individuation alone more than abundant, I will put these other issues aside as a temporary lacuna (or methodologically accepted restriction or failure) to be dealt with once these other problems are resolved.

I will assume that it is clear that at least some pairs of statement-instances are or are not instances of different state-

² For example Lyons in J. F. Staal (ed.) "Formal Logic and Natural Languages", *Foundations of Language*, 5, (1969), pp. 256-284.

³ Cf. B. L. Whorf, *Language, Thought, and Reality*, M. I. T. Press, Cambridge, Mass. (1956).

⁴ Cf. Eric Lenneberg, "Cognition in Ethnolinguistic", *Language*, 29, (1953), pp. 463-471.

ment-kinds or -types. Thus, I assume that no theory is necessary to show that of each of the following pairs, the first two are clearly two tokens of the same statement, the third pair are clearly two tokens of different statements, and the last two are what seem to be borderline cases. (Whether they will remain so after we have considered them in the framework to be proposed is another issue.) The lower-case 's' preceding the numeral will be for statements.

- s1. Steve likes Chekov.
- s2. Steve likes Chekov.
- s3. Piove. } Italian and Spanish, respectively, for "It's
- s4. Llueve. } raining"
- s5. The way out is through the door.
- s6. The key to reality is hard to swallow.
- s7. The cat ate the spaghetti.
- s8. The spaghetti was eaten by the cat.
- s9. Madeleine won't live in Germany, even for Heinrich.
- s10. Madeleine won't live in Germany, not even for Heinrich.

The criteria for statement-identity I will propose below are all non-syntactic. This restriction will allow for the possibility of making the same statement in a wide variety of languages⁵ and will reflect the position that it does not matter for semantic import which means a language uses by which to embody semantically significant features. Thus, I take it that it does not matter (semantically) whether bringing attention to one part of a sentence is achieved phonetically using intonation variation along with voices intensification, as in English (e.g. "The father gave *the house* to his son") or, say, syntactically using an affixal system, as in Quechua.⁶ It may

⁵ Cf. R. J. and Susan Haack, "Token-Sentences, Translation and Truth-Value", *Mind*, 79, (1970), pp. 40-57.

⁶ See Wolfgang Wölck, "Especificación y foco en Quechua", presented at the Fifth Symposium of the Inter-American Program of Linguistics and Language Teaching, Sao Paulo, January, 1969.

be more than merely a provisionally reasonable tack to attempt to delineate semantic import independently of syntactic notions: in virtue of the fact⁷ that there is at present an extensive reevaluation of the supposition that syntax underlies semantics (in, for example, the form in which this was held by Katz and Postal⁸ and by Chomsky⁹), the methodological presupposition that an adequate theory of language will some day allow for syntactic reformulation of the (non-syntactic) semantic criteria to be proposed here, might not only at this state be gratuitous, but also, ultimately, mistaken.¹⁰

Each of the criteria to be proposed below can be seen as a filtering device through which putatively identical statements sA and sB are to pass, and which will be blocked from passing, at some stage, if they are not in fact identical. They will be considered identical only if they have passed through all of the filters: If the intuitive notion of a statement were sufficiently precise much of the motivation for introducing such filters would be gone. But the presentation of these criteria, below, will not only allow for an articulation of the characteristics of given statements, but will also avoid certain problems both in the intuitive and also in minor sophistications of the intuitive notion of a statement: It will not do, for example, to individuate statements by holding that the two statements sA and sB are the same statement if and only if

⁷ Cf. Noam Chomsky, "Deep Structure, Surface Structure, and Semantic Interpretation" (1969), forthcoming; and George Lakoff, "On Generative Semantics" (1969), forthcoming.

⁸ Jerrold Katz and Paul Postal, *An Integrated Theory of Linguistic Descriptions*, M. I. T. Press, Cambridge, Mass. (1964).

⁹ Noam Chomsky, *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*, M. I. T. Press, Cambridge, Mass. (1965).

¹⁰ This partial explanation of an aspect of the metatheoretic position of this paper is not a blanket rejection of the program of investigating the degree to which semantics might be reducible to syntax, which for certain questions is surely heuristic. Cf. Hiz, "Referentials", *Semiotica*, 2, (1969), pp. 136-166, esp. p. 142.

I leave aside the question of the acceptability of his alethic position on semantics (see p. 147).

one can correctly speak of stating sA as “saying the same thing” as stating sB.

If, for example, Anatol says to Boris “The fat gib is purring”, to Catherine “The kangaroo is purring”, to Dominic “The bookcase is purring”, and so on, one can correctly say of Anatol that he has said the same thing in each instance, viz., that something is purring. But although this is so, it is rather obvious that this will not suffice: Anatol is also, in saying what he says, saying something quite distinct in each case. The main problem here is that the notion of saying the same thing is too vague and too inclusive to be adequate. Such theoretically undesirable consequences as this first suggestion embodies will hopefully be avoided by the notion to be introduced.

Similarly, problems arise if one proposes identifying a statement with the sentence uttered in making that statement, in addition to making it analytic that one cannot make the same statement in two languages. If, for example, both of two people utter the sentence ‘I like tea’, they do not make the same statement, in *any* sense of ‘statement’ which will be adequate for even the most elementary interests.

Although this is obvious once attention is drawn to it, it has an important implication: since exactly the same sentence can be used to make two distinct statements, not all differences relevant to statement differentiation are a function of meaning differences of the sentences involved; thus, one need not postulate an ambiguity, either syntactic *or* semantic,¹¹ when holding that a given sentence might be uttered in making any of a number of statements. In fact, statement individuation is quite distinct from sentence individuation. Even assuming that different meaning¹² establishes different

¹¹ An example of syntactic ambiguity is ‘Loving friends *can* be fun’ (‘loving friends’: cp. “such friends” and “loving them”). An example of semantic ambiguity is ‘He gave her an eagle’ (since an eagle is a falcon-like bird but also, in another sense of the word, a gold coin U.S.Cy., worth ten dollars).

¹² This will hold both for an intuitive notion of synonymy and for such reconstructions of the notion as in Hiz, “Alethic Semantic Theory”, *The Phil-*

sentencehood, given that a sentence A is used to make a statement W, and a sentence B is used to make a statement Y, the identity (or non-identity) of either of these two sentences or these two statements is neither necessary nor sufficient for the identity (or non-identity) of the other two.¹³ I will return to this below.

Thirdly, it is not sufficient to identify a statement in terms of its truth conditions, i.e., the individually necessary and conjointly sufficient conditions for the statement in question to be true. We cannot, that is, hold that sA and sB are the same statement if and only if the truth conditions of sA are identical with the truth conditions of sB. To see this, let us consider the following possibly identical statements s11 and s12:

- s11. Willem's mother, who is named Vita, is a Maoist.
- s12. Willem's mother is a Maoist and she is named Vita.

The truth conditions of s11 are the following (the lower-case 'c' preceding the numeral will be for conditions):

- c13. Willem's mother is named Vita.
- c14. Willem's mother is a Maoist.

The truth conditions of s12, it turns out, are these same two c13 and c14. Are s11 and s12, then, the same statement? I

sophical Forum, 1, (1969), pp. 438-451 (definition on p. 448, examples on p. 449 f.). For example, Hiz holds as having the same meaning 'It was Newton who wrote *Principia*' and '*Principia* was what Newton wrote', Hiz finds a difference in what he calls "slant" between these two. I find this difference relevant to statement identity. See comments on topic and presumption, below.

¹³ As examples of each of the four possibilities: (a) same sentences and same statements: two utterances of 'This city is lovely' at the same time by two individuals, both in talking about Rome, (b) same sentences but different statements: two utterances of 'This city is lovely', one in talking about Rome, the other about Seattle. (c) different sentences but same statements: an utterance of each of 'Llueve' (Spanish) and 'Piove' (Italian) at the same time and place, both making the statement that it is raining, and also, it seems, in answering the question of who it was that came, an utterance of 'John came' and of 'John did', and, (d) different sentences and different statements: an utterance of 'John Loves it' and of 'Bill loves it' in talking about any two different individuals John and Bill, respectively.

think not, for consider the following: If Willem's mother is not named Vita, that is, if condition c13 is not met, then s11 has a presupposition which is not met and s11 is, therefore —cp. the statement that the present king of France is bald, stated when France no longer has a king— without truth value. On the other hand, if as above, condition c13 is not met, while Willem's mother *is* a Maoist, i.e., while condition c14 *is* met, then s12, unlike s11, is false, not truthvalueless, since its first conjunct is true and its second false. Thus, statements cannot be (adequately) individuated in terms of truth conditions alone. There are some distinctions to be made which attention solely to the considerations of "stimuli" and "conditions" of utterance will not tend to illuminate.

Given that these various criteria are inadequate, let me at this point suggest the first necessary condition for statement identity, the first filter. (The 'f' will be for filters.)

f15. Identity of Referents. sA and sB are the same statement only if there is nothing which is referred to in making either statement not referred to in making the other.

This f15 will allow us to distinguish between the statement made in uttering 'A newborn American is crying in its crib' when talking about little David Newman and that made in uttering this same sentence when talking about little Virginia McFadden: If these two statements were in fact the same statement we would have discovered an easy resolution of the population problem.

Let me say here that I take the notion of reference to be one in which one can refer to fictional characters. Thus, in uttering 'He is tormented' and therein referring to Gogol's Madman, one is making a different statement from that made in uttering (a second token of) this sentence and therein referring to Tolstoy's Prince Nekhludov.

If, following Woods,¹⁴ we hold a distinction between there

¹⁴ John Woods, "Fictionality and the Logic of Relations", *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, No. 7, (1969), pp. 51-63.

existing something and there being something, such that it is correct to say in reference to a fictional (imaginary, etc.) character that there *is* such-and-such an individual, but not that there *exists* such-and-such an individual, I think it would be appropriate to alter Searle's Axiom of Existence from "Whatever is referred to must exist"¹⁵ to "It follows, given that something has been referred to, that there is (was, etc.) such a something."¹⁶

Given this interpretation of f15, it might be thought that having this condition satisfied, passing through this filter f15, together with synonymy of sentences uttered would be sufficient to establish statement identity, but this is not so. Consider:

s16. He is standing to the left of his brother.

Suppose that one utters this twice; where, to speak roughly but succinctly, first, 'he' refers to Felix and 'his brother' refers to Sigmund, and second, 'he' refers to Sigmund and 'his brother' refers to Felix. Obviously two distinct statements have been made. (We're not asserting of Felix that he's to the left of Sigmund in both instances, for example.) We will return to this below when discussing referees, where this two instances of s16 will be established as distinct within the framework being introduced, but let me presently introduce other necessary conditions for statement identity.

The above discussion of statements s11 and s12 suggests that relevant to the individuation of a statement are its presuppositions. (Above, s11 presupposes, while s12 asserts, that Willem's mother is named Vita.) Following this, we can formulate this as the filter:

¹⁵ John Searle, *Speech Acts*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, Mass. (1969), p. 77.

¹⁶ Or, that for there to be a something S is a necessary condition for S to be referred to. I assume that (i) Searle is not claiming in his axiom that one can refer only to necessary beings, and correlatively, that (ii) the 'must' in his axiom is to be interpreted as essential.

f17. Identity of Presuppositions. sA and sB are the same statement only if there is no presuppositions of either statement which is not a presupposition of the other.

It might be convenient and helpful at this point for me to be explicit about the notion of presupposition, partly to distinguish it from entailment, but also to show that it is a particular kind of entailment.

For A to presuppose B is for c18 and c19 to hold:

c18. A 's being true is a sufficient condition for B 's being true.

c19. A 's being false is a sufficient condition for B 's being true.¹⁷

This notion of presupposition can be distinguished from entailment on the basis of the following. For A to entail B is for conditions c20 and c21 to hold:

c20. A 's being true is a sufficient condition for B 's being true.

c21. B 's being false is a sufficient condition for A 's not being true.¹⁸

Note that c21 is not part of the usual formulation/definition of entailment, in which c22 occurs instead of c21:

c22. B 's being false is a sufficient condition for A 's being false.

I think that c22 is proposed instead of c21 only because of

¹⁷ More fully stated, where ' Xt ' is read " X is true", ' Xf ' is read " X is false", ' Xo ' is read " X is truthvalueless", and where ' \therefore ' is read "therefore", for A to presuppose B is for each of the following to be a valid argument: $At, \therefore Bt, Af, \therefore Bt, Bf, \therefore Ao, Bo, \therefore Ao$, and for nothing to follow about the other's being true, false, or truthvalueless from either Ao or from Bt .

¹⁸ Parallel to the preceding footnote, and where ' \sim ' is read "it is not the case that", for A to entail B is for each of the following to be a valid argument: $At, \therefore Bt, Af, \therefore \sim Bo, Bf, \therefore \sim At, Bo, \therefore Ao$, and for nothing to follow about the other's being true, false, or truthvalueless from either Ao or from Bt .

one's not having considered sufficiently many relevant facts, but will not elaborate here.¹⁹

Let us now consider:

s23. Little Caesar's gang runs whisky from Windsor through Detroit.

s24. Little Caesar's gang runs whisky from Detroit through Windsor.

In these two, conditions f15 and f17 are both met. Nonetheless, s23 and s24 are clearly distinct from one another. We are therefore in need of supplementation of these filters.

If we consider here not only presuppositions but also the wider notion of entailment, we see in the case of s23/s24, that s25:

s25. Little Caesar's gang smuggles whisky into the United States, is entailed by s23 but not by s24. This suggests a third necessary condition for statement identity:

f26. Identity of Entailments. sA and sB are the same statement only if there is no entailment of either statement which is not an entailment of the other.

This f26, as f15 and f17 before it, is meant as a necessary but not a sufficient condition for a statement individuation. I supplement these three filters with a fourth which will be introduced below. In preparation for this, let me formally introduce the notion of focus.

In making statements, it is very often the case that a particular part of what is said is granted the status of something needing special attention, to be held to have more significance, to be focused on as central in the communicating.²⁰ How all of this is accomplished (syntactically or phonetical-

¹⁹ I have proposed elsewhere, in "The Entailment-Presupposition Relationship", forthcoming, for the replacement of c22 by c21. I will not repeat those considerations tangential to the present discussion here.

²⁰ Cf. above, where Quechua is mentioned.

ly) is a matter which I will leave open for the present. We can refer to the part which is granted this status as the focus²¹ of the statement in question, and can represent this abstract characteristic of the statement —abstract in that no commitment is made as to the syntactic or phonetic realization of this characteristic— by a superscript ‘f’ around the part which is in focus. Thus (‘A’ is for “abstract”):

s27A. ^fJuan^f serenaded Diana.

s28A. I saw Oskar dancing with ^fFrancesca^f.

In s27A, for example, we would have a statement in which one emphasizes that the “agent” was Juan — as opposed to Gian Carlo, for example.

In English the most common way in which focus is realized is by stressing the element in focus, where stress amounts to some sort of combination of intensification, altered pitch, and perhaps also increased duration. For the purposes of this paper I will leave open such questions as whether the semantic notion of focus is realized in the phonetic one of stress in all languages, whether it is the most prevalent way in which focus is realized in most languages, and so on.

Stress can be represented by a plus sign (‘+’) around the part which is stressed. This may be seen as a variation on italics and underlining. (These later, however, serve functions other than that of marking stress, while the plus sign will be limited to this one function.) Thus, the way in which the above two abstractions s27A and s28A would be represented when focus is realized as stress would be:

s29. +Juan+ serenaded Diana.

s30. I saw Oskar dancing with +Francesca+.

That we can semantically distinguish between different state-

²¹ The ways of making focus are many: where ‘∪’ and ‘∩’ mark liaison and hiatus, respectively, compare ‘Il n’est pas ∪ encore venu’ and ‘Il n’est pas ∩ encore venu’ with ‘He hasn’t come yet’ and ‘He hasn’t come yet...’

ments by noting differences of stress can be shown by the following.

s31. Fritzl doesn't go to Munich +five times a decade+.²²

s32. Fritzl doesn't go to Munich five times a +decade+.

s33. Fritzl doesn't go to Munich +five+ times a decade.

Notice that it follows from s31 but not from s32 nor from s33 that Fritzl goes to Munich less than five times a decade. (There are, of course, other differences between these three.)

Having introduced the notion of focus, we can at this point return to one kind of borderline case of identical statement pairs. (Cf. s7 and s8.) It has been argued that there are instances in which the passive of a given active sentence is semantically distinct from its active and that, therefore, one cannot hold universally that actives and their passives are synonymous.²³ In considering this, let us take as an example the following active-passive pair:

s34. Gilbert opened the door.

s35. The door was opened by Gilbert.

Note that the following two clauses can be added grammatically to the former but not to the latter. (The 'a' will be for addenda.)

a36. and Greta the window.

a37. and then shut the window.

While the following two added to the second but not to the first result in grammatical sequences:

a38. and then the window was.

a39. only to be shut an instant later by a gust of wind.

²² This s31 is meant to have no special stress on the 'de' of 'decade'. Read all of the stressed portion of s31 with relatively low pitch. Cf. s32.

²³ Cf. Noam Chomsky, *Syntactic Structures*, Mouton, The Hague (1957), esp. Sec. 9-2-7, and Paul Ziff, "The Nonsynonymy of Active and Passive Sentences", *The Philosophical Review*, 75, (1966), pp. 226-232.

This I assume reflects a general distinction between actives and passives in English, and is a function of the difference of superficial features of English actives and passives, such as the difference in order of noun phrases, the presence or absence of 'by', and so forth. Nonetheless, these features account for rather unexpected differences. For example:

s40. Alexis denied that he stole the wine.

s41. It was denied by Alexis that he stole the wine.

s42. That he stole the wine was denied by Alexis.

Consider the following two addended clauses, differing only in the pause between the end of the above utterance in question and the beginning of the addendum (marked by the colon).

a43. : and then went home.

a44. and then went home.

The pause is, it seems, responsible for a difference in interpretation in the resulting utterance-plus-addendum sequence. The interpretation with a43 is as Alexis' going home after his denial; with a44, as his (putatively) going home after his stealing. Given these "readings" we see that s40 may be followed by both a43 and a44; s41 by a44 but not by a43; while s42 may not be followed by either.

Perhaps these examples establish only that synonymous expressions (sequences) are *not* mutually replaceable in all syntactic contexts. But there are still other differences between actives and passives, not all of which seem to be simply a manifestation of such "superficial" syntactic differences as those mentioned above: For one thing, in answer to the question (The 'q' will be for questions.)

q45. What did Ann do?

a given passive, for example,

s46. The getaway car was driven by Ann.

is bizarre in a way the corresponding active isn't:

s47. Ann drove the getaway car.

The reason for this difference will be articulated below. (The discussion of topic, to follow, can illuminate as well s34/s35 and s40/s41/s42.)

Furthermore, suppose that Xavier walked along a road and that on this walk he saw only one other person, Roy. Suppose also, as many people do, that Santa does not exist. Then, concerning what happened on this walk we say that

s48. Xavier saw Santa.

This is false: Xavier did *not* see Santa (he *couldn't* see Santa, although he might have *hallucinated* seeing him), he saw Roy. But, in this context, compare s48 with:

s49. Santa was seen by Xavier.

Unlike s48, s49 presupposes that Santa exists. In this context, then, s48 is false, while s49 is truthvalueless. This is a difference not in focus or in truth conditions: it is a difference in presupposition. And, if such facts as these suggest that notions such as those of action and of presupposition are closely related to rather "shallow" features of the utterances involved, this illustrates still other ways in which the "surface" is semantically significant.

Let us consider now any given statement in which we have identified the part in focus. We may remove this part and replace it by some phrase such as 'something', 'someone', 'That which', etc., depending on the part being replaced. To allow for a generally applicable replacement of foci, specially when the discussion is in English, I propose to use the word 'blank', written in upper case letters. This "BLANK" should be understood as parallel to a bound variable.

Let us take the case in which focus is realized as stress.

We can, then, for example, alter s50 and s51 to s52 and s53, respectively:

s50. Piet looked at the girl to his ⁺left⁺.

s51. The rock near the ⁺tree⁺ contains uranium.

s52. Piet looked at the girl to his BLANK.

s53. The rock near the BLANK contains uranium.

It was held by Halliday²⁴ and by Chomsky²⁵ that this focus-removed portion is in some sense not at issue in communicating information, is in some sense presupposed (Halliday's and Chomsky's basic formulations, respectively). Since I agree with Chomsky's comment (in the article's footnote which is presently numbered 17) that this presupposing is not obviously the same as the Strawsonian notion, I would like to distinguish the two by retaining 'presuppose' and 'presupposition' for the latter and introducing 'presume' and 'presumption' for the former. Thus in s50, it is presupposed that there is someone called Piet, and presumed that Piet looked at the girl to his somewhere, or, as suggested above, to his BLANK.

I assume that a statement's being relevant or irrelevant in a given context is a function of its semantic characteristics. It seems obvious —examples will illustrate this— that relevancy is partially determined by a statement's presumptions and thus by its focus. Since this is so, difference in focus is a semantic difference. Thus we should distinguish between two utterance-tokens which differ only in focus.

s54. John saw Jim.

should be seen as representing one of several distinct utterance-types. In what has preceded I have assumed that given

²⁴ M. A. K. Halliday, "Notes on Transitivity and Theme in English: Part II", *Journal of Linguistics*, 3, (1967), pp. 199-244.

²⁵ Noam Chomsky, "Deep Structure, Surface Structure, and Semantic Interpretation". Forthcoming.

representations would be read with natural stress.²⁶ Alternatively, since this traditional orthographic representation tends to obscure alternative foci possibilities, we can hold that s54 is an ambiguous representation which is an abstraction from, inter alia, the two distinct

s54a. +John+ saw Jim.

s54b. John saw +Jim+.

This is *not* overly precise. It will allow us to distinguish, for example, between these two in contexts in which one but not the other, is relevant. (Cf. above.) Thus, where ‘**’ marks irrelevance:

Dialogue A.

q55. Who saw +Jim+?

s54a. (cp. ** s54b)

s56. No. +Bill+ saw Jim.

Dialogue B.

q57. Who(m) did +John+ see?

s54b. (cp. ** s54a)

s58. No. John saw +Natasha+.

Note that s56 can follow s54a but not s54b as a direct denial, while s58 can follow s54b but not s54a. This consideration²⁷ suggests the following:

²⁶ Cf. The presentation of this is Noam Chomsky and Morris Halle *The Sound Pattern of English*, Harper & Row, New York (1968).

²⁷ Cp. J. F. Staal, “Some Semantic Relations between Sentoids”, *Foundations of Language*, 3, (1967), p. 80. Incidentally, this kind of distinction (as between s54a and s54b) tells against N. Goodman’s criticism (“About”, *Mind*, 79, (1961), pp. 1-24) of Ryle and Putnam. Goodman’s claim is that

s59. Crows are black

(numbered [8] in his article) is about, in fact “absolutely about”, both crows and black things. His grounds for rejecting the position that s59 is about crows but not about black things are that what we at first blush consider s59 to be about is a function of such actually irrelevant factors as conversational context in which s59 is an answer to

q60. What is the color of crows?

f62. Identity of Foci. sA and sB are the same statement only if there is nothing which is a focus of either statement which is not a focus of the other.

Let us return with this observations to active-passive pairs, e.g.:

s63. Mary likes Bill.

s64. Bill is liked by Mary.

We can at this point, for the sake of clarity and for what will follow, make explicit where these two have stresses. The stress naturally falls as follows.

s65. Mary likes +Bill+.

s66. Bill is liked by +Mary+.

We can now notice clearly that the passive of a given active will change the focus from one element to another. This should manifest itself in semantic oddity in question replies, and it does. Thus, to:

q67. Who does +Mary+ like?

rather than to

q61. What are some black things?

but that such differences in, for example, "psychological emphasis" are not relevant to aboutness. Note, however, that the answer to q60 is s59 as s59a:

s59a. Crows are +black+.

while the answer to q61 is s59 as s59b:

s59b. +Crows+ are black.

if in fact s59 is a natural answer to q61 at all. (I will not rely on *this* possible problem at all in what follows.)

What this difference between s59a and s59b shows is that s59 is actually a way, convenient for some contexts, of nondifferentially representing the distinct statements s59a and s59b. The location of Ryle's and Putnam's "error" is not to be found in *their* confusing the status of psychological emphasis but rather in a mistaken identification by Goodman of two distinct statements.

Thus, if Goodman's point is that Ryle and Putnam are led to overlook perfectly good cases of a statement's being about something because of inattention to possible situations in which that statement might be made, his argument fails since it presupposes incorrectly that the same statement is being considered in these different situations. If, however, he is saying that what *they* count a statement as being about differs from what it is "absolutely about", his point, if it does satnd, is merely a terminological comment.

we have as replies s65, but ?? s66. This oddity of s66's might well be described as being due to the irrelevance of this reply to q67.

We can, I think, highlight such differences as this by use of the notion of topic. Since I would like to use this notion in a way which differs slightly from at least some uses I have seen this notion put to lately, let me be explicit about this matter. I would like a notion of topic such that for the following statements:

s68. He drinks.

s69. Zandvoort is quite small.

s70. As for the book, there are few good jokes in it.

s71. As for Jim, Jane kissed him again.

s72. Dad was smoking a pipe.

s73. That he slept all day is surprising.

s74. His nose is long.

the following which are labelled "T" will count as topics, while those labelled "NT" will be non-topics:

T/s68: he	NT/s68. drinking
T/s69: Zandvoort	NT/s69: Holland
T/s70: the book	NT/s70: jokes, the book's jokes
T/s71: Jim	NTs/71: Jane, kissing, kissing Jim
T/s72: dad	NT/s72: the family, a pipe, pipes
T/s73: that he slept all day	NT/s73: he, sleeping, surprises
T/s74: his nose	NT/s74: he, Cyrano

To capture this notion, I propose the following. First, we may introduce the notion of a direct topic.
DT is a direct topic of S if and only if

- (i) stating S is saying something quite specifically about DT,
- (ii) in stating S one would therein be straight-forwardly

- satisfying a prior request, *had* such a request been made, to tell something about DT, and,
- (iii) there is no DT' also satisfying conditions (i) and (ii) which is such that DT satisfies these first two conditions solely in virtue of the added supposition that DT' is a member of, or part of, DT.

In s68, consider the putative direct topic drinking. This fails to be a direct topic because condition (ii) is not met. And in s74, for example, the putative direct topic Cyrano is not a direct topic because it fulfills condition (i) and (ii) only because of the supposition that the “his nose” in question is Cyrano’s, i.e., is a part of Cyrano. Notice here that this (ii) will hold in such cases only for “inalienable possessions”: possessions of Cyrano’s which would be marked explicitly in some languages (e.g. Maori) as alienable do *not* count as fulfilling condition (ii). E.g., we’re not telling anything about *him* (the possessor) in asserting s75:

s75. His car is built like a tank.

Condition (ii) will eliminate, for example, Jane as a topic in s71 but not in:

s76. Jane kissed him again.

since the “as for him” amounts to an insistence that s71 be taken simply as saying something quite specifically about Jim and not about anyone or anything else.

Condition (iii) will allow us to distinguish between

s77. As for Mexico, Mazatlán, is still small.

s78. Mazatlán is still small.

since Mexico is a direct topic of s77 but not of s78. One can hold that Mexico as a putative direct topic of s78 does satisfy condition (i), and possibly condition (ii), but it is only in virtue of the supposition that Mazatlán is part of

Mexico that s78 is about Mexico. Contrasting with this is s77 in which Mexico is also mentioned and so does not satisfy conditions (i) and (ii) towards being a direct topic *solely* on the additional supposition mentioned above.

We will use this notion of direct topic below. In what follows, there will be a need to distinguish between different ways of referring to the same “something”. Related to this notion is talking of entities under a description: “ways” amounting to different descriptions. The use in this paper of the notion of a description will be in a while (and technical) sense which includes not only such instances as “the man in the raincoat”, “the moon-rock on his desk”, “the fat gib sleeping on the pillow”, but also (names²⁸ and nicknames such as) “Tim”, “Mr. Karlgren”, “The Han Dynasty”, “Casablanca” and (pronominals such as), “he”, “it”, and “they”.

We can introduce the notion of minimal topic. A minimal topic of a statement S is a direct topic of S under the description of it in the utterance uttered in stating S. If there is no description of this direct topic in the utterance in question, then there will be no such minimal topic. In such a case, this direct topic is implicit. I propose to define an implicit topic as a direct topic under that pronominal description of it in the utterance in question *had* that direct topic been made explicit. We can now define a topic of a statement as that which is either a minimal topic of S or an implicit topic of S. Thus in

Dialogue C

q79. Feeling better today?
s80. Much better.

Dialogue D

q79.
s81. I'm feeling much better.

a topic of both s80 and s81 is “I”: in s80 “I” is an implicit topic, while in s81 it is a minimal topic. Now,

²⁸ For names as part of particular languages, cf. P. Geach, “The perils of Pauline”, *The Review of Metaphysics*, 23, (1969), pp. 287-300; esp. pp. 297f.

f82. Identity of Topics. sA and sB are the same statement only if there is no topic of either statement which is not a topic of the other.

(To apply this to active-passive pairs, e.g. the pair about Ann and the getaway car, s46/s47, note that the two statements have different topics. In addition, these two have different foci and —cp. the pair about Xavier, s48/s49— different presuppositions.)

I have little to say to illuminate the notion of description identity on which f82 rests, but perhaps the following will be helpful. A case in which it is not obvious either that two descriptions are or are not the same description-type is the following. (A 'd' will indicate a description.)

d83. a pipe which was a present to him from Anna

d84. a present Anna gave him, a pipe

We can suppose that these appear in a context in which we would like to determine whether two statements are the same, for example,

s85. A pipe which was a present to him from Anna was found.

s86. A present Anna gave him, a pipe, was found.

I feel that there is a distinction between these s85 and s86, and that this difference is solely a function of the difference (I take there to be) between d83 and d84. One way of beginning to articulate this difference is by determining what kind of classification is being employed in the description concerned. In general there may be an ordering of classification, so that something is taken to be basically of some kind, and then of a sub-kind of that kind, and so forth. There are classification differences in this case: in d83 the most basic classification is as a pipe, while this is not so in d84. This difference shows up clearly when this classification ordering is central. Thus, in answer to:

q87. Which pipe was found?

one may answer appropriately with s85 but not with s86. And, similarly, in answer to:

q88. Which present was found?

one may answer appropriately with s86 but not with s85. This same phenomenon of ordered classification supports the comments in Ziff's *Semantical Analysis*,²⁹ in which feline quadrupeds are distinguished from quadrupedal felines.

Furthermore, if we recall f15, we can note that identity of referents as discussed in that context was an extensional notion, that is, if R was a referent of a given statement, and R was the same thing (entity) as R', it followed, was entailed, that R' was also the referent of the statement. As a further restriction on statement identity, then: On the model of topics, minimal topics, and implicit topics, we can introduce the notion of a referee as a referent under the description of it in the utterance in question (= a minimal referent), or, if there is no such description, that same referent under the pronominal description of it there would have been had this reference been made explicit (= an implicit referent). Then,

f89. Identity of Referees. sA and sB are the same statement only if there is nothing which is a referee of either statement which is not a referee of the other.

Thus, assuming that my dog is named Leo,

s90. Leo is snoring.

s91. My dog is snoring.

are different statement because although they refer to the same entity, they do so under different descriptions and, therefore, each has a referee the other does not: Leo is a referee of s90 but not of s91, while my dog is a referee of s91 but not of s90.

²⁹ Paul Ziff, *Semantical Analysis*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, N. Y. (1960), p. 184.

This same filter when applied to two instances of s16 will establish non-identity by blocking passage since Sigmund described as “his brother” is a referee in only one instance. Relatedly, compare the notion of a proposition in Searle.³⁰ I assume that his notion of a description is as inclusive as mine.

These filters, then, f15, f17, f26, f62, f82 and f89, I take as a way of delineating statementhood: We can, by way of sketch, then, say that a statement is an abstract entity which has as properties —by which statements may be individuated— certain presuppositions, entailments, foci, topics, referents and referees. I think that with the use of these filters one will be able to make and to articulate rather fine distinctions between even merely slightly different statements. Whether they are fully adequate I will leave as an open issue. They leave some statement-pairs identical although I feel certain of these pairs to be neither perfectly clearly identical nor perfectly clearly distinct: e.g. s9 and s10. Until these are shown to be distinct, however, this is not a great problem.

Let me close with some unanswered questions, most of which came into focus in considering languages other than English. Being a native speaker only of English, I will simply raise these issues.

I have handled instances in which there is a part obviously unsaid (cf. *dialogues C and D*) as if they would all be clearly unproblematic for this framework. I have furthermore committed this paper to the position that what is understood as omitted in implicit reference is pronominal, and that such pronominal presence or omission makes no difference to statement identity. Since, for example, the phenomenon of prosiopesis —as Jespersen³¹ calls the omission of an utterance’s

³⁰ John Searle, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

³¹ Otto Jespersen, “Negation in English and other Languages” (1917), reprinted in *Selected Writings of Otto Jespersen*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London.

initial syllables —is widespread, it might be interesting to see whether such (and other) instances of reference omission *are* always pronominal, and *are* always treated as irrelevant to statement identity in all languages in which it occurs.

Similarly, one might ask whether for instance, as seems to be the case, in answer to the question

q92. *Ton chien où est-il?*

one makes the same statement no matter which of these three he utters:

s93. *Je ne sais pas.*

s94. *Je sais pas.*

s95. *Sais pas.*

I also assume in this paper that descriptions do not differ if case is changed: thus, I take “he” to be the same description as “him”. Whether or not this is reasonable may also be questioned. In virtue of the fact that there are at least two types of “topicalization”, which is that transformation in which that being “topicalized” is placed at the beginning of the sentence; one in which the topic is put into the nominative and the second in which the topic remains in its original case —Oertel³² describes these as the pendent nominative and as prolepsis, respectively— perhaps a description occurring proleptically *is* semantically different from that same description occurring pendently. Since this difference is not significant in my dialect of English, I have no involved comment to make here: it seems that for some, “He, she saw him” is grammatical. I cannot see any difference, semantically, between this and “Him, she saw him” — not that either occurs in my own idiolect.

Correlatively, restrictions on topicalizing differ from language to language, and it is possible that this difference will

³² Hans Oertel, *The Syntax of Cases in the Narrative and Descriptive Prose of the Brāhmanas*. Carl Winter’s Universitätsbuchandlung, Heidelberg. (1926).

account for the nonstability in some languages of statements made in other languages which have fewer restrictions on topicalizing. For example in Samoan, unlike in English, one can topicalize the 'the yam' (in Samoan, *le ufi*) in

s96. Bill loves the girl who sees the boy who wants the yam and the ax which are big.

to get something like:

s97. The yam, Bill loves the girl who sees the boy who wants it and the ax which are big.

which in Samoan is the grammatical:

s98. *o le ufi e alofa Pili i le teine olo'o va'ai i le tema olo'o mana'o iai ma le to'i e tetele.*⁸³

Compare these with (grammatical) topicalization in English:

s99. Ted, he loves hoagies and baked Alaska.

s100. Alice, Bill loves her.

s101. Kingpin Joe Tenney, the F. B. I. have him on their ten-most-wanted-men list.

Hopefully, attention to statement-making in languages other than English will help in avoiding at least some parochialisms of theorizing and will contribute to a generally more adequate view of statements.

⁸³ Cf. John Grinder, "Conjunct Splitting in Samoan", *Linguistic Notes from La Jolla*, 2, (1969), pp. 46-79, esp. pp. 64, 69f.

SUMMARY

El tema de este artículo es el problema de individuación de enunciados. Presupone un entendimiento mínimo de cuando dos enunciados difieren entre sí, pero no presupone ningún conocimiento articulado o teórico de cuál sea la base para efectuar tal diferenciación.

Considero que resulta claro para cualquiera que al menos algunos pares de enunciados son o no son instancias de diferentes clases o tipos de enunciados. Los criterios que señalaré para decidir sobre la identidad de un par de enunciados no son sintácticos; esto hará posible considerar que un mismo enunciado pueda hacerse en una amplia variedad de lenguajes, y reflejará la tesis de que no importa, para el contenido semántico, qué medios utilice un lenguaje para dar lugar a rasgos semánticamente importantes en un enunciado.

Cada uno de los criterios que propondré podrá considerarse como un filtro al través del cual pueden pasar dos enunciados sA y sB; estos serán idénticos sólo en el caso en que de hecho pasen todos los filtros que señalaré. La presentación de estos criterios pretende también eliminar ciertos problemas inherentes a la idea intuitiva de enunciado.

Considero distintos un enunciado y la oración utilizada para hacer tal enunciado. La misma oración puede utilizarse para hacer dos enunciados diferentes, de manera que la identidad de oraciones no puede ser criterio de la identidad de enunciados. Se señalan también algunos contraejemplos a la tesis según la cual dos enunciados sA y sB son idénticos cuando tienen las mismas condiciones de verdad.

Veamos ahora la primera condición necesaria para que haya identidad de enunciados:

- f1: Identidad de referentes. sA y sB son el mismo enunciado sólo en el caso en que no haya nada a lo que se refiera sA a que no se refiera sB y viceversa.

La noción de referente está tomada aquí en un sentido tal que resulte posible referirse a personajes de ficción.

Las presuposiciones de un enunciado son también relevantes para su individuación. He aquí, pues, el segundo filtro que proponemos:

- f2: Identidad de presuposiciones. sA y sB son el mismo enun-

ciado sólo en el caso en que no haya ninguna presuposición de alguno de estos dos enunciados que no lo sea del otro.

Se distingue la noción de presuposición de la de implicación (*entailment*) y se muestra, a la vez, que la primera es un tipo especial de la segunda.

Necesitamos aún filtros suplementarios, dado que el siguiente par de enunciados, sin ser idénticos, satisfacen los criterios f1 y f2:

- (a) El grupo de César trae whisky de Windsor al través de Detroit.
- (b) El grupo de César trae whisky de Detroit al través de Windsor.

Añadimos, pues, un tercer filtro:

- f3: Identidad de implicaciones (*entailments*). sA y sB son el mismo enunciado si no hay nada que esté implicado por uno de ellos que no lo esté también por el otro.

El conjunto de filtros señalados hasta aquí es necesario pero no suficiente para detectar cualquier par de enunciados idénticos. El cuarto filtro que propongo en este trabajo utiliza la noción de "foco", la cual pasamos a elucidar ahora. Llamamos "foco" de un enunciado a aquella de sus partes a la que damos un *status* más importante por constituir el centro de la comunicación. La manera más común de señalar el foco de un enunciado es poniendo énfasis, de alguna manera, en algún elemento del enunciado. Los siguientes enunciados muestran cómo es posible distinguir semánticamente enunciados diferentes cuando se señalan diferencias en énfasis en distintas partes del enunciado.

- (c) Fritzl no va a Munich ^fcinco veces al año^f.
- (d) Fritzl no va a Munich cinco veces ^fal año^f.
- (e) Fritzl no va a Munich ^fcinco^f veces al año.

Pasamos a enunciar el cuarto filtro:

- f4: Identidad de foco. sA y sB son el mismo enunciado sólo en el caso en que no haya nada que sea foco de alguno de estos dos enunciados que no lo sea del otro.

Se ha sostenido que hay casos en los cuales el pasivo de una oración es semánticamente diferente a la forma activa de la misma

oración y que, por tanto, no pueden tenerse como sinónimas las formas activas y pasivas de las mismas oraciones. La explicación de esto podría estar en el hecho de que al pasar del activo al pasivo de una misma oración, se cambia el foco de un elemento a otro.

Introduzcamos ahora la noción de tópico. En los enunciados que siguen a continuación, señalaremos con una "T" lo que cuenta en ellos como tópico y con "N.T." lo que no es tópico de los mismos.

- (f) Zandvoort es bastante pequeño.
- (g) En cuanto al libro, hay muy pocos chistes en él.
- (h) Papá estaba fumando su pipa.

T. (f) Zandvoort	N.T. (f) Holanda
T. (g) el libro	N.T. (g) chistes, los chistes del libro.
T. (h) papá	N.T. (h) la familia, una pipa, pipas.

Para capturar la noción de tópico, propongo primero introducir la noción de "tópico directo" (T.D.). T.D. es el tópico directo de un enunciado S si y sólo si:

- (i) aseverar S es decir bastante específicamente algo acerca de T.D.
- (ii) por el hecho mismo de aseverar S, se satisface una demanda de decir algo acerca de T.D.; y
- (iii) no hay ningún T.D.' que satisfaga también las condiciones (i) y (ii) sólo por el hecho de que se suponga que T.D.' es un miembro o es parte de T.D.

Pasamos ahora a distinguir las nociones de "tópico mínimo" y "tópico implícito". Para esto es antes necesario diferenciar distintas maneras en que nos podemos referir a lo mismo. Relacionado con este punto está el hecho de que se pueda hablar de una misma entidad bajo distintas descripciones: las "distintas maneras" no son más que descripciones diferentes. La noción de descripción usada aquí abarca no sólo las descripciones definidas e indefinidas, sino también nombres propios gramaticales, apodos y pronominales. Un tópico mínimo de S es un tópico directo de S al cual nos referimos mediante una descripción en la expresión proferida al aseverar S. Un tópico implícito de S sería un tópico directo de S al cual nos referiríamos mediante una descripción pronominal si dicho tópico directo hubiera sido hecho explícito. Ahora bien, un tópico de un enunciado S puede ser o bien un tópico mínimo de S, o bien un tópico implícito de S.

Pasamos a mencionar nuestro quinto criterio:

- f5: Identidad de tópicos. sA y sB son el mismo enunciado sólo en el caso en que no haya nada que sea tópico de uno que no lo sea del otro.

Si recordamos ahora nuestro f1, nos damos cuenta de que la noción de referente ahí usada era extensional. De la misma manera en que se introdujo la noción de tópico mínimo y tópico implícito, utilizando para ello la noción de descripción, podemos introducir la noción de referente mínimo y referente implícito (a los cuales damos el nombre genérico de “referidos”), con el objeto de introducir una última condición para que dos enunciados puedan considerarse idénticos.

- f6: Identidad de referidos. sA y sB son el mismo enunciado sólo en el caso en que no haya nada que sea un referido de alguno de los dos enunciados que no lo sea también del otro.

Dos enunciados pueden ser, pues, diferentes en el caso que cumplan con todos los requisitos antes mencionados pero que sin embargo se refieran a la misma entidad bajo distintas descripciones de la misma.

Los filtros que hemos señalado pueden tomarse como un intento de delinear la noción de enunciado. Podríamos entonces decir, de manera un tanto esquemática, que un enunciado es una entidad abstracta que tiene como propiedades (por las cuales los enunciados podrán ser individuados) ciertas presuposiciones, implicaciones, focos, tópicos, referentes y referidos. Queda abierta la cuestión de si los criterios aquí enunciados son o no perfectamente adecuados para decidir sobre la identidad de aquéllos enunciados cuyas diferencias pudieran ser en extremo sutiles; pienso, sin embargo, que mediante el uso de dichos criterios pueden practicarse distinciones suficientemente finas entre enunciados levemente diferentes.

Concluyo este trabajo haciendo notar ciertas cuestiones que surgen al momento de considerar otros lenguajes diferentes del inglés; esto, creo yo, ayuda a evitar ciertos parroquialismos en los que se podría caer al teorizar, y contribuye a dar cuenta más adecuada de lo que es un enunciado.