

## AN ALLEGED AMBIGUITY IN THE NOMINALIZATIONS OF ILLOCUTIONARY VERBS

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1. According to a tempting and widely held view, the nominalizations of what might be called "illocutionary verbs" (verbs which stand for illocutionary acts) are systematically ambiguous between alleged "act" and "object" senses. Searle, for example, espouses this view in a recent article :

the word "statement" is structurally ambiguous. Like many nominalized verb forms it has what traditional grammarians call the act-object, or sometimes, the process-product ambiguity. A modern transformational grammarian would say that it is structurally ambiguous as it has at least two different derivations from (phrase markers containing) the verb "state". "Statement" can mean either the act of stating or what is stated...<sup>1</sup>

I will call this the "ambiguity thesis" (AT) for short. In fact, AT is not restricted to the nominalizations of illocutionary verbs; philosophers have often held that the nominalizations of the verbs of propositional attitude generally are ambiguous in this way,<sup>2</sup> but I will principally be concerned with the former in this paper. AT does not say that illocutionary verbs are ambiguous, for example, in such contexts as 'A promised to return the book', 'B demands I give up piano playing before dawn', 'I bet there will be a revolution in South Africa inside the month', or 'C stated that Mars is volcanically active', but that their nominalizations, in e.g., 'A's promise', 'B's demand', 'my bet', and 'C's statement' are ambiguous. It is claimed, for example, that in one sense 'promise' ('A's promise') just means 'the act of promising' ('A's act of promising') whereas in the other sense it means 'what is promised' ('what A promised'). Similarly for all or most of the other illocutionary verbs and verbs of propositional attitude (making allowances for such obvious transformations as that from 'A asked...' to 'A's question').

It will be useful sometimes to subscript phrases such as 'A's statement' and 'B's promise', etc. in order to keep straight what AT alleges, but this is not meant in any way to be an endorsement of AT. Thus, in 'B's promise<sub>o</sub>', for example, the subscript indicates that we are interested in what is a putative object sense of 'promise' without thereby admitting that there is any such sense.

2. A second thesis which is often, though not always, associated with AT is that nominalized phrases of the sort we are concerned with are used by speakers to refer to statements, bets, promises, etc. Let us call this thesis the "referential thesis" (RT). Of course, if AT is true then RT must be disambiguated; we must distinguish between reference to acts of stating, promising, betting, etc. and reference to what is stated, promised, and bet.

A prominent example of a philosopher who explicitly holds both AT and RT is Cartwright, in his well-known paper "Propositions"<sup>3</sup>. I will not repeat his remarks on AT<sup>4</sup>, but with respect to RT he says ...is it not, after all, perfectly obvious that we do sometimes say of something to which we have referred that it is true (or false)? Are we not ordinarily doing just this when we utter such sentences as 'That's true' and 'What he said was false'?<sup>5</sup>

Cartwright speaks of RT as an assumption, but it is clear from his discussion that he does not question it. It should be noted that he is concerned only with statements in this paper, as opposed to promises, bets, and the like, but I do not see what justification there could be for holding AT and RT with respect to statements, while rejecting them with respect to other speech acts. He goes on to describe what he takes to be an especially clear case of reference to a statement<sub>o</sub> and predication of truth of it. A speaker, A, says about the French Defense, "Botvinnik uses it" and a second speaker, B, replies "That's true." Cartwright then asks

To what, then, did B refer? In a way the question presents no difficulty. To answer it, it is sufficient to identify that to which B referred; and this is easily done. We may say that B referred to *what A said* (asserted, stated), or to *the statement A made*, or to *the statement that Botvinnik uses the French Defense*, etc.<sup>6</sup>

It should be noted in passing that anyone who holds both AT and RT must also agree that both members of pairs of phrases such as 'A's statement<sub>o</sub>' and 'what A stated', or 'A's promise<sub>o</sub>' and 'what A promised', on the one hand, and 'A's statement<sub>a</sub>' and 'A's act of stating', or 'A's promise<sub>a</sub>' and 'A's act of promising', on the other, refer to the same thing, since it can hardly be maintained that two referring phrases with the same meaning have different referents (at

least in the standard case).<sup>7</sup>

I am not certain whether or not Searle endorses RT as well as AT. There is no evidence one way or the other in the cited paper, but in his book, *Speech Acts*,<sup>8</sup> he holds views which would be difficult to maintain without also holding RT. For example, he includes such expressions as 'France's present crisis' and 'John's brother' in a list of "definite referring expressions" and, in the absence of some explanation of why phrases such as 'A's statement' differ in logical form from these, one is entitled to suppose he would count the relevant nominalized phrases among definite referring expressions as well.

I shall argue, first, that AT and RT are not both true, at least given certain generally accepted views about the structure of speech acts. Second, I shall argue that RT is true and that the nominalized phrases we are concerned with are univocal. This, in turn, has some interesting consequences concerning the nature of the products of speech acts.

3. Searle, in the above passage, apparently supposes that in the deep structure of sentences containing 'statement' the verb 'state' is univocal and relational: It stands for a relation which obtains between a speaker S and a proposition p (which is what he states) whenever S states p. A word about, though not apologies for, propositions may be in order. Propositions have typically been thought to play two distinct but related roles, semantical and epistemological, as vehicles for truth and as the objects of mental acts. Because of the traditional interest in the latter, Stalnaker,<sup>9</sup> among others, has recently defended a "two-step" semantics which isolates propositions (taken to be, or at least to be associated with, functions from possible worlds to truth values) as objects for independent study over "one-step" semantics which assigns truth values to sentences at "points of reference", or possible worlds together with contexts of use. As Stalnaker points out, propositions so conceived are not linguistic entities. Though philosophers often construct formal languages for the purpose of expressing propositions in such a way that makes their truth conditions clear, the study of semantical relations among propositions is not essentially linguistic in character. Similarly, propositions in their role as the objects of mental acts are non-linguistic. On the account Stalnaker sketches, to say that a person believes something is, in part, to say that he can distinguish a subset of possible worlds in which his belief is true, i.e., alternative ways in which the world might have turned out in which he would be disposed to act in the way he does

in the real world. To explain a person's actions is, in part, to show that his desires would be satisfied in all the worlds (or perhaps the "nearest" world) in which what he believes is true. But nothing in this implies that the propositions in question need be expressed or expressable in language.

Speech acts are different in that they essentially involve the production of tokens, usually of sentences, which express propositions and so speech act theories must deal with the pragmatic problem of associating with sentences the propositions they are used on particular occasions to express. Of course speech act theories do more than this — for example, they attempt to give "success conditions" for the performance of various speech acts such as asserting, promising, etc., but I will not be concerned with the latter endeavor here.

Any time a speech act is successfully performed at least three things are involved : A person, an act of uttering a sentence with a certain illocutionary force, and a proposition. The proposition is said to be the *object* of the speech act. Suppose some person, A, says to B "I promise that I will return your book next Tuesday" (for simplicity I will consider only cases where the illocutionary force of an utterance is explicitly indicated by some such formula as 'I promise that...'). Let us suppose also that the relevant success conditions are fulfilled. Then in the analysis of A's promise we have A, his act of uttering the displayed sentence (on Searle's view<sup>10</sup> the phrase 'I promise that...' is taken to be an "illocutionary force operator" — more will be said about this later), and the object of A's act, the proposition expressed in this context by the embedded sentence. The sorts of pragmatic considerations which enter into the analysis of the promise are those that affect the identity of the proposition expressed by the embedded sentence in the context of A's utterance. That it was A's utterance rather than someone else's obviously will affect the identity of the proposition expressed as will his use of the phrase 'your book'. If he used the phrase "attributively" in Donnellan's terminology,<sup>11</sup> then the proposition expressed will be true just in case A returns whatever book B lent him whereas if he used the phrase referentially to refer to *A Snatch from the Life of Ned Hump* the proposition will be true just in case he returns *Ned Hump*. Different promises will have been made depending upon the different propositions expressed. Further, if A uses the phrase referentially, but fails for some reason to refer at all, then no promise was made because no proposition was expressed by the embedded sentence which could serve as the object of his attempted act of promising.

Suppose that A did refer to *Ned Hump*. Then if C were to say "I predict that he (referring to A) will return *A Snatch from the Life of Ned Hump* next Tuesday," the embedded sentences in A's and C's utterances, respectively, would have expressed the same proposition. The object of A's act of promising would be the same proposition as the object of C's act of predicting.

Propositions in their role as the objects of speech acts are as important in the explanation of behavior as they are in their role as objects of mental acts. If we see A running down the street with *Ned Hump* under his arm two minutes before midnight on Tuesday and we wonder why he is doing that, the explanation involves the fact that in uttering the sentence he did (in the circumstances in which he did it, etc.) he committed himself to making it true that B is in possession of *Ned Hump* on Tuesday.

4. This is very familiar, and if we may now take it for granted that propositions are properly taken to play the role sketched, I would like to say briefly why AT is interesting. It is interesting, given the traditional analysis in terms of speech acts and their propositional objects, for its implications concerning the relations among speech acts, the products of speech acts and propositions. This is just that the products of speech acts are propositions. If 'statement', for example, means in one sense 'what is stated' then, if propositions are what is stated, statements (in the putative object sense of that word) are propositions. As Searle puts it

Statement-acts are illocutionary acts of stating. Statement-objects are propositions (construed as stated)...we have to add the phrase 'construed as stated' because, of course, what is stated, the proposition, can also be the content of a question, of a promise, the antecedent of a hypothetical, and so forth.<sup>12</sup>

If true, AT would explain a number of apparent facts about sentences about the products of speech acts which would otherwise be difficult to account for. For example, it would explain how it is possible to say that my statement is the same as Plato's. If what Plato stated (his statement<sub>O</sub>) is the proposition that the soul is like a chariot and if that proposition is what I state (my statement<sub>O</sub>) then my statement is the same as his statement. Further, AT explains how this can be true even though our statements occurred at different times — though my statement<sub>O</sub> is the same as his statement<sub>O</sub>, my statement<sub>a</sub> is not the same act as his statement<sub>a</sub>; these acts are centuries apart. Second, AT would explain how adjectives and predicates from different categories can be applied to phrases such as 'A's statement'. Suppose that there is life on Mars

and that A states this. Then A's statement is true. Now for A to come right out and *state* this, at least on currently available evidence, is absurd. So A's statement is absurd. But it seems at least a little odd to say that A's statement is both true and absurd. Again, the explanation AT offers is obvious : Saying that A's statement is both true and absurd equivocates on 'statement'. What is true, the proposition that there is life on Mars, is neither absurd nor reasonable. It can only be absurd or reasonable to state, believe, or conjecture propositions relative to certain evidence. So A's statement<sub>a</sub> was absurd; it was absurd for him to state what he did on the evidence he had. But since acts cannot be true or false only A's statement<sub>O</sub> was said to be true. Finally, AT would explain how we can attach contradictory predicates to singular terms which seem to refer to the same thing. Suppose that B conjectures that there is life on Mars. Perhaps B's conjecture is not absurd — the available evidence may support such a conjecture. But A's statement is just the same as B's conjecture, viz., that there is life on Mars. How can we truly say that A's statement is the same as B's conjecture when one is absurd and the other not ? According to AT, of course, this is because we have equivocated on 'statement' and 'conjecture'.

5. The proponents of AT do not, as far as I know, argue explicitly for it, but given the use they make of the thesis it is not difficult to reconstruct arguments from their remarks. If two singular terms  $t_1$  and  $t_2$  have the same meaning, then they must have the same referent (if any). Call the referent of a singular term, t, R(t). So if  $t_1$  and  $t_2$  have the same meaning, it has to be the case that R( $t_1$ ) is the same as R( $t_2$ ). Then it is sufficient to show that  $t_1$  and  $t_2$  have different meanings to find some predicate F which is true of R( $t_1$ ) and is not true of R( $t_2$ ), i.e., to find some true sentence of the form ' $Ft_1 \ \& \ \sim Ft_2$ '. The argument implicit in the above discussion involved producing two sets of predicates such that some of the members of one set, call it A, it was claimed, could be attached to 'A's statement' to make a true sentence only if 'A's statement' referred to an act and members of the other set, call it O, could be attached to 'A's statement' to make a true sentence only if this phrase referred to the object of A's act of stating. A includes such predicates of acts as 'was interrupted', 'took too long', 'was absurd', 'was loud', 'was sincere', and so on. O contains such predicates as 'is true', 'implies that God exists', 'is inconsistent', etc. For example, it would be claimed that 'A's statement<sub>O</sub> is false' is true, but that 'A's statement<sub>a</sub> is false' is not true.

I understand AT to say that every nominalized subject phrase of

the sort we are concerned with has at least one of these two senses and that none has any sense other than an act or object sense.<sup>13</sup> Thus, every predicate that can meaningfully be attached to such phrases belongs either to *A* or to *O*. Further, it is clear that *A* and *O* are disjoint : The crucial feature of each set is that its members are predicable of actions or of the objects of such actions but not both. The proponents of AT want to argue, for example, that 'A's statement' sometimes means 'what A stated' precisely because predicates such as 'is true' are impredicative of actions but they are predicable of what is stated. Other members of *A* and *O* may be obtained by matching a variety of predicates to nominalizations such as 'A's promise', 'A's demand', 'A's request', 'A's insinuation' and so on. Thus, 'was satisfied' belongs to *O* because acts of demanding cannot be said to be satisfied. And 'was interrupted by laughter' belongs to *A* because only acts of demanding and not what is demanded can be interrupted by laughter.

6. If I may presuppose RT for a moment, I shall argue both that AT is false and that the argument for it is invalid, but first let me make clear what I do *not* deny. I do not deny that there is a distinction between speech acts and their objects, nor do I deny that propositions are the objects of illocutionary acts. What I do deny is that the nominalizations of illocutionary verbs are ambiguous between "act" and "object" senses. There are three ways in which AT might be false : The relevant nominalizations could have either sense and not the other or they could have a sense which is neither of those alleged by AT. The latter seems most plausible to me : The nominalizations of illocutionary verbs are univocal and their sense is neither of those alleged by AT.

First the putative object sense. Consider : A promises "I will return B's book". C states "A will return B's book". The object of A's promising is the proposition expressed in this context by 'I will return B's book' and the object of C's stating is the proposition expressed by 'A will return B's book'. Since these sentences express the same proposition in this context, what A promised is the same as what C stated. Thus, if AT is true, A's promise<sub>O</sub> is the same as C's statement<sub>O</sub>. But that this is not right is shown by the fact that there is a range of predicates belonging to *O* which are predicable of statements, but impredicative of promises, and vice versa. Further, many predicates of statements and promises are impredicative of propositions. For example, promises can be broken or kept. Statements and propositions can be true or false, but promises cannot. Finally, statements and promises can be

approximate, rough, ambiguous, precise, or vague whereas it is doubtful that propositions can be. Note that because all these predicates are drawn from  $O$  there is no question of their being predicates of statements and promises in the putative act sense.

It follows that some predicate is *true* of A's promise which is not true of C's statement. For example, A's promise was either broken or kept whereas C's statement was neither. Hence A's promise is not the same as C's statement. Therefore, either 'A's promise' and 'C's statement' do not mean 'what A promised' and 'what C stated', respectively, or the proposition is not what is promised and stated. Since we are taking it for granted that the proposition was the object of their acts we should conclude that AT is not generally true.

Let us look briefly at a couple more examples. Suppose A demands that B close the door and C forbids B to close the door. Then A demanded what C forbade. If 'A's demand' meant 'what A demanded' and 'C's forbiddance' meant 'what C forbade' then A's demand would be the same as C's forbiddance. But B must comply with either the command or the forbiddance and fail to comply with the other. So A's demand cannot be the same as C's forbiddance and, hence, 'A's demand' and 'C's forbiddance' cannot mean 'what A demanded' and 'what C forbade'. Finally, consider predicates of, say, bets and those of propositions. Since a proposition is what is bet, or the object of the bet, if 'bet' had an object sense then any predicate true of a bet in that sense would be true of a proposition. But bets can be won or lost whereas propositions cannot. So 'bet' does not mean 'what is bet'. It is, of course, practically impossible to give separate arguments here for each of the illocutionary verbs, but it is clear that this pattern of argument can be reproduced for whatever term we wish, so, if sound, it shows that none of them has an object sense.

7. Searle appears to have anticipated my argument in the above-quoted passage. When he speaks of statements <sub>$O$</sub>  and promises <sub>$O$</sub> , he identifies them with propositions "construed as stated" and "construed as promised". It is easy to see why Searle makes this qualification : If, in my argument, the proposition that A will return B's book "construed as promised" were not identical to the proposition that A will return B's book "construed as stated" then it might be possible to claim that it does not follow from the fact that A's promise was broken that C's statement was broken. But, whatever the merits of the view that propositions "construed as stated" are not the same as propositions "construed as promised" (a murder "construed as an accident" is, after all, a murder), this will

not help as a defense of AT, for if C's statement<sub>o</sub> is *not* identical to A's promise<sub>o</sub> then 'C's statement' and 'A's promise' cannot mean 'what C stated' and 'what A promised', respectively, for Searle admits that these latter phrases do refer to the same thing, and if AT were true then so would 'C's statement' and 'A's promise' have to refer to the same thing. Thus, Searle can't both maintain AT and distinguish between A's promise<sub>o</sub> and C's statement<sub>o</sub>.

Even if Searle's suggestion were compatible with AT, it would render his view unable to account for some of the facts that initially made AT attractive. For example, one of the virtues of AT was supposed to be that it accounts for the fact that it is possible for A's statement to be the same as B's belief. But if a proposition construed as stated were different from a proposition construed as believed then it is hard to see, even if AT were true, how it would be possible to believe a statement: *What* one person believed wouldn't be the other person's statement. If, on the other hand, a proposition construed as believed is identical to a proposition construed as stated then, given AT, statements<sub>o</sub> would be the same as beliefs<sub>o</sub> and the same damaging consequences follow as before.

8. I have argued that if RT is true then AT is false — there is no object sense. I will shortly argue against the alleged act sense, but first I would like to consider a possible defense of the object sense. Though the philosophers I have cited seem all to be committed to RT, one might try to preserve AT by giving up RT. One might then deny that the nominalized phrases under discussion are referring terms at all and try to avoid ontological commitment to such suspect entities as statements, promises, bets, and so on, by a strategy of paraphrase.<sup>14</sup> AT could then be amended in the following way:

AT': The nominalizations of illocutionary verbs are act-object ambiguous and any apparent predication of a statement, promise, bet, etc., is to be analyzed in terms of a predication of a proposition or of an act of stating, promising, betting, etc.

This is not to say that to predicate something of a statement<sub>o</sub> or promise<sub>o</sub> is to predicate the *same thing* of a proposition, but rather that for every such predication an analysis can be given in terms of an equivalent predication of a corresponding property of a proposition. As a rough start, the analysis of a sentence such as 'A's promise was broken' might then proceed along the following lines (ignoring time indices):

( $\exists!$  p)(A promised exactly once that A would make p true & A was able to make p true & p is false)

Thus only propositions and, implicitly, events are quantified over

and the putative property of promises of being broken is analysed into the corresponding properties of propositions of being promised, a person's being able to make them true, and falsity. So there is no difficulty over propositions being said to be broken. Similarly, 'A's demand of B was complied with' and 'C's forbiddance against B was not complied with' might be rendered, as a start,

( $\exists!$  p) (A demanded exactly once that B make p true & p is true)  
and

( $\exists!$  q) (C forbade exactly once that B make q true & q is true)  
Thus if it happens that what A demanded is the same as what C forbade, that is, that p is the same proposition as q, then there is no difficulty in the inference, given AT', that A's demand is identical to B's forbiddance.

However appealing the ontological economy of this reduction, it does not show RT to be false; that it is possible to find such paraphrases shows at most that we can choose a form of words which avoids commitment to statements, promises, bets, etc. The question then becomes whether or not the relevant phrases are in fact used by speakers to refer.

In order to answer this question it is interesting first to notice that skepticism toward the object sense seems more compelling than skepticism toward the act sense. Certainly for a philosopher like Searle, who is inclined to think that phrases such as 'France's present crisis' refer to certain complex events it would be difficult to deny that a phrase such as 'A's act of promising' refers to A's act of promising. Then if AT were true 'A's promise' ought also to refer to A's act of promising since, *prima facie* at least, two phrases with the same meaning should belong to the same semantical category. But this is only the thin end of the wedge — if it is granted that 'A's promise<sub>a</sub>' is a referring term then it would be entirely *ad hoc* to deny that 'A's promise<sub>o</sub>' also is a referring term. At least some systematic explanation of the difference between the two which involved more than a desire to avoid commitment to promises would be required.

This much aside, it does not even seem to me that the suggested analysis correctly preserve the truth conditions of the sentences under consideration. If A made no promise at all then it seems implausible to say that 'A's promise was broken' is *false*; rather, I think it more likely that we would deny it a truth value on the grounds that nothing was referred to of which 'was broken' could truly or falsely be predicated. Or, by analogy, if A had no brother we would not think that 'A's brother was arrested' would imply the false proposition that A has exactly one brother — rather we would think no proposition was expressed. A Strawsonian presupposition seems

to be involved here — to say that A's promise was broken is not to assert that A promised something; rather the existence of A's promise is a precondition for making a statement at all.

9. From the above considerations it seems right to conclude that RT is true and, hence, that phrases such as 'A's statement', 'B's promise', etc. sometimes refer to statements and promises etc. distinct both from propositions and from acts of stating and promising. This, in turn, suggests that there is no act sense of these nominalizations either, for what seemed right about the arguments for AT is that there are predicates of promises and statements, etc., which are impredicative of actions. Since there are such predicates, the singular terms they are attached to do not refer to actions. Again taking 'A's promise was broken' as a model, the argument can be put in this way : Suppose 'A's promise was broken' is true. As we have previously concluded, 'A's promise' refers, but since there is no object sense it does not refer to what A promised. So if AT were true it would have to refer to A's act of promising. But no act can be said to be broken. So 'A's promise' does not refer to an act and, hence, does not mean 'A's act of promising'. Since this argument can be reproduced using many predicates which are admitted, even by the proponents of AT, to be impredicative of actions, it shows that there are many contexts in which the relevant nominalizations have neither act nor object senses.

This argument does not show, however, that there are *no* contexts in which such terms have act senses — an advocate of AT might object that I have not shown that, say, 'A's demand' does not have an act sense in the context 'A's demand was shrill (interrupted by laughter, etc.)'. I do not know how to show that these terms never have an act sense, but if it can be shown that the argument in favor of the act sense is invalid then I think it most reasonable to conclude that the relevant nominalizations are univocal.

In fact, the argument for the act sense is invalid. In order to show that there is an act sense of 'demand', for example, it is not sufficient to show that a sentence such as 'A's demand was shrill' might be true whereas only acts of demanding can be shrill. It no more follows from the fact that only acts of demanding can be shrill that demands are acts than it follows from the fact that a demand can be satisfied that it is a proposition. In order to show that 'A's demand' has a distinct act sense one has to show at least that the same thing cannot be said to be both satisfied and also shrill.

It is important to recall at this point that the crucial difference, glossed over at the beginning, between statements, demands, etc. on

the one hand and propositions on the other, is that statements and demands are in some sense linguistic entities — they are *made* by speakers in the course of uttering with a certain force sentences which express propositions. This suggests that predicates such as 'took five minutes' and 'was shrill' are elliptical, that, for example, 'A's demand was shrill' or 'A's statement took five minutes' really mean 'A's demand was *made shrilly*' and 'A's statement took five minutes *to make*'. Phrases such as 'shrill' and 'took five minutes' are adverbial, they are not really predicates of demands and statements at all. And it does not follow from the fact that 'A's demand was shrilly made' and 'A's statement took five minutes to make' might be true that 'A's demand' and 'A's statement' refer to acts of demanding and stating. It is rather like this : Suppose someone says "The Eiffel Tower took five years to build" and someone else says "The Great Pyramid took twenty years". This does not show that the Great Pyramid is an event of building but only that some adverbs qualify deleted verbs and thus appear in discourse as predicates.

10. If I am right, the nominalized subject phrases we are interested in are both univocal and referential, but they refer neither to illocutionary acts nor to propositions. Thus, for example, a term such as 'A's statement' refers neither to an act of stating nor to the proposition stated. To what does it refer then ? A sensible, if obvious, suggestion is that it refers to A's statement. So a consequence of my view is that if we accept RT then we should recognize in addition to illocutionary acts and their propositional objects a third class of entities. These entities are statements, bets, promises, demands, etc. Interestingly, this view fits rather well with Searle's analysis of illocutionary acts in terms of illocutionary force operators on propositions. Recall the example of A's saying "I promise that I will return your book by midnight Tuesday". We may regard the phrase 'I promise that' as a functor<sup>15</sup> whose argument is the proposition expressed in this context by 'I will return your book by midnight Tuesday' and whose value is the promise A made. 'A's promise' refers to this promise.

I will not attempt here to explain the nature of these entities, but will end with a brief discussion of how the view I have advocated accords with the linguistic facts that originally seemed to favor AT. One linguistic fact that seemed to favor AT was that one can truly say A's statement both was true and interrupted by laughter or that B's promise was whispered and later broken. There is no difficulty in accounting for these facts : A's statement, the making of which was interrupted by laughter, was true and B's promise, which was made

in a whisper, was later broken.

The second fact AT was meant to account for it that we can truly say that my statement that the soul is like a chariot is the same as Plato's statement even though the events of stating occurred at different times. The view I am suggesting does not *explain* this, but it is consistent with it, for there is no reason to suppose that the same statement cannot be made more than once by different speakers.

Finally, that A's statement can be said to be the same as B's conjecture though the former is absurd and the latter not can't be accounted for on my view because it is not true that a statement can be the same as a conjecture. I can, however, suggest why one might mistakenly think that there is a fact to be accounted for. An ambiguity may really be involved, but if so it is not in 'A's statement' or 'B's conjecture'. The problem is that there is a sense in which it is true that A's statement is what A stated. This is not, of course, the sense AT alleges, for in that putative sense a proposition is what A stated and, as I have argued, statements are not propositions. Rather, 'what A stated' seems to be ambiguous.

The ambiguity can be illustrated by the fact that we can say both that what A ate was his dinner and that what A ate was steak. But this does not mean that A's steak is the same as A's dinner. 'What A ate' can refer either to the steak or to the result of eating the steak, which is the dinner. Similarly, 'what A stated' can refer to the object of A's act of stating or to the result of his stating it, viz., his statement. Now one might think that A's statement can be identical to B's conjecture by confusing these two senses of 'what A stated' and 'what B conjectured'. Consider the following argument :

1. A's statement is what A stated.
  2. B's conjecture is what B conjectured.
  3. What A stated is what B conjectured, viz.  
the proposition that p.
  4. Hence, A's statement is the same as B's conjecture.
- (1) and (2) are true identity statements — they say that A's statement is A's statement and B's conjecture is B's conjecture. (Neither sense is relevant to AT; for in the sense alleged by AT what A stated and what B conjectured are propositions and, as argued above, statements and conjectures are not propositions). But in (3) 'what A stated' and 'what B conjectured' do refer to a proposition. Thus (4) is not, as it appears to be, the result of substituting in (1) and (2) on the basis of (3). Hence (4) does not follow.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> John Searle, "Austin on Locutionary and Illocutionary Acts", *The Philosophical Review*, October, 1968, p. 422.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. G. E. Moore, "Propositions" in *Some Main Problems of Philosophy*, George Allen and Unwin, 1953, p. 62; P. F. Strawson, "Truth", *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supp. Vol. XXIV, 1950.

<sup>3</sup> R. Cartwright, "Propositions" in R. J. Butler, *Analytical Philosophy*, Oxford, 1962.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 84-85.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.

<sup>7</sup> Donnellan in "Reference and Definite Descriptions", *The Philosophical Review*, July 1965, argues that in special circumstances a speaker can use definite descriptions to refer to entities their bases are not uniquely true of, but I am not concerned with this sort of case here.

<sup>8</sup> John Searle, *Speech Acts*, Cambridge University Press, 1969, Cf. p. 81.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. R. Stalnaker, "Pragmatics", in *Semantics of Natural Language*, Harmon and Davidson (eds.), Reidel, Dordrecht-Holland and "Contexts and Possible Worlds" (unpublished).

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31. Cf. also Guido Küng, "Prologue-Functors", *Journal of Philosophical Logic* 3, 1974, pp. 241-254.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Searle, "Austin on Locutionary and Illocutionary Acts", p. 423. It is interesting that in a little noticed passage from "On Sense and Reference" Frege, who seems to have had something like AT in mind when he called what is thought, or the sense of a sentence, "the thought" (Gedanke), also draws this conclusion :

A subordinate clause with 'that' after 'command', 'ask', 'forbid', would appear in direct speech as an imperative. Such a clause has no reference but only a sense. A command, a request, are indeed not thoughts, yet they stand on the same level as thoughts. Hence in subordinate clauses depending upon 'command', 'ask', etc., words have their indirect reference. *The reference of such a clause is therefore not a truth value but a command, a request,*

*and so forth.*

(my emphasis). Gottlob Frege, "On Sense and Reference" in Geach and Black (eds.), *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, Blackwell, 1966, p. 68. This, by the way, shows that Church's suggestion, in *Introduction to Mathematical Logic I*, that 'Gedanke' be translated 'proposition' is mistaken.

<sup>13</sup> Cartwright, *Ibid.*, hints that there may be other senses, but he does not say what they might be.

<sup>14</sup> Something like this is advocated by Bruce Aune in "Statements and Propositions", *Nous*, vol. 1, No. 3, August 1967. He says that 'A's statement' does not refer either to any such "object" as a statement or to a proposition and suggests that a sentence such as 'A's statement that p is true' means something like 'A truly stated that p'.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Searle, *Speech Acts* and Küng, *Ibid.*