Between Singularity and Generality

The Semantic Life of Proper Names*

1   Introduction

Historically, theorizing on proper names has had the tendency of oscillating between two extremes: thinking of proper names as unambiguous individual constants in the formal language, and thinking of proper names as definite descriptions. Since Kripke, the orthodoxy has been to treat names as individual constants. However, the orthodoxy faces two anomalies: on the one hand, proper names can have multiple bearers. But multiple bearerhood is (*prima facie*) a problem to the idea that proper names have just one individual as referent. On the other hand, as Burge (1973) noted, proper names can have predicative uses. But the view that proper names are singular terms arguably does not have the resources to deal with Burge's cases.

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* An earlier version of substantial part of this paper were already present in my Bphil dissertation "Between Singularity and Generality: The Semantic Life of Proper Names" (University of Oxford, 2011).

For these reasons, there has been a growing popularity to the view that proper names are predicates.[1] This view can straightforwardly deal with the anomalies mentioned before. If proper names are predicates then they are the kind of term that can be true of many individuals. Thus, there is nothing surprising about the fact that proper names can have multiple bearers. Furthermore, if proper names are predicates, then predicative uses of proper names are not problematic, there are just the standard case. As well as dealing with these anomalies, it is claimed that the predicate view can successfully account for *referential* uses of proper names while still treating them as predicates, thus providing a uniform semantics of proper names.

I believe, however, that the predicate view of proper names is mistaken. In this paper I will argue that the linguistic evidence provided for the predicate view fails the mark; not only because it doesn't support the view that proper names are predicates across the board – especially when considering cross-linguistic data – but also because the examples used are just particular instances of a more general phenomenon, what I call *category change*. According to this phenomenon, words of virtually every word-class can sometimes change categories. Thus, the mere fact that proper names sometimes function as common nouns, seen in light of category change, does not give one reasons to conclude that proper names should be treated as predicates generally.

Further, there is additional linguistic data concerning proper names that predicativists did not initially considered but which represent an important challenge to the view: this additional data concerning the behaviour of proper names cannot be accounted for within the predicativist's unified semantics and furthermore, it suggests

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[1] Defenders of this view include Sloat (1969), Burge (1973), Hornsby (1976), Higginbotham (1988), Larson and Segal (1995), Elbourne (2005), Mathushasky (2006, 2008, 2015), Sawyer (2010), Fara (2011ms, 2015b).

that proper names are not fundamentally predicates. In the final section of the paper I present my own view of the semantics of proper names. I will argue that my own account is superior to both Predicativism and other Referentialist views, in accounting for the additional data and the 'anomalies' mentioned above.

2   The Predicative View

The Predicate view of proper names is mainly motivated by the observation that, on some occurrences, proper names behave like count nouns. This in turn is based on the fact that proper names, at least in English, combine well with a full range of determiners and take the plural form, which are well–known syntactical characteristics of count nouns. Here are a few examples, first emphasized by Tyler Burge (1973, 429) (these exemplify *predicative uses* henceforth)[2]:

(1)   a. The Albert that bought the car is married.

       b. An Albert came to see me today.

       c. That Albert is not in my class.

       d. There are only two Alberts in this town.

       e. Few Alberts came to the party.

       f. Every Albert has voted.

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[2] The label 'predicative uses' has become customary in the literature, and normally refers only to the kind of count noun uses exemplified in (1) where a name N can be paraphrased as 'individual called 'N'' or something of the sort. But the label is slightly misleading since there are other kinds of count noun uses of proper names that should qualify as *predicative* in so far as their semantics also assigns them a predicate as value, albeit a different one. However, we'll keep the custom of calling the count noun uses exemplified in (1) 'predicative' and use the term 'Jeshion's examples' to refer to the additional count noun uses (cf. Section 3.3.1).

The predicativist takes this data to be significant: the fact that proper names exhibit striking similarities to count nouns with respect to their combination with determiners and permission of plural form is taken as indication that proper names belong to the same syntactical category as count nouns. And if proper names are count nouns, then it is reasonable to think that they must have the same kind of semantic value that count nouns have, namely, that of predicates – a property, or a set of objects, etc. Burge says that proper names are *true of* objects (Burge 1973, 428), thus 'Albert' would have as semantic value either a property or an extension consisting in those individuals called 'Albert'.[3]

The Predicate View has the obvious advantage of providing a straightforward syntactic and semantic treatment of predicative uses of proper names. Predicativists typically take the main challenge for their view to be that of offering an account of *referential* uses of proper names. These are the paradigmatic cases, where proper names behave like singular terms that pick out a single object as reference, i.e., 'Maria is happy'. A semantic theory of proper names, therefore, should be able to account for both the predicative and the referential uses of proper names.

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[3] Most predicativists accept that the meaning of *N* is given by what we will call, following Fara, the being-called condition:

> (BCC) 'N' (when a predicate) is true of a thing just in case it is called N (Fara 2015b, 64).

Note the lack of quotation marks around 'N' in the construction 'it is called N'. Fara, following Matushansky (2008, 2015), give some arguments to the effect that in naming constructions the name is not mentioned but used, and it is effectively a predicate (Fara, 2015b, 65-69). However, as we will see in Section 5.3.1, what predicativists apparently mean by *being called N*, boils down to the same property we have been designating all along with *being called 'N'* – that is, the property of having 'N' as a name, or being named with 'N', or being dubbed 'N', etc. I will keep using the quotations marks around 'N', but all I will say about 'being called 'N'' can be also applied to 'being called N'.

In order to accommodate the referential uses, predicativists argue that proper names in these unmodified uses – where they *appear* to function as singular terms – are never *really* unmodified: they appear bare in the surface but their analysis yields an unpronounced determiner and perhaps also a restrictor (Burge 1973, 432; Elbourne 2005, 188; Mathushasky 2006, 285; 2008, 574-575; Fara 2011ms, 9; 2015b, 60). In their view, proper names are in fact part of either a complex demonstrative or a definite description.

Burge believes that unmodified occurrences of proper names are to be represented as playing the role of a demonstrative and a predicate (Burge, 1973, 432). In other words, the covert determiner attached to proper names in unmodified occurrences is a demonstrative 'that' or 'this': 'Maria is happy' is analysed as '*that/this Maria* is happy'. The demonstrative attached to 'Maria' would restrict this predicate down to the individual intended or demonstrated. Elbourne (2005), Mathushansky (2006, 2008) and Fara (2011ms, 2015b) share the view that proper names are part of incomplete definite descriptions. Their view is therefore that the unpronounced determiner covertly attached to unmodified proper names is the definite article. Thus, 'Maria is happy' is analysed as '*the Maria* is happy', perhaps with a predicate modifier – unpronounced and contextually provided – restricting the predicate 'Maria' down to a single individual.

The predicativist argues that since she is able to accommodate the putative referential uses of proper names while still treating them as predicates, her view has the advantage of providing a uniform account of the semantics of proper names.

3   The Case Against Predicativism

The data that motivated the predicativist – that proper names exhibit the syntactical properties of count nouns – is taken to reveal the nature of proper names as predicates, and so it is used as evidence for the thesis that proper names are predicates across the board. But, as I will show in what follows, the data is more complex than what the predicativist initially considered; in at least three respects it does not support the thesis that proper names are predicates across the board.[4] I will discuss these three aspects in the following sections.

3.1 Proper Names Cross-linguistically

Some cross-linguistic data is mentioned by predicativists, usually concentrating in those languages where proper names take the definite article, that are thought to support Predicativism. However, I considered more extensive cross-linguistic data[5] and discussed the distribution of proper names and the rest of determiners and plural form, not just the definite article. I concluded that proper names cross-linguistically do not consistently exhibit the syntactical behaviour observed with proper names in English, i.e., in many languages proper names do not combine well with the whole range of

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[4] There is a fourth important aspect of the behaviour of proper names in contrast with common count nouns that undermines the predicativist thesis. This is the fact that, in English as well as many other languages, proper names do not normally take the definite article unless they appear overtly restricted, and common count nouns most naturally do. This issue has been discussed most notably by Fara (2015b), Hinzen (2016), Jeshion (2017, forthcoming), Mathushansky (2006), and Segal (2001) but also by Jeshion (2015b), Mathushansky (2008), Schoubye (forthcoming). I also discuss this issue in detail in (2011, 2018, ms-a, ms-b).

[5] Details of which cannot appear in this paper for reasons of space. But see Delgado (2018) for the complete survey.

determiners or do not take plural form.[6] But if proper names are in fact count nouns generally, we should expect to find more cross-linguistic consistency in their syntactical behaviour. At any rate, the predicativist should explain why proper names present these conspicuous cross-linguistic anomalies with respect to their combination with determiners and permission of plural form. On the contrary, this cross-linguistic evidence uniformly shows referential uses of proper names to be standard, thus lending support to the referentialist's thesis that the primary function of names is to refer.

3.2 Overgeneration

The predicativist's inference from the syntactical behaviour of proper names to the conclusion that proper names are always predicates overgenerates. There are also other words that on occasions can be combined with determiners. But one should not want to conclude that for this reason these words are predicates across the board. Consider the following examples,

(2)   a. There are *few ifs* to this argument.

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[6] Few examples: First, the use of the definite article is not admissible in Afrikaans, Basque, Danish, Macedonian, Norwegian, Romanian and Swedish. Interestingly, the use of the definite article varies regionally in German, Italian and Spanish, and according to gender in Italian (where in most cases the article goes with female names only). Oddly, the use of the definite article is mandatory in Catalan and Portuguese, however (as with versions of Italian and Spanish that use it) it is not admissible in formal writing. Second, pluralisation of proper names and their combination with numerals and quantifiers show more interesting variations across the languages reviewed. In Faroese, names can be pluralized but cannot be used with numerals or quantifiers. In Italian, Romanian and Swedish only some names can be pluralized (mostly female names). In Mandarin Chinese, the plural marker used with expressions designating persons cannot by applied to names. In Hindi, plural markers with names sound very odd, and with quantifiers and numerals names would appear in the singular. In Basque and Danish names cannot be pluralized and cannot appear with quantifiers even in the singular.

b. We are always raking up *some if* or other, to disturb our faith (OED)

c. I have *two buts* to your proposal.

d. The Romans valued *the old*.

e. *The poor* are always *the most affected.*

f. Is *a she!* (said of e.g., a new born baby)

g. *The why and how* of effective altruism.

In these examples, conjunctions, adjectives and even pronouns function as common nouns, as signalled by the plural markings and the combination with determiners. Thus, if having these syntactical properties on some occasions were a good criterion to classify these words as predicates fundamentally, then conjunctions, adjectives and pronouns would be really predicates.

But this conclusion seems wrong: certainly, conjunctives like 'if' and 'but' in their usual occurrences could not be analysed as predicates, since they are not thought of as functions from objects to truth-values but rather as functions from truth-values to truth-values. There are also good reasons why adjectives may be represented differently from predicates, i.e., as predicate-modifiers. At any rate, even if adjectives are considered ordinary predicates, arguably the semantic value an adjective has in a sentence like (2.d) and (2.e) is different from the semantic value it has in adjectival uses, i.e., when they occur modifying a noun.[7]

The inference from the syntactical behaviour of certain words to the conclusion that they are predicates seems to overgenerate, for it would assign the semantic value of predicates to more words than we would want to. Although it is plausible to treat the

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[7] This is because in (2.d) and (2.e) the nominalised adjective denotes a restricted class of individuals, i.e., *people*, who are old/poor/affected, as opposed to any individual.

relevant words as predicates when interpreting the sentences in (2), one does not need to assume that they are predicates across the board. Moreover, it is a general fact about language that words of certain categories can sometimes play the syntactical role of words from some other categories – and change semantic value accordingly – as I will show in Section 4. But this suggests, at least *prima facie*, that unified semantic accounts for any type of word, proper names included, are not plausible. I turn now to discuss some examples that suggest that multiple semantic accounts for proper names would be preferable given their linguistic behaviour.

3.3 Against Uniformity: Other Uses of Proper Names

An interesting data that was not initially considered by the predicativist is that proper names can sometimes be used as adjectives and even as verbs. Consider the following examples,

(3)   a. That's a typical *Maria* attitude

         b. That dress is so *Chanel*.

         c. I enjoy watching *Almodóvar* movies.

         d. That movie was the most *Almodóvar* of the festival.

         e. I *googled* the title but didn't find anything.

         f. My sister *Houdini'd* her way out of the locked closet (Clark & Clark 1979, p783)

On the predicativist approach, given these uses of proper names, one may conclude that proper names are really adjectives, or that they are really verbs. This seems implausible. Predicativists should not ignore the evidence that names sometimes function as adjectives or verbs, precisely because they take the fact that proper names share the syntactical properties of count nouns to be as significant as to support a

semantic theory for proper names. But there is no reason why we should take the syntactical behaviour of names as significant only when they are used as count nouns, but not when they are used as adjectives or verbs.

Given these uses of proper names that differ not only from referential but also from count noun uses in their semantic contribution to the sentences in which they appear; implementing the ideal of a uniform semantic account for proper names may no longer seem plausible. For the predicativist, a name N means something like *being called 'N'*. But of course, when functioning as adjectives or as verbs names do not have that meaning: an *Almodóvar* movie is not a movie *called* 'Almodóvar'; or *to Houdini* is not to *call* something 'Houdini', or to do something with things *called* 'Houdini'. The predicative view has a point about count noun uses of proper names: on these uses, they are best interpreted as contributing a property or an extension as semantic value rather than a single individual. But likewise, we should think that if it makes better semantic sense to interpret the adjectival and verbal uses of proper names as contributing a certain *other* property or extension – which differs from that which they contribute when functioning as count nouns – then this interpretation should be implemented. But clearly, this sensible methodology is in conflict with the ideal of having a uniform semantic account of proper names, one where they mean the same in all their uses.

3.3.1 Jeshion's Examples

On a similar vein, Jeshion (2015a, 2015b) has called attention to certain uses of proper names that, although functioning as count nouns, are semantically different from the

predicative uses in (1.a-f).[8] These uses are divided into *producer* (4.a), *representation* (4.b) and *resemblance* (4.b) examples (Jeshion 2015b, 371-372)[9]:

(4)   a. The Picassos are in the east wing; the Kollwitzs are in the west wing.

b. Two Obamas came to the Halloween party.

c. Two little Lenas just arrived.

These examples have in common that while being count noun uses of names, their semantics cannot be explained in terms of the *being-called-condition* that the predicativist postulates for predicative uses. In (4.a) the terms 'Picassos' and 'Kollwitzs' apply to works of those artists: their meaning is something like 'x is a work by $\mathcal{N}$', *and not* 'x is called $\mathcal{N}$'. Likewise, in (4.b) 'Obamas' applies to people representing (or dress up like) Obama, and in (4.c) 'Lenas' applies to people physically resembling Lena (e.g., when the sentence is said of two daughters of Lena that physically resemble her).

These examples are also used by Jeshion to argue against the uniformity argument. For the predicativist must either have a separate account for these examples, or provide a rationale for setting them aside as non-literal or non-genuine, or as derived from the 'literal' predicative uses. But Jeshion correctly points out, this rationale should not work against the predicative uses, such that by this rationale, predicative uses would also count as non-literal or derived from referential uses (Jeshion 2015b, 374). This challenge is supplemented in Jeshion's paper with an account that makes predicative

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[8] We will refer to them henceforth as 'Jeshion's examples'.

[9] Jeshion also discusses *family* examples (2015b, 372-373, and Section 6) but I will leave them out in this paper.

uses and Jeshion's examples all derived from referential uses (Jeshion 2015b, Sections 4 and 5).[10][11]

4   Category Change

Our discussion in the previous sections shows something important about the behaviour of proper names, as well as other words, namely that they seem to be able to function in different categories in some occasions. This would have to be considered on a plausible semantic account of proper names. In this section, I want to introduce the phenomenon I call *category change.* This is the phenomenon by which words belonging to certain syntactical categories can sometimes change into other categories. As it was suggested above, proper names can sometimes function as common nouns, but also as adjectives and verbs. Seen in light of category change, the fact that they can behave like this will not be surprising: I will argue that the different uses of proper names can naturally be taken as cases of category change.

4.1 The Phenomenon of Category Change

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[10] Her account also explains some mass term uses (i.e., 'Lenny reads too much Heidegger and not enough Frege') and verbal uses of names derived from referential uses (Jeshion 2015b, 384-385).

[11] Rami (2015) also provides such an account that makes predicative and Jeshion's examples all derived from the referential use, but from a different conception of the referential use. Leckie (2013) also challenges the uniformity argument by providing alternative ways to achieve a unified treatment of predicative and referential uses of proper names. See also Rami (2014) for a similar response to the uniformity argument.

Category change occurs when a word from a certain class or lexical category, i.e., a noun, verb, adjective, etc., is used in a different syntactic environment, entailing a change in its function and often a change in its meaning. Here are few examples of category change:

(5)   a. The *sick* will be the most affected.   (adjective-to-noun)

            b. *Running* is fun.   (verb-to-noun)

            c. I always *butter* the bread when making sandwiches.   (noun-to-verb)

            d. That noise is *annoying*.   (verb-to-adjective)

This phenomenon is often labelled as *conversion* or *zero-derivation* (and also *functional shift*, *category extension*) and it is contrasted with the familiar process of *derivation* or *affixation*, in which new words are formed from a base word by adding affixes.[12] But conversion (or zero-derivation) is taken as a different process because it concerns cases where words shift categories without the help of suffixes or any other morphological change.

Category change can be thought as fundamentally a change in *function*, where function is understood as 'syntactic profile' (for example, in English, the syntactic profile of adjectives includes their ability to appear in attributive position before a noun, and to be sub-modified by adverbs). A change in function will typically involve also a change in meaning. We recognize that a word has changed categories because it is used in a different syntactical environment and it comes to have the syntactical properties of another category. And it is plausible to assume that the semantic value of the word may change when it shifts categories, assuming there is some correlation between syntactic categories and semantic ones.

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[12] For some discussion see Bauer (1983), Cannon (1985), Pennanen (1971), Quirk et al. (1985), Zandvoort (1965).

A host of theoretical issues surrounds the discussion of conversion.[13] For example, there is the issue of the definition of the process, i.e., as a type of derivational process by which a *new* word is derived from another, or as a process by which a single word can be a member of different categories (the issue arising partly since some conversion are only sporadic or occasional although many are stable or permanent). Also, there is the question of how fine-grained word-classes should be and whether we should see changes between sub-categories as cases of conversion. Importantly, there is also the question of *directionality*, that is, the question of deciding which word is the original, or primitive, and which word is the derived one.

I shall not attempt to resolve all these issues since my aim here is not to provide a fully-fledged account of category change. I chose a slightly different name for the phenomenon – I will talk of *category change* and only occasionally of *conversion* – because I want to avoid theoretical associations with established views. My purpose is only to introduce the phenomenon and discuss some of its implications, as they are relevant to the analysis of the different uses of proper names. Thus, my take on how category change works, in particular when involving names, will assume some answers to the issues mentioned above. For example, I will argue in particular that, at least in some cases, a single word is capable of assuming the functions of a different category, without necessarily being lexicalized as a new word – this is the case with *partial* conversions, and I will argue that some category changes involving proper names are cases of partial conversions. Further, following the well-established criterion of *semantic dependence* to settle the issue of directionality[14], I will argue that other uses of proper names

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[13] For an overview of these problems see the Bauer & Varela (2005), 7-17.

[14] See Quirk et al. (1985, 1558): "Semantic dependence of one item upon another is sufficient ground for arguing its derivational dependence". See also Martsa (2013, 237).

semantically depend upon the referential use, suggesting that the latter is the fundamental use from which the other uses are derived.

4.2 Cases of Category Change

The most productive type of category change in English is that between nouns, verbs and adjectives. However, category change also encompasses other, perhaps more unusual, changes like those of prepositions used as verbs, or interrogatives or pronouns used as nouns. We will look at some examples of these first and then discuss category changes involving proper names.[15]

4.2.1 Verbs

Consider these examples of verbs changing into nouns (6) and into adjectives (7):

(6)   a. *Running/Swimming/Reading/Travelling* is fun.

   b. *The killings* are gang-related/I heard *those whisperings*.

   c. The *walk/talk/hunt/change* was pleasant.

(7)   a. The job is *boring/ tiring/ amusing.*

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[15] I have focused this discussion mainly on category change in English for reasons of space, however the phenomenon occurs in other languages as well, although the types and frequency of the changes vary – e.g., noun-to-verb changes in Spanish are not possible without morphological change but verb-to-noun changes are very common. As far as I have been able to attest, the level of productivity of category change in a given language correlates with the level of productivity of common noun (and adjectival or verbal) uses of proper names in that language: for example, category change is much rarer in Danish than in English, and so is the use of proper names as common nouns, adjectives or verbs (data due to Andreas Stokke and Anders Schoubye, p.c.).

b. *working* mother/ *annoying* neighbours/ *confusing* instructions

(8)   a. I am *bored/ tired/ amused.*

b. Very *annoyed/ alarmed/ disturbed* neighbours complained.

Note the functional changes that nominalised verbs (6.c) and nominalised gerunds (6.a-b) exhibit, namely, like nouns they occupy the argument position; can take different determiners and plural form, i.e., '*a* walk', '*some* changes', '*those* whisperings'; and can be modified by an attributive adjective (as only nouns do), i.e., 'his *brilliant* performing', 'an *outstanding* talk'. As adjectives, they can modify a noun ((7.b) and (8.b)), be gradable (8.b) or appear predicatively ((7.a) and (8.a)).

As for semantic changes, verbs used as nouns may designate an activity or state in the abstract (as opposed to designating class of individuals engaged in some activity, or being in some state), i.e., (6.a); or some instance of this activity in a similar way that abstract nouns appearing with determiners seem to designate an instance of the abstract entity they denote when occurring bare (e.g., *Hope* is a virtue. / He destroyed *the hope* I had).

The participles as adjectives express properties that characterize individuals as they are involved in the action or state expressed by the verb: In the case of present participles as *agents* – i.e., examples in (7) – or as *patients* – i.e., examples in (8) – in the case of past participles.

4.2.2 Adjectives

It is quite common to find adjectives functioning as nouns:

(9)   a. This policy will only help the *sick/poor/wealthy/blind/ignorant/wicked.*

b. The *French/British/Japanese* fought in WWII.

c. *Germans / Russians / Catholics / Experts / Patients* voted against the new regulation.

d. The *best* is yet to come / John fears the *unexpected* / The *unimaginable* happened.

e. He is among the *wealthiest / wisest* of the country.

These nominalised adjectives arguably designate a restricted class of individuals that bear the property expressed by the adjective, i.e., 'the sick' designates the class of *people* who are sick, as opposed to the whole class of individuals who are sick, or the property of being sick; 'the French'/'Germans' designate French or German citizens, and not French or German objects, for example.

Adjectives can also change into verbs. For example, the adjectives 'warm' and 'free' change into the verbs 'to warm' and 'to free', displaying all the properties of verbs. With respect to semantic changes, the adjective would change from designating a state or quality, to designating the action of causing that state or quality, e.g., the state of being free/the action of causing freedom.[16]

We also find adjectives used as adverbs, although less frequently. Examples are 'Peter wiped the table *clean*'; 'Birds are flying *high*'; 'She spoke *low* but clearly'.

4.2.3 Nouns

A very productive kind of category change is that of nouns becoming verbs. Here are some examples:

(10)   *Bottle* the juice/ *carpet* the floor/ *dress* the boy/ *shoe* the horse/ *stamp* the passport/ *core* the apple/ *bone* the fish (Examples from Clark &Clark 1979)

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[16] Other examples of de-adjectival verbs: to calm, to dirty, to dry, to cool, to empty, to clean, to tidy, to narrow.

There is a clear change in meaning between the denominal verb and the noun it originates from: to bottle something is to put something into a bottle; to bone the fish is to extract the bones off the fish.

Nouns can freely appear in attributive position modifying another noun, arguably functioning as adjectives, i.e., *school* bus, *brick* wall, *leather* bag, etc. It is a matter of debate whether nouns used in attributive position should be considered as converted to adjectives, because they don't acquire other properties of adjectives (e.g., they are not gradable). But some take they view that they are converted adjectives if they can also appear predicatively, as bellow:

(11)   a. (*cotton/nylon* dress) - This dress is *cotton*, but that one is *nylon*.

        b. (*reproduction* furniture) – This furniture is *reproduction*. (Quirk et al. 1985, 1562)

At the very least, it is plausible to assume that these are adjectival *uses* of these nouns.

4.2.4 Other Category Changes

Against the background of the more ordinary cases of category change just discussed, it is plausible to think that the examples in (12) are also cases of category change:

(12)   a. Martha is very *down-to-earth*.   (phrase-to-adjective)

        b. His manners are very *upper-class*.   (phrase-to-adjective)

        c. A shot of water *ups* engine power. (OED)   (adverb-to-verb)

        d. As soon as she'd *outed* the words, she cried. (OED)   (preposition-to-verb)

        e. Does it count towards the *goddamned* word-count?   (interjection-to-adjective)

        f. The *why* and *how* of effective altruism.   (interrogatives-to-nouns)

        g. A crucial *if* has been overlooked.   (conjunctive-to-noun)

        h. I sense a *but* coming.   (conjunctive-to-noun)

i. This book is a *must* for philosophy students.   (auxiliary-to-noun)

The highlighted words exhibit functional changes – for example, the ability of interrogatives or conjunctives to be used with determiners, as nouns are; or a phrase used predicatively and being gradable, as adjectives are – as well as semantic changes. For example, 'up' in (12.c) changes from meaning (roughly) 'towards a higher place or position' when used as an adverb into meaning 'to increase' when used as a verb.

4.2.4 Proper Names

We are already familiar with examples of proper names functioning as count nouns (recall examples (1.a-f) in Section 2), exhibiting the syntactic properties of count nouns. As for semantic change, when functioning as count nouns, names would arguably designate the extension consisting of people that bear that name. The exact analysis of the semantic changes names undergo will of course depend on the semantics one assigns to the base, so I postpone a more detailed analysis of this until after I present my own semantic account of proper names in Section 5.

Other interesting cases of category change for proper names are changes into adjectives or verbs. We have seen some adjectival uses of proper names in Section 3.3:

(13)   a. That's a typical *Maria* attitude.

          b. That dress is very *Chanel*.

          c. These paintings are much more *Picasso* than the earlier ones.

          d. I enjoy watching *Almodóvar* movies.

          e. These *Hornsby* entailments are a consequence of Predicativism.

Here the name appears modifying a noun, can be gradable as in (13.b), and have comparative forms as in (13.c), all properties of adjectives. Semantically, the changes seem to be quite liberal. We will discuss these in the following section.

Another, perhaps more unusual, case of category change is that of proper names being used as verbs. The more common cases are those involving brand or artefact names being used as verbs:

(14)   hoover, scotchtape, xerox[17], google, skype, rollerblade, photoshop, facebook.

The names in (14) have all the syntactical properties of verbs: for example, they can be inflected for person and tense and can be modified by adverbs. The semantic change is also evident: proper names for artefacts used as verbs designate a specific action, namely, the kind of action that the kind of object that bears the proper name in question was made for: To 'google' something is to search something using Google – Google is a search engine; to 'photoshop' a photo is to modify it using Photoshop – Photoshop is an image processor. However, some of the verbs in (14) have lost the tight connection with the proper name from which they originate, for example, one may hoover the floor without using a Hoover vacuum cleaner (although the verb still designates an action for which the Hoover was made for).[18] This may just be evidence of the progressive nature of category change; while 'facebook' used as a verb is felt as an innovation – unheard of few years ago – 'hoover' and 'xerox' have become lexicalized.

But proper names of people can also sometimes be used as verbs. Consider the following examples (a-c are from Clark & Clark 1979, 783):

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[17] Examples from Clark & Clark 1979, 783.

[18] Note that 'Hoover' is supposed to be the name of the type of instrument, not the name of every particular object that exemplifies it. But 'Hoover' is also used as a count noun to designate the particular objects.

(15) a. I am aware of the perils of *Don Juaning*.

    b. They *Bonny and Clyde* their way through the West.

    c. My sister *Houdini'd* her way out of the locked closet.

    d. I need to *Chisholm* this definition.

    e. He looked like he was going to *Hannibal Lecter* me.

These verbs designate an action that is characterized after the actions of a famous bearer of the name. Of course, this use of proper names is highly contextual; as Clark & Clark argue, it appeals to fairly widespread knowledge of the famous individual involved. Houdini was famous for his skilful escape acts, thus 'to Houdini one's way out' would mean in the right context, 'to escape by trickery' (Clark & Clark 1979, p784). Thus, what proper names as verbs denote depends on knowledge of particular bearers of the proper name.

4.3 Understanding Proper Names In Light Of Category Change

The wide range of cases presented above illustrates how pervasive and flexible category change in English is. We have seen that changes are possible for virtually every word-class and there is in principle no constraint on which new changes may be introduced in the language (except that changes are always into open classes, i.e., not into pronouns, or prepositions). Some innovations would stick and then become established, others would remain occasional. Very unusual category changes, like those in (12) are also possible and meaningful because they occur in languages, like English, in which more ordinary category changes occur constantly and pervasively. Given this, it will be indeed surprising if proper names did not at least sometimes change categories as well. In fact, the evidence suggests they sometimes do. Thus, the fact that proper names are

sometimes used as common nouns, adjectives or verbs, is not only unsurprising but to be expected, and to be accounted for, on any adequate theory of proper names.

However, once category change for names is accepted, the motivation for unifying the referential and the predicative uses of proper names is lost. What would justify the unification of these two uses, when you have other uses that require a separate account? Further, apart from being unmotivated, the unification of referential and predicative uses into a single syntactic and semantic category would seem futile. It seems to follow from category change that there can't be a uniform semantics of count nouns because their meaning changes according to the different uses they have when they change categories. So, if proper names were count nouns, they would *also* need a non-uniform semantics to account for the different meanings they would have when changing categories. I take this as a decisive point against the predicativists' uniformity argument.

4.3.1 Partial Conversion

As said above, the discussion of conversion in the literature has as one of its aims to establish whether we can think of conversion as involving the generation of new words from existing words, or the generation of new uses for them.[19] I think the fact that some category changes are *partial* supports the idea that, at least in some cases, a *single* word comes to have new uses, and therefore new meanings. What is meant by 'partial changes' (or 'partial conversions', see Bauer 2005, 22-23) are those cases in which a word changes category without adopting all the properties of the category it is changing into, and/or without losing all the properties of its original category. For example, in

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[19] See Martsa (2013) for an overview of the different interpretations of conversion.

English, adjectives converted to nouns would take the definite article, as only nouns do, but some, i.e., 'sick', 'poor', 'wealthy', 'wise', 'blind'; would not follow the rest of noun inflections, namely, they would take neither the indefinite article nor the plural form.[20] Also, like ordinary nouns, adjectives converted to nouns can be modified by an attributive adjective (as only nouns do), i.e., 'the *unfortunate* sick', 'the *brave* British'; but also have the following properties, unlike nouns: can be modified by an adverb i.e., 'the *extremely* wealthy' 'the *badly* wounded'; can take comparative and superlative forms, i.e., the *poorest*; and are gradable, i.e., 'the *absolutely* blind', 'the *very* old' (all properties of adjectives). Conversely, *full* changes are those in which the changing word becomes fully functional in another category. This is the case of nouns converted to verbs in English; they acquire all the properties of verbs.

That some category changes are partial allows us to say in a not *ad-hoc* manner that at least some of the category changes proper names undergo are partial changes. This is important for two reasons. First, because it explains the restricted functionality of other uses of proper names, including the common noun use, consistently with cross-linguistic data. Second, because it helps settling the issue of directionality, i.e., deciding which use of proper names is fundamental, and which is derived.

As we have seen, in other languages proper names can sometimes function as common nouns but do not take the full range of determiners or take plural form (cf. Section 3.1). Further, even in English it is not clear that proper names as common nouns are fully functional. One reason is that proper names do not normally appear with the definite article (unless modified pre or post nominally), i.e., '*The Albert is

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[20] Martsa (2013, 84) considers this kind of adjective-to-noun changes as conversions on the argument that they are like some collective nouns, e.g., 'police', which also don't have plural form and cannot take the indefinite article.

happy'.[21] This is recognized as a problem for the view that claim proper names are *type-ambiguous* between referential and predicative types[22] as much as it is a problem for Predicativism. If proper names are fully converted into predicates (or *are* predicates, as the predicativist claims) they should not be subject to the constraints (on pluralisation or the use of determiners) the cross-linguistic data shows; and in particular, there should be no problem with the use of the definite article with proper names in English (Schoubye, 2017, fn34).[23]

A second reason to doubt the full functionality of predicative names is that sometimes proper names, while taking the syntactical properties of common nouns when used predicatively, resist taking some of the *semantic* properties assigned to these predicative uses. A first example of this, noted by Jeshion (2015a, 247-248) is that some proper names (i.e., those well known to have unique bearers) encourage a special reading when used as common nouns. She gives the following example:

(16)   a. Kristallnacht was horrifying.

       b. (?) There have been relatively few Kristallnachts (Jeshion, 2015a, 248; also 2015b, fn30)

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[21] Although there is some disagreement about the grammaticality or acceptability of the use of the article with proper names (see Jeshion (2015b, 2017, forthcoming) for a challenge to this assumed ungrammaticality), most people agree that a certain set up is required to hear this use as fine.

[22] For such view see Schoubye (2017). Similarly, Jeshion (2017, forthcoming) conceives of proper names as coming in two types: the referential type (what are properly called 'names') and the predicative type (that are called 'collective names'). See Jeshion (2017, 231) and (forthcoming, Section 2-4 and 13).

[23] Predicativists, however, do have an explanation for why the definite article doesn't show up with bare proper names in English (Fara, 2015b, Sections 9-11; Matushansky, 2006, Sections 2-3). I shall not discuss this here but see Delgado (2011, 2018, ms-b) for detailed discussion.

The thought is that the most natural reading of (16.b) – perhaps the only available – is a reading where 'Kristallnachts' is not about individuals called 'Kristiallnacht' but about things relevantly similar to Kristiallnacht. But if names are lexicalized as full predicates, with a meaning like *being called 'N'*, it is odd that in these cases we don't automatically get *also* the reading where they mean just that.

For a second example, and conceding to Jeshion for a moment that *The+N* is grammatical after all, note that (17) does not have a generic reading (or, at least, the generic reading is very hard to access):

(17)   The Sarah is an individual with a short name.[24]

But count nouns appearing with the definite article can normally generate generic sentences[25]:

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[24] I'm not suggesting that predicative names cannot generate any generic sentence. For example, the following are generic sentences with predicative names: 'A Sarah is an individual with a short name', and 'Sarahs are scary'.

[25] However, not every definite can generate generic sentences. It has been noted in the literature (see for example, Krifka et al, 1995; Vendler, 1967), that it is hard for a definite to generate a generic sentence if the noun does not denote a well–established kind or is too generic. For example, a noun like 'vehicle' is too generic for the definite 'the vehicle' to generate a generic sentence; however, nouns denoting examples of vehicles (as specific kinds of the genus *vehicle*) can, e.g., 'the motorbike', 'the cart', 'the airplane', etc.

But is it not clear that a proper name qua predicate is too generic for the purpose. It denotes a class of people identified by the name they have (i.e., people called *N*), much like other count nouns that denote classes of people identified by other things, like profession (i.e., the mathematician, the teacher, the fireman); religion (i.e., the Christian, the Buddhist); political inclination (i.e., the feminist, the socialist, the conservative); or other social categories or roles (i.e., the patient, the student, the transvestite, the widow). Such definites can generate generic sentences all right: e.g., 'The mathematician typically feels superior'; 'The feminist believes in the equality of genders'; 'The patient does not like to wait'. What a proper name denotes as a predicate seems to be neither more, nor less, general than what count nouns denoting classes of people are. So, I suspect that what prevents the construction 'the+*N*' from

(18)   a. The potato was unknown in Europe before 1400.   (D-generics)

b. The potato is a starchy, tuberous crop.   (I-generics)

c. The tiger is the largest feline.   (D-generics)

Count nouns appearing with a definite article can generate generic sentences because this construction can either denote the extension of the noun (generating I-generic sentences) or refer as a whole to the kind, or class, consisting in the individuals in the extension of the noun (generating D-generic sentences). But a proper name appearing with the definite article can apparently do neither.

We can eschew the problems that come with the claim that names are fully-fledged predicates by saying instead that proper names changing into common nouns are cases of partial conversion.[26]

4.3.2 Directionality

Claiming partial conversion for proper names also supports the thesis that proper names are fundamentally referential. One of the criteria employed in establishing directionality in conversion is 'restriction of usage': according to this criterion, the derived member of a conversion pair has a smaller range of usage (Martsa, 2013, 238). The predicative use of proper names arguably has a smaller range, both in English and

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generating a genetic sentence is not that its meaning is too generic, but rather that its meaning is too specific, perhaps referential on a single individual.

[26] Which is not to say that there is no lexical rule governing this use as common noun. Whether conversion is full or partial, and whether the results are lexicalized or not, is not necessarily correlated, as far as I can see. For example, the name 'Chisholm' as a verb is fully functional but we would hardly find an entry of it as a verb in the lexicon. Likewise, 'must' (as in 'a must') is lexicalized as a noun (cf. The Oxford English Dictionary) but is not fully functional (i.e., does not naturally take the definite article, or used in the plural).

cross-linguistically, since it has restrictions that the referential use doesn't have, especially in other languages. This in turn counters a potential argument from the predicativist to the effect that proper names are fundamentally predicates and all other uses are derived.[27]

A more important criterion, mentioned above, is that of semantic dependence. According to this, a word of a conversion pair is considered as derived if its semantic analysis is dependent on the meaning of the other word (Martsa, 2013, 237). For example, "kick$_{\text{Noun}}$ can be seen as converted from kick$_{\text{Verb}}$ for it can be paraphrased as 'an act/instance of kicking', or, conversely, bicycle$_{\text{Verb}}$, converted from bicycle$_{\text{Noun}}$, for it is paraphrasable as 'ride a bicycle'" (Martsa, 2013, 104). In category changes involving proper names, their different meanings as adjectives or as verbs do not depend on the meaning they have as nouns (roughly *being called 'N'*), alleged to be their fundamental meaning by predicativists. Rather, they crucially depend on particular bearers of the name involved, i.e., a Chanel dress is not a dress *called* 'Chanel', or to Chisholm a definition is not to do something with objects *called* 'Chisholm'.

Thus, while in noun-to-verb conversions the meaning of the converted verb involves the unrestricted meaning of the noun (i.e., bottle$_{\text{Verb}}$ means 'to put something into a bottle$_{\text{Noun}}$'), the meaning of a verb converted from a proper name involves a particular individual but not the set of people called 'N', or the property *being called 'N'*. This indicates that at least adjectival and verbal uses semantically depend on the referential meaning of the proper name, and not on its predicative meaning.[28] In

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[27] Matushansky (2015) argues not just that referential uses of proper names are derived from predicate uses, but also that predicate uses *cannot* be derived from referential uses. I'll respond to her argument in Section 5.3.

[28] I elaborate this point in more detail in Delgado (2018, ms-a).

addition, the same can be said of Jeshion's examples.[29]

This data undermines the predicativist's claim that the fundamental meaning of proper names is the predicative meaning (the unified meaning of both predicative and referential uses), because the predicative meaning does not appear – and significantly, it is not even required – in the semantic analysis of the different derived meanings of proper names as adjectives or verbs, and Jeshion's examples. But one would not expect this result if proper names are just (common) count nouns that change categories and undergo semantic changes (like both ordinary count and mass nouns do). On the contrary, if proper names were predicates fundamentally, we would expect to find cases of category changes (or cases of semantic extension) where the semantic changes are based on their alleged fundamental meaning (i.e., *being called 'N'*). But the cases we find are not of this sort.[30][31]

In addition, cases of common derivation (using affixes) with proper names are

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[29] Jeshion also argues that the meanings of proper names in Jeshion's examples semantically depend on the referential meaning of the proper name (i.e., 'Picasso' in a production example means 'painting by Picasso', thus depending on a particular bearer of the name). Crucially, Jeshion's cases are unlike cases of deferred interpretation (as Fara (2015a) classifies them) involving common nouns – i.e., 'put the gorillas in the east wing' (said of paintings made by gorillas, adapted from Fara's example, 2015a, 260) – because in these cases, the new meaning is derived from the *unrestricted* meaning of the common noun, and not from the meaning of the noun *once restricted* to a particular denotation (Jeshion, 2015b, 377-379).

[30] I have failed to find a single example of adjectival or verbal uses of a proper name where its meaning is derived from the predicative meaning *being called 'N'*.

[31] The following is also odd: if proper names are fundamentally predicates, and the referential use is derived, it is strange that proper names would be highly polysemous (having adjectival and verbal meanings as well as the different meanings in Jeshion's examples) based on their referential meaning, while exhibiting no other semantic changes based on their predicative meaning. For all I know it is possible that this is so, but I haven't found examples with other words where the target of a conversion pair is highly polysemous while the base is not.

also examples where the base for the semantic derivation is the referential meaning and not the predicative meaning:

> (19) (as adjectives or nouns): Fregean, Russellian, Newtonian, Kantian, Freudian, Aristotelian, Shakespearean, Victorian, Darwinian, Londoner, Parisian.

As adjectives, these words express different properties that are related to particular bearers of the proper name, e.g., 'Russellian' may mean 'being (suitably) related to Russell's ideas'; 'Victorian' may mean 'being characteristics of the period of Queen Victoria's reign', etc. As nouns, the words typically denote people identified as followers of, or experts on, etc., the ideas of a particular bearer of the proper name.

5   The Semantic Life of Proper Names

At the beginning of this paper, I stated two aspects of the behaviour of proper names that are at least *prima facie* problematic for Referentialism but which Predicativism can handle well. The first is that proper names have predicative uses that apparently Referentialism cannot handle, at least while holding a single semantic account of proper names. The second is the fact that proper names can have multiple bearers, i.e., for most names there are many individuals called that name. An adequate account of proper names ought to accommodate these two aspects of the behaviour of proper names, in addition to accounting for both Jeshion's examples and category changes with proper names discussed in the previous sections.

Multiple bearerhood is supposed to be problematic for the view that proper names are singular terms because a standard assumption about singular terms is that they have just one semantic referent. More precisely, the standard view is that singular

terms *refer*, and reference for singular terms is a one-to-one relation between the term and its referent.[32] But if names have multiple bearers the issue arises of deciding which one of the bearers of a given name is its semantic reference.

The assumption that reference for singular terms is only a one-to-one relation *vis-à-vis* the problem of multiple bearerhood has resulted in two positions in the referentialist camp: one option, taken by the Homonymy view, is to say that the name-bearing relation − the relation between a name and the individual that bears it − is the semantic relation of reference. And, given the assumption that reference is one-to-one, they claim that for any name N that seems to have multiple bearers there are really multiple distinct albeit homonymous names − what they call *specific* names − each one with just one referent.[33] The other option, taken by the Contextualist view, is to treat names as context-sensitive expressions and the name-bearing relation as non-semantic, such that any given name N can have many different bearers, but reference between N and any one of its bearers only obtains in a context in which the name is used.[34]

Despite both strategies being reasonably adequate responses to the problem of multiple-bearerhood, they might seem counterintuitive: it seems counterintuitive to think that there are millions of distinct 'David' names. It is also counterintuitive or unnatural to distinguish the name-bearing relation from reference. But more

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[32] In contrast with *plural terms* that can be reasonably taken to refer, but where reference would be a one-to-many relation.

[33] See García-Carpintero (2017), Jeshion (2015b), and Sainsbury (2015) for the Homonymy view.

[34] See for example, Rami (2014, 2015) and Recanati (1993). Pelczar & Rainsbury (1998), Schoubye (2017), and Voltolini (1995) also defend contextualist accounts, although it is not clear what they think of the name-bearing relation. Delgado (2011) defends a variant of Contextualism that takes the name-bearing relation to be semantic.

importantly, both strategies present problems in the long run: while I think both views in general fare better than Predicativism at explaining the behaviour of proper names, neither Contextualism nor the Homonymy view can account for *all* uses of proper names satisfactorily – or so I'll argue in Section 5.3.

The view I present in what follows accounts for multiple bearerhood in a way that preserves the referentialist's contention that proper names are fundamentally referential singular terms, while keeping both the intuition that names are shared between bearers, and the intuition that bearing a name is a semantic relation (just reference). The view also emerged as a way to give a semantic base to all other uses of proper names, which in my account are treated as derived from the fundamental referential meaning.

5.1 Polyreferentialism[35]

My view is that proper names are what I shall call *polyreferential.* I choose this label seeking to exploit a helpful analogy with polysemy: just as polysemous words are considered as single words that have more than one meaning (as well as possibly more than one extension or semantic value corresponding to the different meanings), polyreferential words are single words that have more than one referent.[36]

Polyreferentialism may be *prima facie* intuitive in the case of proper names in so far as it restates multiple bearerhood. However, Polyreferentialism does not just restate that names have many different bearers but holds that each bearer of a given name N

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[35] The semantic account that follows should be understood as accounting for the nature and behaviour of proper names as found in natural language.

[36] Or *can* have more than one referent, even if in some cases they happen to have just one, or none.

is a semantic referent of N. In other words, the view makes no distinction between bearing N and being a semantic referent of N. Thus, names that have many different bearers have therefore many different referents. In contrast with Contextualism, Polyreferentialism is not the idea that names can *potentially* have different referents, on different contexts of use, like context sensitive words do. Rather, it is the idea that names have different referents (as many as bearers the name has) in an absolute (or context-invariant) sense, that is, a name is referentially related to each one of its bearers independently of any given particular use of the name.[37] In contrast with the Homonymy view, Polyreferentialism claims that any name N is a *single* name that can have many different referents; in other words, the view does not proliferate names in order to pair them with the different bearers in a one-to-one fashion.[38]

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[37] Excepting perhaps an initial use where the association between the name and the bearer is established.

[38] I should note here that the views of Perry (2001) and Katz (2001) are similar to mine. However, Perry does not say much about reference, so it is not clear how much our views share. On Perry's account, names (when used referentially) have many *meanings*, a bit like ambiguous words, and only get to have a referent on a particular use. On a given use, one of the name's meanings is selected and therefore a referent determined for that use. In my view, to say that a name has many referents is to say that whenever it is used it semantically refers to each of them. I also think that names have at least the minimal (and very general) linguistic meaning that states its function in the language; something like 'N refers to its bearers/referents', like any other word has. I take the view that reference is a part of the meaning of an expression, therefore my account entails neither that names have no meaning, nor that they all have the same meaning, i.e., the linguistic meaning just stated. However, I will leave the question of whether names could have a more robust type of meaning, more akin to Fregean 'sense', to further research.

Katz claims that names are 'referentially equivocal' and adds as a clarification that "they have multiple bearers, not multiple senses" (Katz, 2001, 147), but not further elucidation of whether bearerhood is to be considered as semantic. Katz also claims that proper names have a single sense, something like "the thing which is a bearer of 'N'" (Katz, 2001, 139). However, he seems

Why think that names have many different referents? I believe that it is more natural to assume no distinction between bearing a name and being a semantic referent for that name. Bearing a name, or being called a name, or being named a name, are intuitive notions. Spelling out what these notions mean more precisely would arguably cite facts about reference. We can say that bearing a name is to be associated with a name, and we can talk about the naming practices that initiate this association, i.e., baptisms, dubbings, birth certificates, formal ceremonies, etc. But we would still need to say just which association these many different practices institute, since clearly not any association that an individual may have with a name will count as bearing N – e.g., the association I have with my favourite name, does not make me a bearer of that name. In addition, there is the question of what purpose this association serves if not the purpose of reference. Suppose the association between a name and an individual is not reference: nonetheless, it seems that it only exists in order to enable reference, via some further stipulation such as that N refer to x only if x bears N. But why should this association between N and x fall short of reference if it is established only for the purpose of allowing one to refer to x with N?

On the other hand, it seems pretty intuitive that bearing N should consist of reference: that what it is for x to bear N – to be named N, or to be called N – is for N to refer to x, or N to be used to refer to x, etc.[39] The association the many naming practices institute – what they have in common – is just reference. What seems constitutive about

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to think that it is names as *types* that have many bearers, but *tokens* of it have, via the assigned sense, a determinate referent (see in particular fn42 in Katz (2001)). I think in this respect Katz view is more similar to Contextualism.

[39] I'd say reference is captured by both the relation expressed as 'N refers to x', and the converse relation expressed as 'x is a bearer of N'. But I'll ignore this nuance in what follows.

bearing a name is not going to be anything that can be cited as a naming practice – of which there can be a vast amount – but rather that these practices, in different ways, institute reference between a name and an individual.[40]

Names have a purpose in the language: to be used to refer to, pick out, or talk about an individual. It seems natural to assume that given the referential purpose of names, the association of a name with an individual generates a semantic relation of reference, so that we will use the name to refer to (pick out, talk about) the individual. Moreover, the reference of any referential use of a proper name, and its contribution to propositional content thereby, would be an individual associated with the name. Thus, it seems right to count this association as semantic.

In principle, there seem to be nothing against the thought that the *same* name can be used to initiate another naming practice, and thereby comes to have another bearer. But on the polyreferential view this means that a referential practice is thereby initiated and the name comes to have another referent. Thus, a name would be referentially related to more than one individual, and reference for proper names as polyreferential would be a one-to-many relation. And this runs against the standard view that reference for singular terms is a one-to-one relation. Can proper names still be singular terms that refer on the polyreferential view?

Polyreferentialism claims that for a single name N, there are as many referential relations to individuals as bearers the name has, and the reference relation obtains between a single name and each one of its bearers *individually*. Thus, it is not that the

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[40] Gray (2014, Section 2) makes a more detailed argument that facts about name-bearing depend on facts about reference, citing in particular Madagascar-like cases where it seems clear that the island's coming to have the name is has nowadays depended on certain referential practices of speakers, and not on any form of baptism or similar naming practice that is supposed to be constitutive of the bearing relation.

name thereby refers to some plurality or loses its function as referential term and becomes instead a general term, designating a set of individuals. In other words, a polyreferential name does not have a single extension consisting of all of its bearers, but many extensions each consisting of one bearer.

To say that for polyreferential words reference is one-to-many just means that reference is such that can relate one item (a name) with many other items (individuals). But there are different ways for a relation to be one-to-many: for example, plural reference and *being-true-of* are one-to-many as well, but they are different from polyreference.

Consider plural reference for contrast: Plural terms refer to a number of objects *taken together*, i.e., 'The Beatles' refer to Paul, John, Ringo, and George taken together, but it doesn't refer to any of them individually. In contrast, 'David' refers to Hume, and to Kaplan, and to Lewis, but it doesn't refer to Hume, Kaplan and Lewis taken together. Or consider another analogy: the relations *being-father-of* and *being-surrounded-by* exemplify different ways of being one-to-many: *Being-father-of* is one-to-many in a way that is similar to polyreference: a single individual x can be related by *being-father-of* to different individuals, a, b and c. But in this case, it is true that x is a father of a, and x is a father of b, and x is a father of c. *Being-surrounded-by,* on the other hand, is more like plural reference: by it one individual x can be related to many individuals a, b, and c *taken together*, while not being the case that x is surrounded by a, and x is surrounded by b, etc.

The *being-true-of* relation is one-to-many as well, but it is different from the referential relation. For one thing, it is mediated by a property, i.e., a general term is associated with a property, or a description, and it is true of an individual if the individual has the property or satisfies the condition in question. A referential name is

associated with individuals directly, not in virtue of any property or condition the individual must satisfy; and it refers to them in virtue of this direct association.[41]

The difference between the reference relation and the *being-true-of* relation has a grammatical correlate: A general term like 'cow' cannot appear in argument position without determiners (unless I use it non-standardly as a proper name for a particular object, or use it vocatively), since a general term cannot designate a single individual in its extension unless it occurs with a determiner that restricts its denotation[42]. The *being-true-of* relation apparently does not have the semantic effect of allowing the term to pick just one individual. This is arguably because a general term is not directly associated which each individual that it is true of, but associated with a property, or an extension that contains many individuals; what they contribute to propositional content is this property or extension. Indeed, sometimes general terms (still appearing with determiners or in the plural) are used referentially, but to refer to the kind, class or property to which they *are* associated.[43] A proper name, on the contrary, does not need to be restricted by determiners in order to refer to one of its referents; it refers individually to each individual that is associated with it.

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[41] This does not mean that names could not have Fregean senses, or something similar. I would say that still in this case, the name 'Aristotle' is associated with the individual (the philosopher) *and not that* it is associated with the sense (for example 'being the teacher of Alexander') and *only* with Aristotle as a satisfier of the property expressed by the sense. Note in addition that it would be implausible to say that a name *designates* whatever property is expressed by its sense.

[42] Note that this is why Predicativism must posit a hidden determiner to go with names when in argument position (or used referentially).

[43] For example, consider the generic 'The tiger is the largest feline'. Note that what we said is consistent with the fact that in this sentence, the definite article can be considered an expletive, for it doesn't have deictic or quantificational import, i.e., it does not select a particular tiger from the extension of tigers.

Note that *predicate denotation* can be defined as one-to-many in a way that is similar to polyreference. If a predicate is polysemous, it will be associated with at least two different properties, and (possibly) two different extensions. For example, the polysemous predicate 'walnut' has at least two meanings, i.e., '*x* is a walnut *fruit*' and '*x* is a walnut *tree*'. So, this predicate has a one-to-many relation to its meanings (it doesn't seem plausible to think that 'walnut' has a single extension consisting of both trees and fruits; rather it seems to have two separate extensions).

When proper names are used as general terms, they will typically also be polysemous, since proper names can have the different senses exemplified in Jeshion's examples. For example, 'Picasso', on a common noun use, has the following meanings (among others): '*x* is called 'Picasso'', '*x* is a painting by Picasso', '*x* resembles Picasso', etc.

I think the issue of whether a term is *singular*, as opposed to *general*, should not be decided based on whether the term can designate only one object or many objects. Rather the distinction should be made based on whether the term *refers* to individuals, or it is *true of* individuals (and designate properties, or extensions). Thus, according to Polyreferentialism, proper names are singular terms even though they are polyreferential: because their fundamental semantic property is still that of referring; and they contribute individuals to propositional content directly, as opposed to being like a general term whose fundamental semantic property is that of being true of individuals, and whose contribution to propositional content is a property or a set of individuals.

5.1.1 Polyreferentialism and Compositionality

Now the question naturally arises whether polyreferentialism entails that sentences containing names are also polysemous. Given that, according to Polyreferentialism, proper names have many referents – and what they do, being *referential* terms, is to contribute their referents to the propositional content of sentences in which they occur – then the sentences in which they appear will also express many different contents, as many as referents for the name there are.[44]

However, it is *each* of the referents of a polyreferential name that is contributed to propositional content, and not all of them at once. Consider,

(20) David is happy.

This sentence does not express a *single* proposition about various Davids taken together (as a sentence with plural terms may do), or about a set of Davids. Rather, it expresses many different singular propositions, each about a single David. What we said above about 'David' referring to Hume, *and* to Kaplan, *and* to Lewis, *and not* to Hume, Kaplan and Lewis taken together, translates here into the thought that (20) expresses the proposition that Hume is happy, *and* it expresses the proposition that Kaplan is happy, *and* it expresses the proposition that Lewis is happy. But (20) does not expresses the proposition that Hume, Kaplan and Lewis are happy.

Thus, polyreference is governed by the following principle of non-agglomeration (PNA)[45]:

(PNA)   When N is polyreferential, N refers to a, and N refers to b, but N does not refer to a & b.

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[44] In what follows I will use 'meaning' and 'content' for sentences and 'propositions' interchangeably.

[45] Thanks to David Yates for help in formulating this.

And analogously for sentence expression (PNA-S):

(PNA-S) When S contains a polyreferential N, S expresses p, and S expresses p', but S does not express p & p'.

Something similar can be said about polysemous terms and sentences containing them. Given the (at least two) meanings of 'walnut', the term contributes the property or extension 'x is a walnut fruit' *and* the property or extension 'x is a walnut tree' to propositional content. Thus, a sentence such as 'My mother likes walnuts' expresses two propositions, namely, that my mother likes walnut fruits, and that my mother likes walnut trees. But it doesn't express the proposition that my mother likes all things walnut (i.e., 'walnut' does not contribute a single extension to propositional content consisting of both fruits and trees).

It seems clear, however, that when using proper names referentially, speakers typically[46] mean to talk about just *one* of the many referents a name may have, and typically only one referent is relevant to the conversation, or to evaluate what the speaker said and whether what she said is true. Here we will need to appeal to the distinction between semantic reference and speaker reference. Consider (20) again. Given that 'David' is polyreferential, the sentence will express many different contents, as many as referents of 'David' there are. The semantics of the name in (20) exactly (compositionally) determines the meanings or contents the sentence has.[47] However, a

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[46] *Typically*, because there may be referential uses of names in which is not clear that reference to only one referent is intended (cf. fn47 below).

[47] The account is designed to work on the normal cases, and on these, the semantics of the name will compositionally determine each proposition expressed by a given sentence. However, there are special cases in which it is not clear what compositional analysis to give. Polysemous words sometimes admit the activation of two of their meanings, and perhaps proper names too. An example of the first will be 'Lunch was delicious but took forever' (Falkum & Vicente, 2015,

speaker that uses this sentence will typically mean to talk about a single David, and so the *speaker's* meaning when using the sentence is typically just one of the meanings the sentence has. The speaker selects one of the meanings of the sentence, i.e., selects one of the referents of the name he is using (likewise, the speaker would select one of the meanings of polysemous words), and just this meaning is what he expresses – what the speaker said (as opposed to what the sentence says), what is relevant in the communication, is the proposition the speaker means, and not the many propositions the sentence expresses.

That names are polyreferential, and sentences containing names express many different propositions should generally not be problematic for communication. Despite a name having many different referents, for every speaker there would be a relative small number of referents for the name that he knows and would want to speak about, and the number of referents that overlaps with those his audience knows in most communications will typically be much smaller. The speaker's intention to refer to just one bearer of the name may need to be reinforced (by accompanying demonstrations or descriptions) if the context is such that more than one bearer of the name is a good candidate for speaker reference, in order to facilitate the audience's interpretation. The

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2), where the different senses of lunch ('type of food'/'type of event') are both activated. But in this case, it doesn't seem plausible to say that the sentence expresses the proposition that lunch (food) was delicious and took forever, and it expresses the proposition that lunch (event) was delicious and took forever, since both these propositions would be odd (probably even a case of category mistake) but more importantly, neither of these propositions seem to be what a speaker will want to express with the sentence. The intuitive proposition that is expressed is something like <lunch (food) was delicious and lunch (event) took forever>. But as said, it is not clear how to get this result compositionally from 'lunch', that only appears once in the sentence. Examples with proper names that activate more than one of its referential meanings are hard to find, but perhaps the following, in the right context, will be an example of it: 'Aristotle is either a philosopher or a shipping magnate'.

semantic reference for a proper name does not need to be *fixed* by appealing to any feature of the context in which is used. Reference is already fixed on the different bearers at the original naming acts. The speaker reference of a particular use of a proper name is determined both by the fact that the individual referred to is one of the referents of the name, and that the speaker has intended to refer to this individual.[48]

Note that both homonymists and contextualists would need to appeal to some kind of selection mechanism to explain reference as well. On the Homonymy view, when a speaker uses a name, she would be selecting one specific name among many homonymous ones. But it seems that the only basis for selecting between specific names that are formally identical is that they presumably have distinct referents (the only thing that distinguishes specific names from each other). Thus, I don't see how selecting a specific name does not boil down to selecting a particular referent. Contextualists appeal to a layer of meaning, or a character, for the proper name – roughly the condition that the individual referred to must be a bearer of the name. But this condition does not automatically deliver a referent for a use of a proper name in a given context; it rather acts as a constraint on reference in conjunction with speaker's intentions in referring to a particular individual. Further, since there are many contexts in which more than one bearer of the name is a good candidate for reference,

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[48] In the normal case, the speaker's intentions *alone* do not determine a referent for a use of a proper name. The speaker is constrained to select among the referents of a particular name (but this is no more than saying that, in general, in using any word, one is constrained by the word's meanings). If the speaker means to refer to Smith but uses the name 'Jones', his use of 'Jones' does not thereby refer to Smith, for he did not succeed in selecting a referent of 'Jones'. Special cases of mistaken reference can result in reference being established between a name and an individual who was not initially associated with the name (i.e., Madagascar-like cases) but this does not contradict the point that the speaker's referential intentions alone do not *generally* determine reference.

contextualists accounts would need to appeal in one way or another, to the speaker's intentions in referring to one bearer over another.[49]

There is a tricky issue on exactly what to say about the truth-conditions for sentences (in general, since not just those containing names but also those containing polysemous predicates will express many different propositions). My tentative account (which I hope to develop in detail in further work) would be the following.[50] Given a standard way of understanding sentence truth as depending on the truth of the proposition it expresses, we will have the following rule:

> **Truth-Conditions for Sentences:** For any sentence *S*, *S* is true when it expresses a true proposition *and S* is false when it expresses a false proposition.

As a result, most sentences containing either polyreferential terms or polysemous predicates will be true, *and* they will be false. Some sentences will be just true or false; for example, the sentence 'David is self-identical' would be only true, since every proposition expressed by it is true. An ordinary sentence like (20) is true, and it is false. A speaker will say something true when the proposition he means to express with (20) is true, even if (20) is also false.[51]

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[49] For example, Rami's elaboration on the exact determination of reference includes parasitic, demonstrative or purely descriptive referential intentions, in addition to the constraint played by the condition that the individual referred to must be a bearer of the name (Rami, 2015 and 2016). For Schoubye, the (contextually determined) variable assignment on which reference depends is said to represent the speaker's intentions (Schoubye, 2017, 732).

[50] Thanks to Elia Zardini for discussion here.

[51] My account entails that we won't be able to reason from the truth or falsity of sentences. For example, the sentence `David is happy and David is not happy' expresses many different propositions, only some of which are contradictions, for many others are true propositions, e.g., when Hume is happy and Lewis is not (among many other possibilities). Likewise, we can't infer from 'David and Paul are happy' that 'David is happy'. Therefore, I would say that the truth-conditions for a conjunction depend on the proposition the conjunction express: A & B is true

Finally, Polyreferential names are still rigid designators: they refer to the same individuals across different possible worlds. If we evaluate (20) with respect to other worlds, we still looking at whether Hume is happy at those worlds, and whether Kaplan is happy, and whether Lewis is happy, and not at whoever happens to be a referent of 'David' in other worlds. Again, (20) is going to come out true at w and is going to come out false at w (just for the same reasons it is true at the actual world, and it is false at the actual world). The truth and the falsity of the sentence with respect to any world will depend on how things are with the same individuals. A modal sentence, such as 'Aristotle could have been a farmer' is standardly thought to be true because there is a possible world w, where Aristotle is a farmer. On the polyreferentialist view it comes out true as well, since for every bearer of 'Aristotle' in the actual world, there is a possible world w where he is a farmer. With respect to identity statements like 'Hesperus is Phosphorus' we will say that only some of the propositions it expresses come out true (and necessarily so), i.e., when 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus' name the same individual.[52]

5.2 Polyreferentialism, Polysemy and Ambiguity

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when the proposition that 'A and B' expresses is true, and not when A is true and B is true (likewise for disjunction, negation or entailment).

[52] I'm aware that the account will need to be supplemented with a rule that states precisely what to do in case a name is iterated in the same sentence (i.e., David=David'; 'David saw David'), that is, whether we should require that the name gets the same value in both occurrences or not, resulting in that 'David=David' would either express the propositions that Hume=Hume, and that Kaplan=Kaplan, or the propositions that Hume=Hume, and that Hume=Kaplan, etc. I will leave this for further research, though I'm inclined to take the second option, with the result that 'David=David' will express only some necessary propositions.

One might wonder at this point to what extent polyreferentialism is really different from ambiguity or really similar to polysemy. A standard way of contrasting polysemy and ambiguity is to say that while in the former case there is just one word that have different senses or meanings, and these meanings are crucially related, in the latter case there are really two distinct homonymous words, with unrelated meanings. Polyreferential words fall somehow between: a proper name $\mathcal{N}$ (when referential) is just *one* word that may have just one sense[53] and may have many referents. On this standard conception of ambiguity (i.e., where ambiguous words are conceived as separate words with unrelated meanings), polyreferentialism is not ambiguity, since the core idea of polyreferentialism is that one and the same word can have more than one referent. So, I think it is plausible to keep polyreferentialism separated from ambiguity.[54] However, in order to substantiate further this distinction, I will discuss some relevant differences between ambiguity and polyreferentialism.

Some of the properties that distinguish ambiguity from polysemy (or from other phenomena like context sensitivity) also distinguish ambiguity from polyreferentialism. First, I think translation provides some support for the distinction between ambiguity on one hand and polysemy and polyreferentialism on the other. For example, while the word 'bank' is homonymous in English, this is not the case in other languages. This supports the idea that there are really two distinct words, *bank₁* and *bank₂*, that just happen to be spelled and written the same in English. Polysemous words tend to be translated into a single word that also displays polysemy, or sometimes their different meanings get assigned different derivatives of one word (or at least words with shared

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[53] Cf. fn38 and fn41 on whether names have senses, or linguistic meanings at all.

[54] Sometimes polysemy is considered as a type of ambiguity. In this case, polyreferentialism will count as another type of ambiguity, still distinguished from polysemy and ambiguity proper.

etymology).[55] But proper names do not get translated into different names corresponding to their different referents in other languages.[56]

Second, if a word possesses different morphological derivatives, it is an indication of ambiguity: for example, form *bank₁* you get *banker*, from *bank₂*, *embankment*; or *race₁* has *race* (verb), and *racing* as derivatives, while *race₂* have *racist* and *racial* (Cruse, 1986, 55-56).[57] But proper names, like polysemous words, don't seem to possess different morphological derivatives corresponding to their different referents: for example, *Victorian* is a derivative of 'Victoria' regardless of whether its meaning is related to Queen Victoria or another Victoria.

There is further evidence that supports distinguishing polyreferentialism, polysemy and ambiguity. Ambiguous words can also be polysemous, and polyreferential words (names) can also be polysemous and/or ambiguous. For example, 'bank' disambiguated as 'financial institution' (as opposed to 'riverside'), is also polysemous: it can mean the building where the bank is located (e.g., 'The bank is in South Street') or the directorate of the institution (e.g., 'The bank fired ten employees'). It can also change categories and be used as a verb (e.g. 'You should bank that money asap'). But it doesn't seem sensible to classify the different senses of 'bank' that are related in the same level as its different senses that are unrelated; we wouldn't want to

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[55] For example, 'book' gets translated into the single word 'libro' (Spanish, Italian), and 'livro' (Portuguese), which are also polysemous between 'abstract work', and 'concrete copy', in their respective languages. 'Walnut' is translated in Spanish into 'nuez' (fruit) and 'nogal' (tree) but both words have their origin in the latin word *nux*.

[56] For example, the name 'Charles' is translated into the single 'Carlos' in Spanish, in reference to both Prince Charles, and Charles Darwin ('Príncipe Carlos', and 'Carlos Darwin' respectively).

[57] This is not to say that ambiguous words could not have a common derivative as well, for example *banking* can be derivative of both *bank₁* and *bank₂*.

say that 'bank' is ambiguous between 'building', 'financial institution' and 'riverside'. Thus, it seems that the distinction between polysemy and ambiguity should be preserved.

In the case of proper names, we already seen that they are typically polysemous as well, i.e., they have different meanings when used as common nouns, adjectives or verbs, or in Jeshion's examples. But we also find that names can be ambiguous in addition to being polyreferential. An example of ambiguous names may be some acronyms, such as 'APA'.[58] 'APA' can be used to refer to the American Philosophy Association, or to the American Psychology Association (among many other things). But given their different origins as abbreviations of different names, we might think that there is really (at least) two different names 'APA', one for the American Philosophy Association, the other for the American Psychology Association, that just happen to be homonymous. Examples with proper names of people that can be considered ambiguous, because they have different origins, or belong to different languages or traditions, include: *Arn* (Yiddish contracted form of 'Aaron') and *Arn* (English short form of 'Arnold'); *Effie* (English pet form of 'Euphemia'), *Effie* (Scottish anglicised form of the Gaelic name 'Oighrig') and *Effie* (Jewish pet form of 'Ephraim').[59] With respect to translation, consider for example that 'WHO' is ambiguous between referring to the World Health Organization, and referring to the association Woman Helping Others[60]. But when referring to the World Health Organization, 'WHO' gets translated into 'OMS' in Spanish[61] while the other 'WHO' would presumably get translated into

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[58] Thanks to Elia Zardini for bringing this example to my attention.

[59] Examples from *A Dictionary of First Names.*

[60] See https://www.whofoundation.org

[61] From 'Organización Mundial de la Salud'.

'MAO'.[62][63] Intuitively, this is different from a case in which two or more people are called 'David'. Thus, it seems that ambiguity needs to be contrasted from polyreferentialism.

5.3 The Semantic of Other Uses of Proper Names

I have argued throughout this paper that proper names are fundamentally referential, but they also sometimes change categories – they have predicative uses, as well as adjectival and verbal uses – and have other derived uses, i.e., Jeshion's examples. I will now show how these other uses of proper names are semantically derived from the referential use.

5.3.1 The Predicative Meaning

We agree with the predicativist (and other referentialists) that in predicative uses, proper names express roughly the property *being called 'N'* or *bearing 'N'*. I suggested in Section 5.1 that bearing a name or being called a name should be understood in terms of reference. Note that the predicativist needs to say what *being called N* means, for it is clear that it has at least one ordinary sense that is irrelevant to the account.[64] Since predicativists reject that proper names refer, they presumably would not analyse 'x is

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[62] From 'Mujeres Ayudando a Otros'.

[63] It is not clear that pet form of names ever gets translated, but if they do, my guess is that, for example in Spanish, 'Effie' as the English pet form of 'Euphemia' would get translated into 'Eufe' or 'Eufi' (from 'Eufemia'); and as the Jewish pet form of 'Ephraim' would get translated into 'Efra' or 'Efri' (from 'Efraín').

[64] That is, the ordinary sense in which x counts as being called 'John' if I called x 'John' mistakenly, i.e., when x is not called 'John' in the sense we are after (cf. Delgado, 2011, Section 3.2, and 2018, Section 5.5; Hawthorne and Manley 2012, 221).

called N' as 'x is referred to by 'N'', or ''N' refers to x', etc. However, it is difficult to see what else they could say instead. It can't simply be that *being called N* just means *being an N/being in the extension of 'N',* for this is circular – we were supposed to get an explanation for *being an N* in terms of *being called N* – but also highly uninformative: it gives us no clue as to what things are *N*s, or when *N* is true of something.[65] Fara ends up appealing to naming or referential practices to explains what *being called N* means:

> "We are not saying that to be called Michael just is, with nothing more to be said, to be in the extension of the name 'Michael'. Rather, being called 'Michael' [sic] – being in the extension of the name 'Michael' – is something like having been dubbed Michael, with the name 'Michael' continuing to be used to refer to you in ways that are caused, with a chain of intentionally reference-preserving links, by the original dubbing" (Fara, 2015b, 73).

Matushansky also says the relation between an individual and a name is a *naming convention* (Matushansky, 2008, 599). But we still don't know what these naming practices or conventions are if they are not related to reference. And indeed, Fara seems to suggest in the above quote that what it is for an individual to be in the extension of *N* is for a referential practice tying that individual and *N* to be in place.

But how would there be a referential practice linking an individual with a name if names are not referential devices, but predicates? When predicates are used referentially (e.g., when nouns are used vocatively: 'waiter', 'driver', etc.; or cases like 'mum' and 'grandma', etc.) they are used to refer to those individuals the noun is true of on quite independent grounds of whether the noun is ever used referentially. In other words, what makes someone a waiter or a mother is quite independent of the fact that

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[65] See Delgado 2011, Section 3.2, and Delgado 2018, section 5.5, for a more detailed discussion on the meaning of *being called 'N'*. See also Hawthorne and Manley, 2012, 221-222.

the words 'waiter' or 'mother' can be use referentially to designate a waiter or a mother. But with names, according to the predicativist, what we have is a predicate whose conditions of correct application to any individual depend on N being used to refer to that individual. But since on this account N is not referential, the only reason one can refer to an individual with N is that the individual is in the extension of N. Thus, it seems that the only way out of this circularity is to admit that N is referential after all.[66]

According to the Polyreferential view, given that it takes the name-bearing relation to be just reference, *bearing 'N'*, or *being called 'N'* (in the relevant sense), are equivalent to *being a referent of 'N'*. Thus, the predicative meaning of a name depends on the referential meaning, its analysis crucially involves the name being referential. The predicative name expresses a property that individuals can have if they are *referentially* related to a referential name. Whenever a name N is associated with an individual (on

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[66] The reader may wonder whether there is some confusion here between a semantic account of what *being called N* means and a perhaps metasemantic account that states why N means what it does. The first thing to say is that the explanation we get from Fara in the above quote is supposed to elucidate what the *meaning* of *being called N* is since, as we mentioned, there are other senses to the expression that are irrelevant (cf. fn64) and predicativists in general wouldn't want to say that *being called N* just is *being an N/ being in the extension of 'N'*, on pain of circularity (therefore I believe this to still belong to the semantic level). My claim is that in appealing to referential practices, or intuitive notions such as *having 'N' as a name*, *'N' being used to refer to one*, to give the meaning of *being called N,* their account incurs in another circularity, since on the view a name is not a referential tag, the individual referred to with N must be in the extension of N. However, if stating the conditions of correct application of a predicate belongs to metasemantics, I would say it is still circular to hold that what makes it the case that N applies to some individual is that there is some referential practice of using N to refer to this individual in place, when in turn, what justifies referring to the individual with N is that the individual is in the extension of N (that N applies to the individual). This circularity at what would be the metasematic level cast doubts on the correctness of the account at the semantic level (thanks to an anonymous referee to bring the semantic/metasemantic distinction up)

the association that we call reference)[67] this individual acquires the property *being a referent of 'N'* (or *being a bearer of 'N'*; or *being called 'N'*). Thus, the semantics of the referential name (i.e., the referents it has) determines the extension of its predicative counterpart: the individuals in the extension of a predicative name N are just the referents of N. If a referential name does not (yet) have any referents (i.e., suppose I am creating a new name), its predicative meaning (if I use it as predicate) would still express the property of being a referent of this name, but its extension would be empty, since the predicate is true of nothing, insofar as the name does not (yet) have any referents.[68]

I turn now to discuss briefly how Contextualism and the Homonymy View (as broadly construed) derive the predicative meaning for proper names.

In general, accounts that treat names as context-sensitive assign something like a *character*, or a similar ingredient of meaning, to the proper name that would help determine their referent in each context of use. This character would encode a condition or constraint on reference such that the object referred to must meet this condition. The analogy is with pronouns marked for gender, i.e., 'she', 'he'. The character of these pronouns encodes the condition that the thing referred to by a use of

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[67] However this happens – I am not concerned in this paper with defining exactly how this association is initiated and sustained, only with its obtaining. Nothing I say here precludes incorporating, for example, Kripke's ideas of initial baptism and reference transmission through historical-causal chains or accommodating for special cases of name changes (i.e., Madagascar-like cases).

[68] Matushansky claims that the predicative meaning of N being derived from its referential meaning requires the existence of a particular bearer of N, and because of this, she claims, it is impossible that the predicative meaning is derived from the referential meaning (Matushansky, 2015, 350). But I reject this claim: the predicative *meaning* of N does not depend on the existence of a particular bearer of N (only its having a member in its extension does). The predicative meaning of N only depends on N being referential. And a name gets to be a referential term by being introduced as a name.

'she'/ 'he' must be a female/ a male respectively. In the case of proper names, their character would encode the condition that the thing referred to by a use of N must bear that name.

The pronouns 'she' and 'he' can sometimes be used as predicates, and as such they are true of those individuals who meet the condition expressed in their characters: e.g., 'my kitten is a *she*' would mean something like 'my kitten is a female'. Contextualists appeal to the same mechanism to explain the predicative use of proper names. When used as predicates, names express the property encoded in their character, i.e., *being a bearer of 'N';* and are true of those individuals who have that property (See Rami (2014, 425) and Schoubye (2017, *op. cit.* Sections 2.2-2.3).

Although this is a fairly elegant way of deriving the predicative meaning from the referential meaning of proper names, a common criticism to this account has been to point out that predicative uses of the pronouns 'she' and 'he' are rather an exception among indexicals, that in general don't have predicative uses (witness: '(*) there are lots of Is in this room').[69] More dramatically, Jeshion (forthcoming, fn54) points out that the predicative uses of 'she' and 'he' are limited to certain occurrences, and parallel neither predicative uses of names, nor common nouns with respect to a wide range of determiners and other constructions she discusses.[70] Therefore it seems doubtful that

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[69] This criticism is acknowledged in (Rami 2014, fn51) and (Schoubye 2017, fn31).

[70] For example, '*Some shes want water'; '*The she wants water'; '*My she needs a vaccine'; '*The shortest she needs water' (all from Jeshion, forthcoming, fn54). Moreover, Jeshion also argues that when used referentially, proper names take affective demonstratives, ordinary possessives, bare expressives, and prenominal restrictive modifiers, while pronouns do not (e.g., '*Poor she has been ill') making the identification of proper names with pronouns unconvincing (Jeshion forthcoming, fn54).

predicative uses of proper names can really be modelled to predicative uses of pronouns.

On the Homonymy view, each individual bears a specific name, and each specific name has at most one referent, i.e., there are not two individuals that share a specific name. The way this view attempts to account for common noun uses of names that seem to entail that different individuals have the same name, is by appealing to *generic* names. A generic name N_G is a name individuated in terms of its sound or spelling (taken as a word) than can serve as a 'template' from which to generate various specific names N_S. Thus, David Hume and David Kaplan have two distinct specific names *David$_S$* that were created or introduced at the time of their baptisms and share the generic *David$_G$* from which their specific names were generated (Jeshion (2015b, 380), García-Carpintero, (2017, *op. cit.*, Section 5).

The predicative meaning needed to account for common noun uses of proper names cannot be derived from any referential N_S, simply because we would only generate a predicate that is true of at most one individual (i.e., 'being a bearer of N_S'). But the predicate meaning cannot be *semantically* generated from the generic name N_G either, since generic names do not have meanings and are not borne by anyone. The homonymyst's strategy is to take another expression that has the generic name as extension – that is, a quotation of the generic name ('N_G') – and claim, appealing to Nunberg's mechanism of meaning transfer[71], that this expression stands for a property shared by the different Davids, i.e., '*x* is a bearer of a specific name generated from the generic *David$_G$*', or something of the sort (Jeshion, 2015b, 381; García-Carpintero, 2017, 52). In other words, a name for a certain word is used as a predicate to denote

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[71] This is, roughly, the idea that you can use an expression with a certain extension, to designate another extension, as long as the two extensions are suitably related. See Nunberg, 1995.

individuals that have a relationship with that word. Jeshion provides for analogy other examples of quotations of words used as predicates, e.g., 'awesome' to denote 'occurrences of 'awesome'':

(21)   Four "awesomes"s is more than enough in a blog-post (Jeshion, 2015b, 381)

The account is supplemented with the claim that speakers standardly quote without using quotation marks, to explain the lack of quotation marks when names are occurring as predicates, as in 'Every Albert is happy'.

I find this account problematic for three reasons. First, although we could grant that in practice quotations of words may occur without quotation marks, it should be at least also correct to employ them: 'Two 'Albert's came to the party', or 'Every 'Albert' is happy'. One would expect the use of quotation marks to be at most redundant but not weird. However, these sentences now seem odd and the intended interpretation is hard to access (at any rate, it would be hard to access to the ordinary speaker).[72] Further, it would be strange to remove the quotation marks of a predicative name when used in conjunction with a standard mention of the name that take quotation marks, as in the following:

(22)   'Albert' is very popular these days, in fact I know at least five Alberts.

Second, it just seems strange that one should use a quotation of a name to talk about people who have that name (or a specific one generated from that name). Jeshion's example does not make the use a quotation of a name to talk about people plausible because (21) is about words and not about people. A relevant analogy would be that of using a quotation of the adjective 'awesome' to denote people who are awesome: 'There are four 'awesome's among my friends'. It is true that awesome people are somehow related to the *word* 'awesome', but a much more natural way to talk about

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[72] For a related criticism, and few others, see Rami (2014, 414-418).

them would be to use the adjective itself (as it happens when you convert adjectives to nouns, e.g., 'There are four *intellectuals* in this room') since a much more important relation these people have to the adjective is that of being in its extension.

Lastly, it turns out that the predicative meaning of a name N is not derived from N as referential or does not depend on N's referential meaning; rather it is derived from the meaning of a different expression, i.e., the quotation of a generic name. But this robs homonymists the possibility of saying that referential names are more fundamental than predicative names, on criteria like semantic dependence (cf. Section 4.3.2). And this is damaging to the homonymist's response to the predicativist's uniformity argument, where the fundamentality of referential names (and the claim that every other use of proper names is derived from it) play a crucial role.

5.3.2 Adjectival and Verbal Meaning, and Jeshion's Examples

I argued against Predicativism that the different meanings of proper names as adjectives or as verbs, and in Jeshion's examples, do not depend on the meaning they have when used as common nouns, but rather they crucially depend on particular referents of the name involved (cf. Section 4.3.2). On the Polyreferential view, the derivation of these meanings is straightforward. A name can undergo category change, and therefore semantic changes, based on one of its referential meanings: just as a particular referent of a name is selected as the speaker-referent on a particular use of the name, also a particular referent of the name can be selected to derive a new meaning. Thus, a particular referent of 'Chanel' (the designer) is selected and the name is used as an adjective, or predicate modifier, to express a property related to that particular referent, i.e., to mean (among various possibilities) 'being like Chanel (elegant and feminine)' – e.g., 'that dress is so Chanel' – or 'being made by Chanel' – e.g., 'she wore the Chanel

dress'. Likewise, a verbal used of 'Houdini' is based on a particular referent of the name (the famous magician), to mean 'doing like Houdini did (to escape by trickery)'. Finally, Jeshion's examples are treated the same: for example, a particular referent of 'Picasso' (the painter) is selected to derive a new meaning, i.e., 'x is a painting by Picasso' in production examples.

Note that something similar happens when polysemous words change categories or undergo sematic changes. Standardly, a new meaning is derived from one of the meanings of a polysemous word. For example, the adjective 'healthy' can be used as a noun – i.e., 'the healthy' – to denote people who are healthy, based on one of the meanings of 'healthy' (to be in a healthy state) and not the other (to promote health)[73]. 'School' has the senses 'educational institution' and 'building that host an educational institution'; as a verb, i.e., *schooling*, its meaning is derived from the former, not the latter.

The Homonymy view works similarly to handle both Jeshion's examples and the adjectival and verbal uses. Giving any specific name N_S that has only one referent, one can derive a new meaning for a use of N_S that express a property in relation to this referent. Thus, the specific name $Picasso_1$ that names the painter, when used in a production example, means 'x is a painting by $Picasso_1$'. Likewise for adjectival and verbal uses: since the property expressed in these uses is related to a particular referent, it is derived from the specific name of that referent.

In contrast, Contextualism does not seem to be able to handle these cases well. This is because, on this view, a name only has a semantic referent at a context; names do not refer to their bearers independently of context. Thus, if 'Picasso' acquires the painter as semantic referent just at a context where the term is used to refer to him, it

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[73] Of course, not precluding that other common noun meanings might also be derived from the other meanings of 'healthy'.

is not clear how this (contextual) referent of 'Picasso' can be used in a semantic transfer to obtain a new meaning for the name in a producer example, or adjectival or verbal uses, on assumption that any of these other uses of 'Picasso' constitute a different context on which 'Picasso' has to be interpreted. This is to say, in the sentence 'There are two Picassos in the museum' (production example), 'Picasso' is not referential – it does not refer to the painter; rather it expresses the property 'x is a painting by Picasso'. But this meaning cannot be derived from the semantics of 'Picasso' as a name, since its semantics do not include the painter (or any other referent), and further, this meaning is clearly not derived from the character, or other layer of meaning of the proper name, as predicative uses are.

To press the point further, consider the case of pronouns. 'She' may acquire Chanel as semantic referent on a context where I am referring to the designer, but even if I just did this, I cannot go on to use 'she' in a producer example – e.g., 'this is a she dress' – to convey the meaning '*x* is a dress designed by Chanel', or as an adjective – e.g., 'this dress is very she' – to convey the meaning '*x* is elegant as Chanel', etc. An obvious explanations for this would be that Chanel is not part of the semantics of 'she', and therefore such extended meanings for 'she' that relate to Chanel are not possible.[74] Supposedly, a competent speaker is able to somehow draw the connection between the character of 'she' and the meaning of a predicative use of it (Schoubye, 2017, 735-736), since it is part of the semantics of 'she' as a pronoun that it has this character that encodes the property *being a female.* Likewise, if 'she' is used as an adjective, i.e., 'a she

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[74] I have been pointed out that there are some such uses of indexicals, i.e., 'this is so *you*'; 'That's very *me*'. But I think these uses are marginal, and do not generalize to other possible constructions with 'you' or 'me' ('there are two *mes* in the museum') or other indexicals, such as 'I', or 'that'. The use exists in Spanish with 'she' or 'he' but is also very marginal (thanks to the audience of the IIF-SADAF Seminar (University of Buenos Aires) for discussion here).

dress', its meaning would presumably be also derived from the character of 'she', to mean 'a female dress'[75], and not from any potential referent of 'she', since potential referents are not part of the semantics of 'she'.

But with proper names things are different. On the one hand, the adjectival uses (or verbal uses and uses in Jeshion's examples) that we are discussing are not derived from the name's putative character (i.e., *being a bearer of 'N'* or something similar).[76] On the other hand, since according to Contextualism, the individual bearers of a name are not part of the semantics of the name (recall that the name-bearing relation is non-semantic), it should not be possible to derive from it new meanings that relate to particular bearers. Thus, the fact that proper names do have derived meanings related to particular bearers tells against the contextualist's account of how names work.

In sum, I have shown that the polyreferential view can adequately account for all derive uses of proper names discussed so far and argued that it fares better than other referentialist's accounts at this. In addition, polyreferentialism also adequately responds to the initial challenges Predicativism posed to Referentialism.

6   Conclusion

I have argued that the predicate view of proper names is mistaken. I have first argued against the syntactic evidence used to support the view and against the predicativist's methodology of inferring a semantic account for proper names based on incomplete syntactic data. I have also shown that Predicativism can neither account for the

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[75] Indeed, 'a she dress' would be interpreted as meaning 'a female dress'.

[76] In fact, there doesn't seem to be any other adjectival or verbal uses, or Jeshion's examples, derived from the property *being a bearer of 'N'*.

behaviour of proper names in full generality (to include cases of category change and Jeshion's examples) nor claim the fundamentality of predicative names.

Yet, I believe that Predicativism has helped us to see something new. In developing my own view, I have accepted the insight that proper names in some sense express generality. Hence, I have proposed that proper names – albeit fundamentally singular referential terms – express generality in two senses. First, by being used as predicates, since then they are true of many individuals; and second, by being referentially related to many individuals. I have responded to the problem of multiple bearerhood by proposing that proper names are polyreferential. I have explained the behaviour of proper names in light of the wider phenomenon I called 'category change' and shown how Polyreferentialism can account for all uses of proper names. I hope that this new theory will contribute to further our understanding of proper names.

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