

Kaplan on Demonstratives

Indexical

A word whose referent is dependent on the context of use ... whose meaning provides a rule which determines the referent in terms of certain aspects of the context.

Examples: *I, my, you, he, his, she, it, that, this, here, now, tomorrow, yesterday, actual, present.*

Demonstration

Typically, ... a (visual) presentation of a local object discriminated by a pointing.

Demonstrative

An indexical expression that requires an associated demonstration.

Pure indexical

Does not require an associated demonstration.

Examples: *I, now, here, today, tomorrow, yesterday.*

Singular proposition

An ordered pair consisting of an **individual** and a property.

Context

A possible occasion of use of an expression.

Every context has an *agent*, a *time*, and a *location*.

Content

The proposition *expressed* by an utterance.

Circumstance

A counterfactual situation, i.e., *possible world*. What we take into account to evaluate the truth-value of the content.

Directly referential

An expression whose referent, once determined, is taken as fixed for all possible circumstances.

Two Principles:

1. The referent of a pure indexical depends on the context, and the referent of a demonstrative depends on the associated demonstration.
2. Indexicals, pure and demonstrative alike, are directly referential.

Two Kinds of Meaning

Content

The content of a sentence is the **proposition** expressed.

- A content is a function from circumstances of evaluation to an appropriate extension.

Character

- A character is a function from a context to a content.

Examples

- On Monday, Bill says “I am hungry today.”
- On Tuesday, Marc says “Bill was hungry yesterday.”

Both utterances have the **same content**, the proposition that Bill is hungry on Monday, $\langle \text{Bill}, H, \text{Monday} \rangle$.

But the two utterances have **different characters**.

Characters

It is the character of ‘Bill’ simply to refer to Bill, regardless of the context. (It is a function that yields Bill as its value for **every** context.)

It is the character of ‘I’ to refer to the agent of the context. (It is a function that yields Bill as its value in contexts in which Bill is the **agent**.)

“I am hungry today.”

Its character is a function that, given a context with agent, a , and time, t , has as its value the content that a is hungry at t , $\langle a, H, t \rangle$.

So, where $a = \text{Bill}$ and $t = \text{Monday}$, its character has as its value the content $\langle \text{Bill}, H, \text{Monday} \rangle$.

“Bill was hungry yesterday.”

Its character is a function that, given a context with time, t , has as its value the content that Bill is hungry on the day before t , $\langle \text{Bill}, H, \text{the day before } t \rangle$.

So, where $t = \text{Tuesday}$, its character has as its value the content $\langle \text{Bill}, H, \text{Monday} \rangle$.