

Kripkenstein and the Cleverly Disguised Mules

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In this paper I explore concerns about meaning raised by Kripke's interpretation of Wittgenstein's concerns about rule-following (Kripke 1982). I shall suggest that a certain kind of contextualism about the word 'means' and its cognates makes for a novel and promising response to Kripke's Wittgenstein (hereafter 'Kripkenstein'). Roughly speaking, the idea is that we should respond to Kripkensteinian concerns by saying that we don't mean_{high} addition by 'plus', but we may nevertheless still mean_{low} addition by 'plus'.

I will use epistemic contextualism – contextualism about 'knows' and its cognates – as an analogue to help me elucidate the view I have in mind. The mechanics behind the contextualism are similar in each case, or so I suggest: the context-sensitivity of both 'knows' and 'means' is importantly related to the context-sensitivity of 'explanation'-talk.

In the first section I describe contextualism about 'knows' as it is motivated by the epistemic explanationism I have espoused in earlier work. Then in the second I discuss some problems with causal and hybrid theories of reference. These help to motivate the explanationist theory of reference which is presented in section three. The fourth section shows how this explanationist theory motivates the kind of contextualist response to Kripkenstein described above. The concluding section considers a rival contextualist theory and an objection.

I should stress that I am not at present convinced that the view about meaning described in this paper is correct; I offer it as an interesting option that I think should be on the table.

1. Explanationist Contextualism About 'Knows'

It is familiar ground that the word 'knows' is often thought to be contextually shifty, so that sentences of the form 'S knows that p' may come out true on some occasions of use but false on others. To borrow an example originally used by Dretske 1970 (for slightly different purposes), consider David, who has taken his sons to the zoo and is looking at the animals in the zebra enclosure. They are, as you'd expect, black and white striped horsey-looking creatures. In everyday contexts, a speaker can truly say: 'David knows that the animals in the enclosure are zebras'. But in other contexts, such as may occur in the philosophy classroom, speakers may be discussing the possibility that the zebras in this particular zoo have been replaced by cleverly disguised mules which David cannot distinguish from zebras. Were a speaker to utter 'David knows that the animals in the enclosure are zebras' in one of *these* contexts, her utterance would be false. The reason for this, according to the contextualist, is that the extension of 'knows' in the special kinds of context created by discussing the possibility of cleverly disguised mules is different from the extension of 'knows' in everyday contexts. Often, epistemic contextualists will describe this difference by saying that the *standards* for correct application of the word 'knows' are *higher* in the special context than in everyday contexts.

Different contextualists account for the difference in the extension of 'knows' in different ways. Lewis (1996) says that 'S knows that p' comes out true in a context C iff 'S's evidence

eliminates every not-p possibility' comes out true in that context. Context, according to Lewis, can thus have an impact on the extension of 'knows' which is related to the impact of context on the range of the quantifier 'every'. As context can limit the range of the quantifier, it can limit the number of possibilities that need to be ruled out in order to count as having ruled out 'every' not-p possibility, i.e. in order to count as 'knowing' that p.

I prefer to think of things slightly differently. (I am not inclined towards the kind of infallibilism about knowledge that motivates Lewis's claim that in order to know p one's evidence must rule out *every* not-p possibility.) I think that one thing that can help us understand knowledge claims is a better understanding of how they related to claims about explanation. I favour a set of necessary and sufficient conditions on knowledge in which *explanation of the belief by the fact believed* plays a key role. I call such proposals forms of 'explanationism' about knowledge. They are kin to causal theories of knowledge, which require a causal connection between fact and belief,¹ but there are significant differences between causal theories and explanationist theories (particularly for those who, like myself, believe in the existence of non-causal explanations).

Other explanationists (though they do not use that term to describe themselves) include Goldman² (1988) and Rieber (1998). Each of Goldman, Rieber and myself offers a slightly different explanationist proposal. I describe these in detail in Jenkins 2006, and offer reasons for preferring my formulation to the alternatives. For current purposes I shall focus on my preferred version of explanationism, which says that S knows that p iff *p would be a good explanation to an outsider of S's belief that p*. An 'outsider' is someone who knows nothing special about S or S's situation (but knows general facts about rational epistemic enquiry, and is able to entertain p).

I am inclined to agree with philosophers like Garfinkel (1981), Van Fraassen (1980) and Lipton (1990) that contrast – explicit or implicit – is crucial for understanding how explanation works. Here is Lipton, suggesting that all explanation is contrastive (p. 210):

We may not explain why the leaves turn yellow in November *tout court*, but only why they turn yellow in November rather than in January, or why they turn yellow in November rather than turning blue.

I shall not argue for this view here; I rely on its intuitive appeal. It is important to be clear, however, that what I am suggesting is that whenever a contrast is not explicitly given, or whenever it is not *fully* explicit, *contextual* factors supply the rest. And this contextual determination of a contrast in turn determines what will count as a satisfactory explanation.

For instance, suppose I ask why leaves turn yellow in November, and context determines that I am asking why they turn yellow in November rather than January. And suppose you answer that they turn yellow because the reduction in green pigment reveals a yellow pigment which was always present in the leaves. This is not a good answer to my question. If, however, context had determined that I was asking why they turn yellow in November rather than blue, your answer would have been a good one. As the example illustrates, it is not always obvious, when an explanation-seeking question is asked, which implicit contrast is in play. Your answer may not be a good one to the question I was trying to ask, but it may have

¹ See e.g. Alvin Goldman 1967.

² This is Alan Goldman, not Alvin Goldman whom I referenced in footnote 1. Further references to 'Goldman' are also to Alan Goldman.

been hard or impossible for you to work that out unless I gave you more clues (laying stress on *November*, for example).

The point is that just as context determines exactly what question is being asked when someone asks ‘Why p?’, so it determines exactly what will count as a ‘good explanation of p’. The latter is dependent on the former.³ When a speaker says ‘q is a good explanation of p’, he is in effect saying⁴ ‘q is a good answer to the question ‘Why p?’’. What counts as a ‘good answer to the question ‘Why p?’’ depends on the contrast that would be supplied to fill out the question ‘Why p?’ as uttered in the speaker’s context. Hence what counts as a ‘good explanation of p’ depends on this same factor.

Returning to our mules, I propose (roughly, following Rieber 1998) that it is helpful to think about two kinds of questions that might be being asked when one asks ‘Why does David believe those animals are zebras?’:

- (1) Why does David believe those animals are zebras rather than lions, tigers, etc.?
- (2) Why does David believe those animals are zebras rather than cleverly disguised mules?

The simple answer ‘Because they *are* zebras’ looks like a good answer (even for an outsider) to question (1). The fact that the animals are zebras explains why they look black and white, stripey and horsey, and hence explains why David believes they are zebras rather than lions, tigers, etc. But this simple answer looks like a bad answer to question (2), except perhaps to someone who has special knowledge about David’s situation (i.e. someone who is not an outsider). The fact that the animals are zebras explains why they look black and white, stripey and horsey, but that *doesn’t*, in the absence of further information, explain why David takes them to be zebras rather than some other creatures that also look that way, such as cleverly disguised mules. (The kind of further information that would help here would include information about David’s prior beliefs concerning the likelihood of seeing non-zebra creatures that look that way in an enclosure marked ‘zebras’ at the zoo.)

What this suggests, to an explanationist like myself, is that whether it is appropriate to describe David as ‘knowing’ that the animals are zebras will depend on whether or not one’s context is supplying contrasts like those in question (1) or like those in question (2). Hence my brand of epistemic explanationism supplies a version of epistemic contextualism.

2. *Motivating Problems About ‘Means’*

Some kinds of context sensitivity in ‘means’ and its cognates aren’t my concern in this paper. I suspect, for example, that the word ‘means’ can be used to talk about reference meaning, sense meaning, and perhaps other kinds of meaning (see chapter 2 of Russell 2008 for a good discussion), depending on context of utterance. I shall be focusing on reference. The thesis to be developed is that, even once it is settled that the relevant kind of meaning is reference, context can shift the extension of ‘means X’ such that in one context ‘S means X by ‘x’ will come out true and in another it will not. I should also point out that I shall be looking at what individual *speakers* mean by certain words, not (or not directly) on what *words* mean.

³ In fact I believe explanation-talk to be sensitive to context in all sorts of other ways as well; see Jenkins 2008 for details.

⁴ I of course don’t mean that the sense of the two utterances is the same.

My motivation for exploring this kind of semantic contextualism is similar to that which inclines me towards epistemic contextualism. It comes from an explanationist approach to meaning: a theory of meaning which takes inspiration from causal theories, but replaces the appeal to causation with an appeal to explanation.

I shall use Kripke's causal theory⁵ of reference for proper names, and an Evans-style hybrid theory, as stalking horses in describing the explanationist view of reference that interests me. According to Kripke (1980), what a name refers to depends on two things. Firstly, there is a dubbing event, ostensive or descriptive, by which the name first comes to be associated with a particular referent. Secondly, there is a chain of appropriate causal connections between that dubbing event and the current speaker's use. The qualification 'appropriate' is important here, since many kinds of deviant causal connection with a dubbing will *not* suffice to determine that a speaker's word refers to the dubbed item. One necessary condition on appropriateness of causal connection is that the speaker must intend, at the point of learning the term, to use it in the same way as the person(s) from whom she learned it (p. 96), though Kripke is clear that he is not in a position to provide a full set of necessary and sufficient conditions (pp. 93-5).

It certainly does not seem that the intention just mentioned is a sufficient condition for appropriateness of causal connection. Suppose I intend to use the name 'Maudie' as Jo does. She uses it for her pet cat, whom she has dubbed 'Maudie'. However, I mistakenly think Jo uses the name 'Maudie' to refer to her tortoise (whose real name is 'Speedy'). Am I referring to Jo's cat when I look at Speedy making for his pile of lettuce leaves and say 'Oh look, Maudie wants some lettuce now'? There is some force to the view that I am referring to *Speedy*, not Maudie, here. But even that doesn't seem quite right; I certainly *tried* to refer to Speedy, but I fluffed the attempt by using the wrong name. I find it pretty uncomfortable to say that I accidentally referred to Maudie and almost as uncomfortable to say that I succeeded in referring to Speedy. In §3 I shall be describing an account whose aim is to accommodate these intuitions.

Intuitions to the contrary are, I suspect, probably best understood as intuitions about some *other* kind of meaning besides reference. For instance, for all I say here, my use of 'Maudie' may have a *sense*-meaning which is roughly equivalent to the sense-meaning of 'Jo's tortoise' as used by me, or that of 'Speedy' as used by Jo. (Maybe, for instance, we should say that all three have a sense meaning which is wholly or largely determined by their association with the description *Jo's tortoise*. This would require, of course, that we be careful about the relationship between sense and reference; we would not be able to go on to say that sense determines reference in any straightforward way.) And my use of 'Maudie' may have the same *character*, in the sense of Russell 2008 (p. 46), as that of 'Maudie' as used by Jo. Character in this sense is *what the speaker needs to know (albeit perhaps implicitly) in order to count as understanding the expression*. (Maybe we could say that 'Maudie' in both our mouths is such that to count as understanding it one needs to know that 'Maudie' refers to Jo's cat; this will deliver the not undesirable result that I do not really understand the word.)

Kripke's proposal leaves us with a question: how can we get clearer on which causal chains count as 'appropriate' and which count as 'deviant'? Hybrid theories inspired by Evans

⁵ Kripke himself is not sure that what he's offering is a 'theory'; he prefers to call it a 'picture' (p. 93).

(1973) may appear to offer a solution. Very roughly speaking (the view itself is subtler in various ways), Evans suggests that a proper name refers to whatever is the dominant ‘causal source’ of certain key pieces of descriptive information that the speaker associates with that name. For instance, one key piece of descriptive information that I associate with the name ‘Joan of Arc’ is *Joan of Arc was burned at the stake by the English in 1431*. The notion of a dominant causal source is not entirely clear, but I take it that the rough idea is that the dominant causal source of the various key pieces of descriptive information I associate with ‘Joan of Arc’ is the person who is causally responsible for my believing most (and/or the most important, and/or enough) of these things.

Assuming that in the above case one crucial piece of descriptive information I associate with the name ‘Maudie’ is *Maudie is Jo’s tortoise*, this kind of view, when sufficiently elaborated, seems to identify Speedy the tortoise as the referent of ‘Maudie’ when I use it.⁶ This may not be quite the desired answer, but at least it’s an answer.

However, other problems remain. What should we say about reference to abstract objects such as numbers? I assume we do not want to regard numbers as *causal* ‘sources’ of anything. We could try saying that *these* cases are covered by Kripke’s original model (relying, presumably, on description rather than ostension, when it comes to the question of how numbers undergo a dubbing) rather than Evans’s hybrid. But this would not be satisfactory, as exactly the same thing can happen with numbers as happened with Speedy and Maudie. I can be intending to use ‘7’ as you do, but mistakenly think you use it to refer to the number 5. When I then say ‘7 is the successor of 4’, do I refer to the number 7 or the number 5 by ‘7’? We were hoping the hybrid theory would answer this kind of question; if it cannot do so in this case it does not do enough to meet our needs.

One suggestion to consider here is that a small tweak to the Evans-inspired story can resolve this problem. Perhaps we should say that the referent of a term is whatever is the dominant *explanatory* source of certain key pieces of descriptive information associated by the speaker with that term. That is to say, a term refers to whatever is responsible in an explanatory – and not necessarily causal – way for my believing most (and/or the most important, and/or enough) of these key pieces of descriptive information.

This is not my preferred option. An advantage of the causal theory which neither the hybrid theory nor this descendant shares is that according to the causal theory reference does not turn on which descriptive propositions the speaker *believes*. I take this to be an advantage because I take reference to be possible in the absence of *any* descriptive beliefs (and certainly in the absence of any substantial enough to do the kind of work envisaged by the hybrid theory and its descendant), and because I think that sometimes we want to say that the dominant casual/explanatory source of the descriptive beliefs a person associates with a term is *not* correctly identified as the referent of that term. If this were not the case, it would not be so uncomfortable to identify Speedy as the referent of my confused use of ‘Maudie’

3. *Explanationist Contextualism About ‘Means’*

⁶ This, I think, is roughly what Evans says about his ‘Ibn Kahn’ case: Evans 1973, p.19.

Let's come back to the causal theory, and re-open the question of how to determine when a causal chain is 'appropriate' and when it is 'deviant'. I suggest that we consider the view that the 'deviant' cases are ones where a certain explanationist condition is not met.

In order to introduce the condition in question, let me define a few terms. Let S be the speaker whose usage of a term 'x' to refer to X we are interested in. We'll call a dubbing of X an 'X-dubbing activity', and we'll use 'S's linguistic predecessors' to refer to the speakers of S's language who exist at or before the time of S's utterance of 'x'. And let an 'outsider' be someone who (as in the condition on knowledge described on p. * above) knows nothing special about S or S's situation, nor anything special about X. Then the relevant condition is this one:

(C) Citing the X-dubbing activities of S and/or her linguistic predecessors can serve as a good explanation to an outsider of S's usage of 'x'

The proposal I want to consider is that not only does this resolve the question of when a causal chain is 'deviant', it also serves as a necessary and sufficient condition for *S means X by 'x'* (at least where reference is the kind of meaning under consideration).

For example, suppose I use the name 'Mu' to refer to my cat Mu. In this case, the usage to be explained is my addressing Mu by that name, reporting her activities to others using it, and so on. And one can provide good explanation, even to an outsider, of why I use the name this way by citing my act of dubbing Mu with the name 'Mu' when she was a kitten. 'Mu' in my mouth does not refer to my other cat Marks, because there is no Marks-dubbing activity, carried out by either me or my linguistic predecessors, that would serve as a good explanation to an outsider of the way I use the name 'Mu'.

Similarly, the name 'Maudie' as I confusedly use it in an attempt to talk about Speedy does not refer to Maudie because there is no Maudie-dubbing activity such that citing it would provide a good explanation to an outsider of my usage. Then again, nor do any dubbings of Speedy look like *they* could so serve. So we get the result that this use of 'Maudie' ends up referring neither to Maudie nor to Speedy.

It is important that (C) specify that the recipient of the envisaged explanation is to be an outsider. People who *do* know specific facts about S's situation can get by with less explanatory information than outsiders. For example, suppose that Adam decided to call his second child 'Paul' because he named his first child 'John' and wanted to continue working his way through the Beatles in order of preference. To someone who knows Adam's naming strategy and how much he likes each Beatle, Adam's use of 'Paul' might be well explained by his John-dubbing activity. Omitting mention of the outsider from (C) therefore risks delivering the result that 'Paul' as used by Adam refers to John.

It is also important to note that the proposal captured by (C) preserves the non-reliance on the speaker's descriptive beliefs which I described at the end of the previous section.

4. A Contextualist Approach to Kripkenstein

For current purposes, a crucial aspect of the explanationist account of reference meaning described in the previous section is that, given the contrastive nature of why-questions and

the effect of this on ‘explanation’-talk, we can expect the precise constraint imposed by (C) to vary according to the context in which (C) is uttered. The view under development here is that the context-sensitivity with regard to what can serve as a ‘good explanation’ to an outsider of S’s usage of ‘x’ corresponds to a context-sensitivity with regard to what S ‘means’ by x.

When asking why-questions of the form ‘Why does S use ‘x’ the way she does?’, context determines a salient class of contrast situations. Similarly, when talking about ‘explanations’ of S’s usage of ‘x’, what counts as an ‘explanation’ depends on which contrastive why-question(s) are singled out by context as the ones an answer to which count as an ‘explanation’ of S’s usage.

Explanationism about meaning, combined with an appreciation of this context-sensitivity in ‘explanation’-talk, strongly suggests a certain approach to the concern about meaning inspired by Wittgenstein and elucidated by Kripke (1982). The approach is analogous to the classic epistemic contextualist’s response to scepticism outlined in §1 above, and I take it to be a very interesting feature – and potentially a significant attraction – of the proposal described in the previous section that it makes possible this response to Kripkenstein.

The idea is to accommodate two apparently conflicting intuitions about meaning. Although Kripke’s meaning-sceptical claims could not be called ‘intuitive’ in any pre-theoretic sense, there is *something* about them which strikes a chord in many who are exposed to them. It is very hard to say exactly what determines the meaning of our words to the exclusion of close-but-subtly-different alternatives. Yet the contrary intuition (which surely *is* pre-theoretic) that our words mean *exactly* what we everyone ordinarily thinks they mean is far too compelling to be put aside on those grounds.

In this section I move away from proper names to other symbols, but I take other symbols to have reference meanings too. It is not necessary to settle here the question of what these are, but we might, for instance, say that the reference meaning of a predicate is a property, or we might say that it is a set of (actual or possible) objects; and we might say that the reference meaning of a function symbol is a function, or a we might say that it is a set of ordered pairs of arguments and values (assuming we take that to be different). I take it that dubbings – or something similar enough – set up the meanings of words besides names, and that these may be either descriptive (‘I will use ‘is red’ to attribute the colour property characteristically shared by tomatoes, London buses and post boxes’) or demonstrative (‘I will use ‘is red’ to describe things of *this* colour’). I also take it that *explicit* dubbings are rarer with non-names as they are with names, but since we need to be able to accommodate non-explicit cases in order to understand the way names refer (see Kripke 1980, p. 162, addendum (d)) this should not present any new problems.

Kripkenstein’s question concerns a hypothetical scenario in which a speaker (we’ll call him S) has only performed finitely many calculations involving the function symbol ‘+’ before, and in particular has never consider the sum ‘68 + 57’. Kripkenstein wonders what it is about S and/or his usage of the symbol ‘+’ that determines that on considering ‘68 + 57’ S should give ‘125’ as the answer to this new sum, rather than ‘5’. That is, Kripkenstein wants to know what it is that determines that S has been using ‘+’ to express the addition function rather than the quaddition function:

x quus y = x plus y if x and y are both less than 57

= 5 otherwise

Kripkenstein rejects the idea that S's actual use of the symbol '+' can settle this type of issue (it is finite and hence underdetermines meaning). He also rejects the possibility of appealing to dispositions, since they at most determine how a person *will* or *would* use a term, not how he *should* use it, and in order for S to count as meaning addition rather than quaddition the normative dimension is crucial. Debate rages as to whether these criticisms are fair, and as to whether other proposals, such as causal or non-reductive accounts of reference, can do the required work. I cannot go into details here (Boghossian 1989 offers a classic, though not unproblematic, survey). My issues with the causal account are described in section 2 above, and I find non-reductive positions – that is, accounts which offer no response to Kripkenstein but to state that S's use of '+' *just does* mean addition – unsatisfying.⁷ This is partly because, methodologically, they seem to me like the kind of position that should be adopted only as a last resort. If we opt too early for one of these we might overlook a more philosophically illuminating proposal. And it is partly because they do nothing to accommodate what is *tempting* about Kripkenstein's conclusion. (The latter consideration also applies to causal – and indeed all extant non-meaning-sceptical – responses to Kripkenstein.)

However, a quick response to the original quus case can be proposed based on considerations of the previous section. We might say that S uses '+' the way he does because of the addition-dubbing activities of his linguistic predecessors. These predecessors may well have thought about cases like '68+57' even though S hasn't, in which case there is no cause for concern *yet* that their activities were insufficient to secure the correct meaning for S's use of '+'.

To generate a more difficult problem case for the explanationist about meaning, let us redefine 'quus' as only differing from '+' only with respect to a sum which *nobody* (as opposed to S alone) has ever considered before. To understand the explanationist response to this version of the problem, consider that in this case the why-question that stands behind condition (C) above could be expanded to either of two contrastive questions. To spell these out, let me introduce the following terminology concerning ways of using the symbol '+'. First, there are *regular ways*: ways like assenting to ' $7 + 5 = 12$ ' and ' $2 + 2 = 4$ '. Then there are *wacky ways*: ways like assenting to 'There is a large + in your garden', '+ tastes better than pineapple' and ' $7 + 5 = 2$ '. Finally, there are *quussy ways*: ways like giving the wrong answer to ' $n + m$ ' in cases which nobody has ever considered before. The two questions to focus on are:

- (1) Why does S use '+' in regular ways rather than wacky ways?
- (2) Why does S use '+' in regular ways rather than quussy ways?

The key point here is that 'Because of the dubbing activities of S's linguistic predecessors' seems to be an adequate answer to question (1) but not to question (2). Presumably there was no single explicit dubbing activity for '+', but the *kinds* of things that S's linguistic predecessors have done are sufficient to explain S's using '+' in regular ways rather than wacky ways. They are the things that make the difference between S's using '+' to express addition and using it to refer to grapefruit or to attribute the relation of siblinghood. But they

⁷ I am more sympathetic to the kind of non-reductionism which merely rejects any *conceptual* reduction of meaning to something else.

are not sufficient to explain S's using '+' in regular ways rather than quassy ways: they don't make the difference between S's using '+' to express addition and his using it to express quaddition. The activities of these predecessors were finite, and they did not do enough to specify what was to happen in the cases where addition and quaddition come apart.

Trading on the analogy with epistemic contextualism, we can think of contexts which single out question (1) as the relevant one as 'low-standards' contexts: contexts where the conditions for 'meaning' addition by '+' are relatively easily satisfied. And contexts which single out question (2) as the relevant one can be described as 'high-standards' contexts: contexts where the conditions for 'meaning' addition by '+' are much harder to satisfy.

We can then say, in *whatever* context, that '+' means by low standards, or $\text{means}_{\text{low}}$, addition but does not mean by high standards, or $\text{mean}_{\text{high}}$ addition.

Importantly, we can then add that contexts in which quassy meaning scenarios are salient will tend to be contexts in which 'means addition by '+' tends to mean *means_{high} addition by '+'*. Whereas ordinary contexts in which such considerations are not on the table will tend to be contexts in which 'means addition by '+' tends to mean *means_{low} addition by '+'*. This explains why Kripkensteinian worries are tempting as soon as we start thinking about quassy meaning scenarios, and also why this does not – and indeed should not – in any way lessen our commitment to our everyday meaning claims.

5. Concluding Remarks

Other contextualist theories of meaning could deliver essentially the same result as that described in §4. For instance, a causal theory of meaning, combined with a suitably contextualist – and perhaps contrastive – understanding of causation (see e.g. Schaffer 2005) could presumably secure a similar pattern of verdicts. My preference for an explanationist theory over this alternative is based primarily on the suspicion that the patterns of causal talk which motivate such a view of causation are patterns better accommodated by postulating that 'cause' is sometimes used to mean *causal explanation*. But this rival shares the feature described at the end of §4 and is for that reason an interesting position, with which I need not quarrel too much for current purposes.

To finish up, it is worth mentioning briefly a certain concern about the view of §4.⁸ Consider a high-standards context where 'S means addition by '+' is not true, and the last thing S said was '5555+1 = 5556'. We get the result that 'S did not make a true claim with her last utterance' is true in those contexts. But 'S *did* make a true claim with her last utterance' may be true uttered later, even though S has said nothing else in the intervening period, if the later context is a low-standards context where 'S means addition by '+' is true.

The worry is that I risk being forced to say that 'true' inherits context sensitivity from 'means'. And even those prepared to endorse context-sensitivity in 'means' may draw the line at saying it infects 'true'.

Fortunately, I am not compelled to take this line. What is sensitive to context in the above case is what (if anything) counts as S's 'claim'. In the low-standards context, S's 'claim' is

⁸ Thanks to a member of my audience at the Eidos Because Conference for discussion of this point.

that 5555 plus 1 is 5556, which is true. In the high-standards context, it is unclear that what S did counted as making a ‘claim’ at all.⁹

⁹ I would like to thank Aaron Bronfman and Daniel Nolan for discussion, and an audience at the Eidos Because Conference in Geneva (February 2008) for their helpful questions and comments.

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