REVIEWS

Alessandro Capone, *The pragmatics of indirect reports: Socio-philosophical considerations* (Perspectives in Pragmatics, Philosophy & Psychology **8**). Heidelberg: Springer, 2016. Pp. xii + 364.

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This monograph greatly benefits from the truly interdisciplinary perspective that the author adopts on the broadly defined phenomenon of indirect reporting, illustrating both its cognitive and its communicative dimension. Capone shows very effectively how certain observations and conclusions, warranted within a certain framework of investigation, can be cast in doubt when a different framework of analysis is adopted.

The logic of indirect reporting involves an optimal balance between the speaker's rights, the hearer's rights, and the reporter's rights in a given context of utterance. How close to the content of the original utterance is the reporter's utterance allowed to be? How much credit should we concede to the cognitive condition according to which an indirect report is insofar acceptable as the original speaker is ready to assent/subscribe to the possible modifications introduced by the reporter?

After a first chapter ('Putting the threads together') in which Capone manifests his contextualist attitude (especially inspired by Relevance Theory; Sperber & Wilson 1995) as the unifying force behind the huge interdisciplinary effort that characterizes the tissue of philosophical and linguistic considerations in the book, Chapter 2 ('On the social practice of indirect reports') introduces the subject of the transformations that link an original direct report to its indirect correlate, based on criteria of content preservation that crucially involve the nature of the reported speech act. The issue of transformations is also the core of Chapter 3 ('On the relationship between direct and indirect reports'), where the admissible omissions and expansions from direct to indirect reports are scrutinized, with a special eye on the concept of 'voice'. The dynamic interplay of different voices, whereby the reporter acts upon the content expressed by the original speaker, is the subject of Chapter 4 ('Indirect reports as language games'). Chapter 5 ('Indirect reporting and footing') essentially discusses the relevance of Goffman's notion of footing for the pragmatics of indirect reports. In Chapter 6 ('Reporting non-serious speech'), the issue of non-serious speech lends itself to a careful evaluation of the cognitive dynamics that regulates the balance between speaker's rights, hearer's rights and reporter's rights, dynamics that are especially explored

in Chapter 7 ('Indirect reports and slurring') and Chapter 8 ('Indirectly reporting and translating slurring utterances') from the perspective of the complex cognitive modulation of slurring, also based on the analysis of the relationship between the social practices of reporting and of translating. Chapters 9–12 revolve around belief reports and attitudes *de se*, which we will discuss in more detail below. Propositional attitudes, in their relation to the concept of pragmatic intrusion, is also the subject of Chapter 13 ('Attributions of propositional attitude and pragmatic intrusion'), whereas Chapter 14 ('Simple sentences, substitution and embedding explicatures'), where explicatures are taken to pervade the logic underlying the pragmatics of indirect reporting, should be read as the final confirmation of Capone's strong contextualist attitude.

In what follows, we will mainly concentrate on the aspects of the monograph that intrigued us most (the discussion on attitudes *de se* in Chapters 9–12). They revolve around the way in which *de se* phenomena (i.e. the cases in which a report is about an attitude that an agent has about himself) relate to the old philosophical chestnut of opacity in contexts of propositional attitude and, more generally, over the lessons we can draw for the general issues concerning the relation between language and cognition.

Capone manages to offer an astonishingly thorough overview of the different perspectives on *de se* phenomena, by (i) emphasizing the often neglected distinction between Castañeda's (1968) classical account of *de se* and Perry's (1979) insistence on the irreducible cognitive import of the notion of ESSENTIAL INDEXICAL; (ii) comparing propositional accounts with non-propositional accounts, and (iii) effectively assessing the contribution that linguistics and pragmatics can make to the stream of research found in the philosophical literature.

We will here follow Capone's thread in Chapters 9–12, showing that the three perspectives raise the right kind of questions and briefly sketching some comparison with lines of analysis based on our work on *de se* (see Delfitto & Fiorin 2011, to appear; Fiorin & Delfitto 2014; Delfitto, Rebould & Fiorin, to appear).

In Chapter 9 ('Belief reports and pragmatic intrusion'), Capone raises the issue concerning the role of the modes of presentations in belief-contexts, more specifically the role they play (i) in elucidating the (reported) believer's perspective vs. the reporter's perspective, and (ii) in enriching the semantic content of the syntactic representation by means of a specific modality of pragmatic intrusion.

On the one hand, virtually everyone subscribes to the view that taking into account the modes of presentation associated with referential expressions in pragmatics constitutes the most viable and effective solution to canonical belief puzzles like Quine's DOUBLE-VISION PROBLEM (Quine 1956) and Kripke's puzzles about *Londres/London* and *Paderewsky* (Kripke 1979). On the other hand, the question arises: What role do these modes of presentation exactly play in defining the balance between semantics, pragmatics and 'grammaticalized' *de se* (Higginbotham 2003)?

Our view on the matter is that propositions are representational structures, in cognition and in perception, which constitute the result of the operation whereby

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we assign properties to the objects that are given to us in cognition/perception, under some or other mode of presentation (see Soames 2015). Soames' view is that entertaining a proposition is performing this operation. This view does not exclude the possibility that distinct cognitive/perceptual acts of predication be representationally equivalent, in that they attribute the very same properties to the very same distal object, though the latter is individuated through different modes of presentation. On these conceptual grounds, it becomes possible to define a proposition *p* as a class of equivalence of different cognitive acts of property-attribution.

Returning now to belief attitudes, we might state that a belief predicate under the reporter's view involves a relation between an individual and a proposition, the latter conceived of as a class of equivalence of representationally equivalent cognitive acts of property-ascription. This clearly implies that there are two distinct lexical meanings of BELIEVE: $BELIEVE_1$, which is a relation between an individual (John) and a certain state of the world, independently of how this state of the world is cognitively accessed by the believer; and $BELIEVE_2$, which is a relation between an individual (John) and a specific cognitive act, whereby a property is ascribed to an object under a certain mode of presentation.

In this analysis, it is pragmatics that decides whether the reporter is making use, in a certain context, of $BELIEVE_1$ or of $BELIEVE_2$, that is, whether the reporter is adopting a *de re* perspective (i.e. her own perspective) or a *de dicto* perspective (i.e. the believer's perspective). On these grounds, we do not need BELIEVE as a three-place relation in the sense of Schiffer (1995).

In Chapter 10 ('The semantics and pragmatics of attitudes "de se"') and Chapter 11 ('Consequences of the pragmatics of "de se"') Capone deals with the fundamental problem of *de se* attributions. The view exposed above, according to which *de re*/*de dicto* ambiguities are a function of the modes of presentation introduced in the pragmatics, predicts a systematic ambiguity between *de re* and *de se*. In particular, this view entails that the *de se* interpretation of a sentence such as *Privatus thinks that he is rich*, reports a situation in which Privatus thinks reflexively of himself as a rich person. A serious problem for this view is Higginbotham's claim that control structures (*John expects to win*, *I remember walking in Oxford*, etc.) can be read only *de se*. How should we account for this grammaticalized form of *de se*?

Once again, Capone suggests a pragmatic approach, in which the first-personal nature of the anaphoric element involved (the overt third-person pronoun or the covert PRO) can be properly put into the foreground.

Let us consider these issues in some more detail. First of all, Higginbotham's position is empirically well-sustained, as confirmed by the acceptability of discourse fragments like the following (example (17) on page 234): *My grandfather died before I was born. I remember that he was called Rufus. But I do not remember him being called Rufus*. Clearly, *remember* is ambiguous between a propositional reading (one remembers something without having necessarily 'experienced' it) and an experiential reading, in which the remembering is

associated with a set of specific *qualia*, shared, at least to a certain extent, as Capone conveniently illustrates, with the original experience that is remembered. Higginbotham further proposes that the experiential reading of a sentence such as *Alessandro remembers walking in Oxford* is derived by a syntactic mechanism of theta-transmission, according to which this sentence could be roughly paraphrased as *Alessandro remembers that Alessandro, as the experiencer of that very remembering, walked in Oxford*. Capone's main motivation for increasing the explanatory load for pragmatics in this account is that it is disputable that theta-transmission alone can ensure the required *de se* reading (see the criticism on page 239, which Capone attributes to Neil Feit). In recent work (Delfitto & Fiorin, to appear), we developed the insight that first-personal EXPERIENTIAL readings can actually be properly derived if we re-interpret Higginbotham's account in a radical way, as a mechanism of theta-role overwriting, involving the deletion of the agent role associated with the embedded predicate and the formation of a complex predicate of experience. On these grounds, the truth-conditional import of the sentence is no longer the one to which Capone/Feit correctly object, but something that lends itself to the following paraphrase: *Alessandro is the bearer of an experience of remembering-walking-in-Oxford*, whereby the relevant *qualia* are those proper to an experience of remembering-of-walking, as distinct from, say, an experience of thinking-of-walking or of remembering-running.

This entails that the analysis we would subscribe to is more strictly tied to syntactic/semantic conditions than what Capone would probably assume. The further conclusion we would draw is the necessity of a detailed syntax/semantics/pragmatics of experience readings, to be carefully teased apart from perception-based readings, an issue that has been almost entirely neglected so far, in spite of the important emergence of the issue of phenomenal experience in the philosophy of mind.

The important question raised in Chapter 12 ('Impure "de se" thoughts and pragmatics') is: In what circumstances a *de se* report involves immunity to error through misidentification (IEM)? The answer Capone provides is that such immunity occurs when 'a descriptive component is lacking in the mode of presentation used' (305).

Consider in this respect an indirect report that is obligatorily *de se*: *Alessandro remembers walking in Oxford*. Is it possible that Alessandro correctly remembers that someone walked in Oxford on a certain occasion, while being mistaken in remembering that that person was he himself?

Capone is entirely correct in thinking that IEM involves the absence of any descriptive dimension. Under the approach to control structures mentioned above, the reading of *Alessandro remembers walking in Oxford* is inherently EXPERIENTIAL: Alessandro is the bearer of a mental state of remembering-walking-in-Oxford. If this is so, it follows that there is no agent of an independent event of walking about whom we might raise issues of identity. All we have is a complex mental state whose characterizing *qualia* are entirely specific to it. The way we have suggested to make sense of this important observation

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(Delfitto, Reboul & Fiorin, to appear) is that experience predicates are inherently referential, in the sense that they refer to phenomenal properties that 'bear the experiencer on their sleeves'. The experiencer is implicit in the semantics of the experience predicate, in terms of the minimal sense of ownership and agency (MINIMAL SELF) that necessarily characterizes experiences (see Fiorin & Delfitto 2014; Delfitto, Reboul & Fiorin, to appear). The same conclusion holds in fact for Wittgenstein's canonical minimal pair (Wittgenstein 1958), intended to illustrate IEM-effects: (a) *I am wearing red shoes*; (b) *I have a toothache*. This minimal pair further shows that IEM cuts across the syntactic use of the first-person pronoun. It is not first-personality in the morphosyntactic sense of the word that matters, it is first-personality in the EXPERIENTIAL sense of the concept (this is indeed a concern around which Capone's preoccupations constantly revolve).

All in all, Capone's book should be compulsory reading both for those who are in need of a first thorough introduction to the variegated domain of indirect reporting and for those who are in need of an in-depth discussion of the many complexities that arise in this domain and that deserve a serious interdisciplinary treatment.

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