

Are Cantonese Speakers Really Descriptivists? Revisiting Cross-Cultural Semantics

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1 Introduction

In an article in *Cognition*, Machery, Mallon, Nichols, and Stich [Machery et al., 2004] present data which purports to show that “East Asian” native Cantonese speakers tend to have descriptivist intuitions about the referents of proper names, while “Western” native English speakers tend to have causal-historical intuitions about proper names. Machery et al take this finding to support the view that some intuitions, the universality of which they claim is central to philosophical theories, vary according to cultural background. Machery et al hypothesize that the differences in intuitions about reference stem from general psychological differences between Eastern and Western subjects. Machery et al conclude from their findings that the philosophical methodology of consulting intuitions about hypothetical cases is flawed vis à vis the goal of determining truths about some philosophical domains. To quote Machery et al, “our data indicate that philosophers must radically revise their methodology” because “the intuitions philosophers pronounce from their armchairs are likely to be a product of their own culture and their academic training” ([Machery et al., 2004] pp.B9). “The evidence suggests that it is wrong for philosophers to assume a priori the universality of their own semantic intuitions” ([Machery et al., 2004] pp. B8).

In the following study, I present data incompatible with Machery et al’s results. Native Cantonese-speaking immigrants from a Cantonese diaspora

in Southern California do not have descriptivist intuitions about the referents of proper names when presented with a Cantonese story and Cantonese questions about reference and truth-value. This data raises questions about the quality of Machery et al's study and the conclusions they draw from it.

1.1 The Original Study

Saul Kripke famously argued that the referent of a proper name is not fixed by the set of definite descriptions a speaker who uses the name associates with it [Kripke, 1980]. Kripke's argument rests on a series of hypothetical examples in which a certain speaker *S* associates a description *D* with a name *N*, the description *D* is either true of a person *p*, or is true of no one, while *N* is causally and historically taken by a community of speakers to be the name of a person *p'*. In such a case, philosophers, and as Machery et al point out, most English speakers, intuitively take *S*'s use of the name *N* in a sentence to be referring to someone, namely *p'*, and not *p*. Thus, it appears that the referent of a name is the thing it is causally and historically taken to name, and not the thing picked out by the definite descriptions associated with the name. Since Kripke did not make essential use of the fact that it was English that he was discussing, nor that he was consulting the intuitions of English speakers about English names, his argument about reference, if sound, appears to many philosophers to generalize to proper names in all natural languages. Questioning the generality of Kripke's claims about reference, Machery et al report that 31 Western participants from Rutgers University and 41 Chinese participants from the University of Hong Kong have different intuitions about the referent of an English name when both are presented with an English story and English questions concerning uses of that name. The following is Machery et al's primary probe concerning the name "Gödel", which they adapt from Kripke:

Suppose that John has learned in college that Gödel is the man who proved an important mathematical theorem, called the incompleteness of arithmetic. John is quite good at mathematics and he can give an accurate statement of the incompleteness theorem, which he attributes to Gödel as the discoverer. But this is the only thing that he has heard about Gödel. Now suppose that Gödel was not the author of this theorem. A man called "Schmidt", whose body was found in Vienna under mysterious

circumstances many years ago, actually did the work in question. His friend Gödel somehow got hold of the manuscript and claimed credit for the work, which was thereafter attributed to Gödel. Thus, he has been known as the man who proved the incompleteness of arithmetic. Most people who have heard the name “Gödel” are like John; the claim that Gödel discovered the incompleteness theorem is the only thing they have ever heard about Gödel.

When John uses the name “Gödel”, is he talking about:

(A) the person who really discovered the incompleteness of arithmetic? or

(B) the person who got hold of the manuscript and claimed credit for the work? ([Machery et al., 2004] pp. B6)

Machery et al report that Cantonese speakers are more likely to answer the question consistent with descriptivist views about proper names, namely, answer A, whereas English-speaking “Westerners” are more likely to answer the question consistent with causal-historical views about proper names, namely answer B. Thus, Machery et al conclude, there is support for the idea that intuitions about reference differ according to culture, and that therefore a methodology for determining facts about reference which relies on intuitions about reference is dubious, since such a methodology will present culturally-relative judgments as facts and data points for a theory of reference. Machery et al conclude that Kripke, in giving Gödel-type cases as his original motivation for his theory of reference for proper names, relied on this flawed methodology.

1.2 Criticisms of the Study

Let us take for granted, following Machery et al, that ordinary speaker intuitions about Gödel-type cases are central to Kripke’s argument against descriptivism about the reference of proper names.¹ Given this assumption, it is curious that Machery et al did not conduct their study of Cantonese-speaker intuitions with suitably translated Cantonese versions of their stories,

¹This is an assumption I will question in the final section of this paper.

together with questions asked in Cantonese rather than English, about Cantonese rather than English names. Kripke originally gave an argument in English about the referents of names using examples and cases spoken in English. And while Kripke did not appear to make essential use of the fact that he was a “Westerner” speaking and arguing about English names in English, this rather innocuous presupposition is precisely what Machery et al seem to be questioning. But to question this presupposition requires Machery et al to show that such a methodology fails to successfully generalize, because suitably generalized, it generates results inconsistent with Kripke’s. Yet, the most natural generalization of Kripke’s methodology is not to ask native Cantonese (or Mohawk or Swahili) speakers in English about the referents of English names when used by English speakers in hypothetical cases. The relevant generalization would be to test Kripke’s theory of reference as a theory of Cantonese (or Mohawk or Swahili) names by asking such native speakers in their native languages about the referents of Cantonese (or Mohawk or Swahili) names when used by Cantonese (or Mohawk or Swahili) speakers in hypothetical cases. It is certainly not a supposition of Kripke’s methodology, nor any philosophical methodology that derives from Kripke’s work, that speakers of all natural languages have anti-descriptivist intuitions about the referents of *English* names. Any such supposition would be ludicrous, and any methodology that accepted it would be rightly criticized.

The aim of the present study is to rectify this shortcoming in Machery et al’s original study, thereby retesting the original Kripkean hypothesis and methodology. If Kripke’s theory of reference for proper names is true of all such linguistic items in all natural languages, and Kripke’s methodology of consulting native English-speaker intuitions about the referents of English names in hypothetical stories told in English is a proper methodology for arriving at such a theory for English names, then it follows that an appropriately generalized version of Kripke’s methodology will yield the same intuitions as Kripke’s for all languages containing proper names. These hypotheses predict that native Cantonese-speakers will tend to have causal-historical intuitions about the referents of Cantonese names in hypothetical stories told in Cantonese. Discovering such intuitions will thereby confirm the conjunction of Kripke’s theory of reference and his methodology. The discovery of such intuitions is the aim of the first experiment.

2 Experiment I

2.1 Design

An anonymous questionnaire modeled on the original Kripke “Gödel” case was given to both Cantonese and English-speaking subjects. Cantonese versions were given to Cantonese subjects, and English translations were given to American subjects. Each questionnaire contained two questions, one eliciting an intuition about the referent of a name, the second eliciting an intuition concerning the truth-value of a declarative utterance containing that name. This two-question format differs from Machery et al in that they did not test for intuitions about truth-values in their original study. Each question had two answer-choices, one choice consonant with the causal-historical theory of names, the other consonant with the descriptivist theory of names. The text of the questionnaire is given below.

Suppose there is a group of people who do not know anything of the English author Shakespeare except the name and that he is the author of “Romeo and Juliet”. Unbeknownst to this group of people, Shakespeare did not in fact write the play “Romeo and Juliet”; in fact, a German man named “Spencer” wrote the play, but Spencer was an obscure writer who died before the play was published. Shakespeare in fact found the play and published it as his own. Nobody knows this. This group of people otherwise use the name “Shakespeare” and can use it in conversation, for instance, they may ask each other, “I wonder whether Shakespeare was English or German?”

Question 1: When these people use the name “Shakespeare” in a conversation, is their use of the name to talk about:

- A. Shakespeare
- B. Spencer

Question 2: When these people use the sentence “Shakespeare was English”, is what they say:

- A. True
- B. Not True

For both questions, the “A” answers are consonant with the causal-historical theory of names, the “B” answers are consonant with the descriptivist theory of names.

2.2 Subjects

Cantonese subjects were drawn from a Chinese immigrant community in the San Gabriel Valley, California, and all consisted of native Cantonese-speaking Chinese immigrants. Subjects were all adults who ranged from having no or little fluency in English, to some formal schooling in English. Subjects were asked in workplace, home, and public settings for their participation. Subjects were asked to read the probe and respond to a series of questions, which included demographic data. 40 subjects participated but two were excluded from analysis because of multiple answers on a single question, resulting in 38 total Cantonese-speaking subjects.

English-speaking subjects were drawn from (1) a community yoga class at Vassar College, (2) a group of high-school teachers at Poughkeepsie High School, and (3) Vassar College undergraduates. All subjects were adults, in college or college-educated, and no subjects had 3 or more college-level courses in philosophy. 50 subjects completed the questionnaire and only monolingual English speakers who were not of East Asian descent were included for analysis, resulting in 31 English-speaking subjects.

2.3 Results and Discussion

Following a similar scoring system given by Machery et al, answers consonant with the causal-historical theory of names were given a score of 1, and answers consonant with the descriptivist theory of names were given a 0. Therefore, mean scores for each question ranged from 0 to 1. Both scores were then individually summed so that each subject’s cumulative score could range from 0 to 2, 2 representing that the subject answered causal-historically to both questions, and 0 representing that the subject gave descriptivist answers to both. Means and standard deviations for both questions individually, as well as the sum of both questions are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Mean Scores for Experiment 1 (SD in parenthesis)

	Cantonese	English
Question 1: Reference	.87 (.34)	.65 (.48)
Question 2: Truth-Value	.87 (.33)	.94 (.27)
Sum	1.74 (.64)	1.59 (.6)

While both Cantonese and English speakers tended toward causal-historical intuitions about reference, an independent two sample t -test yielded a significant difference between Cantonese and English-speakers with regards to intuitions about reference ($t(54.65) = 2.08, P < .005$), with Cantonese speakers likelier than English-speakers to have causal-historical intuitions about the referent of the Cantonese translation of the English name “Shakespeare”. Such a significant difference disappears, however, with regards to intuitions about truth-value, where an independent two sample t -test yielded no significant difference between Cantonese and English speakers ($t(66.44) = -0.98, P > .33$). There was also no significant difference between Cantonese and English speakers with regards to the summed score for both questions, ($t(67.92) = 0.99, P > .32$).

The results directly contradict Machery et al’s claim that Cantonese-speakers tend to have descriptivist intuitions about proper names. The results also challenge their claim that intuitions are cultural-relativity as Cantonese-speakers seem well in-line with the idiosyncratic intuitions of Western philosophers, even significantly more so than other college-educated Westerners. While this data is incompatible with Machery et al’s claims about cultural relativity and the descriptivist tendencies of East Asians, it is not technically incompatible with Machery et al’s data, as their experiment elicited Cantonese-speaker intuitions about English names using English stories. Rather, it is more appropriate to describe the situation as one in which native Cantonese speakers seem to answer questions in English about English differently than they do in Cantonese about Cantonese. This phenomena requires some kind of explanation, which is the aim of the second experiment.

3 Experiment II

3.1 Design

Whereas Experiment I utilized a straightforward adaptation of Kripke’s “Gödel Case” to directly replicate or undermine the results of Machery et al using Cantonese, two more questionnaires were given to test the conditions under which Cantonese-speakers may have descriptivist intuitions about the reference of proper names in Cantonese. These questionnaires are adaptations of a certain kind of philosophical thought-experiment found in the literature on theories of reference [Evans, 1979]. Questionnaire II asked sub-

jects for intuitions about two novel names, “Big Fu” and “Little Kwei” in Cantonese, and “Richard Rich” and “Pauly Poor” in English, when such names are explicitly used as abbreviations for definite descriptions in a linguistic community. The text of the questionnaire in English is given below, with the Cantonese version in the appendix.

Questionnaire II

Suppose a group of villagers have a landlord who they have never seen and whose name they do not know. All the villagers know is that their landlord is the richest landlord in the province. After a while, the villagers made up a name for their landlord, calling him “Richard Rich.” They converse with each other using the name, saying things like “Next week it will be time to pay rent to Richard Rich”. In actuality, their landlord, the richest one in the province, is named “Pauly Poor”. Coincidentally, there also happens to be a man named “Richard Rich” who is a landlord, only he happens to be the poorest landlord in the province. The villagers do not know any of these facts, however.

Question 1: When the villagers converse and use the name “Richard Rich”, they are using the name to refer to

- A. Pauly Poor
- B. Richard Rich

Question 2: When the villagers converse and say “Richard Rich is our landlord”, what they say is

- A. True
- B. Not true

In both questions, answer A is consonant with a descriptivist theory about proper names, and answer B is consonant with a causal-historical theory of proper names. These types of stories are well-known in the philosophical literature to be cases in which philosophers consider a name to refer to the satisfier of the definite descriptions associated with it. Following the philosophical literature, we will call these types of cases “Julius”-type cases. Questionnaire II tests for whether or not Cantonese-speakers have descriptivist intuitions about names in “Julius”-type cases, and Questionnaire III below revises Questionnaire I but for the presence of information that renders it a “Julius”-type case rather than a “Gödel”-type case.

Questionnaire III

Suppose there is a group of villagers who accidentally stumble upon the play “Romeo and Juliet”. They do not know the author of the play. After a while, the villagers make up a name for the author, calling the author “Shakespeare”. As a matter of fact, this play was written by a German man named “Spencer”. But before the play was published, Spencer died, and an English man coincidentally named “Shakespeare” found the play and published it under his own name. The villagers know nothing about this. The villagers otherwise use the name “Shakespeare” in conversation, and will ask questions like “What country was Shakespeare from?”

Question 1: When these villagers use the name “Shakespeare” is their use of the name to refer to:

- A. The real author of Romeo and Juliet, Spencer
- B. The false author of Romeo and Juliet, Shakespeare.

Question 2: When these villagers say “Shakespeare was English”² is the sentence they say

- A. True
- B. Not True

In Question 1, answer A is consonant with the descriptivist theory of proper names, whereas B is consonant with the causal-historical theory. In Question 2 on the “Shakespeare was English” version, answer A is consonant with the causal-historical theory, and answer B is consonant with the descriptivist theory. In the “Shakespeare was German” version, answer B is causal-historical, while A is descriptivist.

3.2 Subjects

Thirty-three Cantonese-speaking subjects were chosen from the same population group as indicated in Experiment I, but were not the same subjects as

²Alternate versions of Question 2 substituted “German” for “English” to test for any difference in judgments of truth versus falsity. There was no difference. Results are below.

those in Experiment 1. Thirty-four monolingual English-speaking subjects who were not of East Asian descent were drawn from the same population as Experiment 1, but were not the same subjects as those in Experiment I. As in Experiment I, no English-speaking subjects had 3 or more college-level courses in Philosophy.

3.3 Results and Discussion

Scoring procedures were exactly as in Experiment I. Mean scores and standard deviations for each individual question, and the summed scores, are given in Table 2 and 3 below.

Table 2: Mean Scores for Questionnaire II (SD in parenthesis)

	Cantonese	English
Question 1: Reference	.09 (.29)	0 (0)
Question 2: Truth-Value	.39 (.46)	.74 (.44)
Sum	.48 (.57)	.74 (.44)

For Questionnaire II, an independent two sample t -test yielded no significant difference between Cantonese and English speakers on answers regarding reference ($t(32) = 1.79, P > 0.08$). Both groups overwhelmingly gave descriptivist answers. However there was a significant difference on answers regarding truth-value, with Cantonese significantly more descriptivist than English-speakers, ($t(64.20) = -3.05, P < .005$). This led to a significant difference in summed scores, with both sets of subjects more descriptivist than causal-historical, but with Cantonese subjects significantly more descriptivist ($t(60.7) = -2.08, P < 0.045$). All of the English-speaker causal-historical judgments came from judgments of truth-value, as did most of the causal-historical judgments of Cantonese-speakers. This suggests that Cantonese-speakers appear more consistent with their judgments across both questions than English-speakers in “Julius”-type cases. English-speakers appear to believe that names in “Julius”-type cases are used to refer to one person, p , while also believing that sentences in which such names appear are not true or false of p , but someone else.

Table 3: Mean Scores for Questionnaire III (SD in parenthesis)

	Cantonese	English
Question 1: Reference	.39 (.5)	.23 (.43)
Question 2: Truth-Value	.47 (.51)	.45 (.51)
Sum	.87 (.92)	.69 (.76)

Unlike in the case of Questionnaire II, an independent two sample *t*-test yielded no significant difference between Cantonese and English speakers on answers regarding reference ($t(41.9) = 1.29, P > 0.2$), truth-value ($t(46.87) = 0.1547, P > 0.87$), and summed scores ($t(40.77) = 0.797, P > 0.43$). It is worth noting that with respect to judgments of truth-value, both sets of subjects were about evenly split between causal-historical and descriptivist judgments, and both sets of subjects gave truth-value judgments that are not much different from chance.

4 Discussion

On the basis of studies conducted in Cantonese about the referents of Cantonese names, we can conclude that, at a minimum, the original Machery et al study was flawed in not controlling for the obvious factor; the fact that they presented stories in English to native Cantonese-speakers to draw conclusions about Cantonese-speaker intuitions about the reference of proper names. At the very least, Machery et al’s have failed to generate any data that refutes the conjunction of Kripke’s theory of reference and his methodology. Cantonese-speakers indeed have causal-historical intuitions about the referents of Cantonese names perfectly in line with Kripke’s original claims. Where Cantonese intuitions did differ significantly from English-speaker intuitions in, Cantonese intuitions turned out to be more causal-historical than descriptivist, more in line with Western philosophers. The difference cannot be attributed to the fact that the “Shakespeare” probe involved a popularly known name in many cultures, for whether or not speakers had causal-historical or descriptivist intuitions about the referent of such a name genuinely depended on the causal history of the name, not the native-language of the subject.

The difference between my results and Machery et al’s results are quite striking. Taken together, one might conclude that Cantonese-speakers have intuitions that English is a language with a descriptivist reference for proper names, whereas they have intuitions that Cantonese has a causal-historical

reference for proper names. Such a conclusion is already inconsistent with Machery et al's hypothesis that the reason behind East Asian descriptivist intuitions is the finding in cultural psychology that East Asians appear to disfavor "causation-based" judgments and favor "categorical-based judgments based on similarity" ([Machery et al., 2004], pp. B5. For the relevant findings in cultural psychology, see [Nisbett et al., 2001], [Nisbett and Miyamoto, 2005]). According to Machery et al's logic, East Asians must favor causation-based judgments when asked about reference in their own language, and categorical-based judgments when asked about reference in Western languages. Perhaps globalization has hybridized East Asian psychology as much as it has their economies and consumption patterns, so that East Asians are as much bi-cultural as they are bilingual, and therefore also "bi-intuitional" and "bi-philosophical". However, such conclusions are clearly unwarranted.

Instead, it is possible that we are seeing effects of linguistic competence and the differences between primary and secondary language competence. Perhaps, in Machery et al's original study, the non-native but still fluent speakers of English for some reason or other (a) exhibited an incomplete grasp of how English names were working in the story, or (b) in some way interpreted English probes of the "Gödel"-type as probes of the "Julius"-type, where both English and Cantonese-speakers have overwhelmingly descriptivist intuitions about reference.

As is well known in the philosophical literature, "Julius"-type cases are not genuinely cases in which speakers have descriptivist intuitions about proper names. Rather, they are cases in which an expression, "Shakespeare", though syntactically a proper name, is semantically an abbreviated definite description [Soames, 2002]. An expression is syntactically a proper name if and only if it occurs grammatically in all and only those syntactic constructions in which paradigmatic cases of proper names occur. An expression in a language is semantically a definite description if and only if its semantic value is identical to the value of some definite description. Part of the causal history of the name "Shakespeare" in Questionnaire III, in English and in Cantonese, involve users that acquire the name via a definite description, and tie the name to nothing more than a definite description, and not to any object. Thus, consistent with the causal-historical view of the reference of names, the name is in fact a disguised definite description. A possible explanation of why the fluent but non-native speakers of English interpreted the original probes of English in a descriptivist way is that somehow, the original probes were understood to contain names that were acquired by way

of a definite description and which had tied to them in the language nothing but a definite description. One possible explanation of the disparity in my data and Machery et al's data may be that using probes in a subject's native language allows for native speakers to better distinguish between stories of the "Gödel"-type and stories of the "Julius"-type. But how accurate this is as an explanation requires more study.

In the cases that matter to Machery et al's conclusions, there were no significant differences in intuitions between English and Cantonese-speakers about reference. The few significant differences suggested that Cantonese-speaking subjects may indeed be more causal-historical in their intuitions about names in the original "Gödel"-type cases than English-speakers, and far more descriptivist in their intuitions about truth-values in the "Julius"-type cases. These are not differences that support Machery et al's claims of cultural relativism. For one, Cantonese-speakers are in fact more in line with Western philosophers than English-speakers generally. Secondly, Experiment II suggests that judgments about truth-values in "Julius"-type cases do not seem to be all that reliable. Both sets of subjects seem to have variable and inconsistent judgments about truth-values in relation to their judgments about reference. The answer may lie in the fact that ordinary subjects simply are not very good at distinguishing between (1) the truth or falsity of a sentence in a language, (2) what is uttered by the use of a sentence, (3) what a speaker intends to utter by using a sentence, and various other possible objects of truth-value judgments. Subjects may also not be particularly good at distinguishing between certain kinds of homophonic but semantically distinct uses of sentences in a language. These various distinctions have taken philosophers themselves more than a century to discover, argue about, and apply in making their own judgments. Even trained philosophers oftentimes catch themselves making mistakes in deploying these distinctions in judgment, to which any instructor of graduate-level courses in philosophy can attest. Ordinary speakers may be deploying a variety of more imprecise notions in making their judgments of truth-value, ending up with rather variable and inconsistent intuitions in these rather unfamiliar, arcane thought-experiments. This fact raises serious questions about just how much weight philosopher's actually place on ordinary speaker intuitions in thought-experiments.

4.1 A Refutation of the Refutation of Philosophical Methodology

I have so far been operating on the assumption, shared by Machery et al, that the intuitions about reference of ordinary, philosophically unsophisticated, native speakers of a language are central to Kripke's, and in general, philosophical methodology. Even on this assumption, Machery et al's conclusions are invalid, for they rest on a completely inappropriate generalization of Kripke's methodology. Moreover, this assumption itself is quite dubious as Williamson argues [Williamson, 2007]. Intuitive responses to sophisticated hypothetical cases in philosophy often require knowledge and experience with subtle distinctions that the philosophically unsophisticated may be unfamiliar or inexperienced in applying. Confusing the difference between what a speaker is trying to say in using a sentence with what the sentence is saying in the public language may explain why such speakers are very often inconsistent in thinking that speakers refer to one person with a name N when they use it in a sentence S, but evaluate the truth-value of that very utterance as though the name N refers to another person. Unless these subtle distinctions themselves are artificial, culturally-relative constructions of the philosophical community with no basis in reality, something that Machery et al have not argued, they will require some level of sophistication and education to understand, and some experience in deploying when making judgments. This fact renders educated philosophers in a better position to deploy them accurately in making judgments about hypothetical cases. The intuitions of ordinary speakers may not be particularly probative for some kinds of philosophical theories, and the fact that an intuition arises from a philosopher's idiosyncratic academic training might give us better reason to treat it with esteem rather than disdain.

But setting aside this general critique, I believe that even if Machery et al could show that there is some culture of people who have intuitions about reference about their language different from English and Cantonese-speakers, the critique of Kripke's methodology would still be flawed. It is not inconceivable that there is a language, perhaps even a natural language, in which there are no proper names, or one in which there are syntactic items that function the way in which proper names function syntactically in English and Cantonese, but function semantically the way in which definite descriptions function in English and Cantonese. And if there are such languages, it would be expected that monolingual speakers of them would

fail to have causal-historical intuitions about the reference of proper names, as there would be no proper names in those languages. If there were no proper names in a certain language, such speakers would not have intuitions about them, just like subjects who do not encounter watermelons do not have any judgments about watermelons. It is hard to see how the possibility of such languages, even if actual, would pose a problem for Kripke's theory of reference or his methodology for arriving at such a theory. Nothing about theories of reference for proper names require the impossibility of languages without proper names, or the impossibility of communities of human beings who do not have intuitions about the way proper names work. Thus, even if the original Machery et al study can be run successfully in some other natural language, the conclusions critiquing philosophical methodology do not follow. In generalizing Kripke's methodology and theory far beyond what any sensible philosopher has ever done, Machery et al seem concerned with targeting a straw man. One cannot critique a methodology by arguing that some inappropriate generalization of it is flawed.

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Appendix

Questionnaire I in Cantonese

問卷 1

請閱讀以下故事，回答下列問題。

假如有一班人，完全唔識英國名劇作家‘莎士比亞’係邊個，只知到佢係‘羅蜜歐與茱麗葉’嘅作者。佢哋唔知‘莎士比亞’其實有寫過呢齣戲，呢齣戲係一個名‘史賓沙’嘅德國人寫嘅，但劇本尚未出版，‘史賓沙’就死咗。‘莎士比亞’搵到個劇本就自己嘅名出版咗。但呢班人冇人知呢件事。佢哋以‘莎士比亞’嘅名為題閒談嘅時候，甚至會問“莎士比亞究竟係英國人定係德國人？”

問題1:

當呢班人用‘莎士比亞’嘅名傾偈嘅時候，佢哋講嘅係甲定乙呢？

甲：‘莎士比亞’

乙：‘史賓沙’

問題2:

當呢班人講：“莎士比亞係英國人。”呢個講法係：

甲：對

乙：不對

Questionnaire II

問卷 2

請閱讀以下故事，回答下列問題。

假如有一班村民，從未見過佢哋嘅地主唔知佢嘅名，對佢嘅嘢一無所知，只知到佢係全省最肥嘅地主。過咗一段時間啲村民安咗個名比個地主叫佢做‘大富’。其實呢個全省最肥嘅地主嘅真名叫‘小貴’。而‘大富’另有其人，佢係全省最瘦嘅地主。但係班村民完全唔知情。當班村民傾偈提到‘大富’嘅時候，佢哋會話“下星期要交租比大富”。

問題1:

當班村民傾偈提到‘大富’呢個名嘅時候，佢哋講嘅係甲定乙呢？

甲：小貴

乙：大富

問題2:

當班村民傾偈提到：“大富係我哋嘅地主”。呢個講法係：

甲：對

乙：不對

English Translation

Suppose there is a group of a villagers who have never seen their landlord nor know his name, and know nothing else about him except that he is the fattest landlord in the province. After a while, the villagers made up a name for their landlord, calling him "Big Fu". In actuality, the fattest landlord in the province's name is "Little Kwei". There is in fact a man named "Big Fu" who is the thinnest landlord in the province. But the villagers do not know any of this this. When the villagers converse and use the name "Big Fu", they will say things like "Next week it is time to pay rent to Big Fu."

Question 1: When the villagers converse and use the name "Big Fu", are they using it to refer to:

A. Little Kwei

B. Big Fu

Question 2: When the villagers converse and say "Big Fu is our landlord", is what they are saying:

A. True

B. Not true

Questionnaire III

問卷 3

假如有一班村民，無意中發現‘羅蜜歐與茱麗葉’嘅劇本，但佢哋唔知作者係邊個。過咗一段時間嘅村民安咗個名比個作者咁窈叫佢做‘莎士比亞’。

其實呢齣戲係一個名‘史賓沙’嘅德國人寫嘅，但劇本尚未出版，‘史賓沙’就死咗。咁窈真係有一個叫做‘莎士比亞’嘅英國人搵到個劇本就以自己嘅名出版咗。但呢班人冇人知呢件事。

佢哋以‘莎士比亞’嘅名為題閒談嘅時候，甚至會問“莎士比亞究竟係邊個國家嘅人？”

問題1:

當呢班人用‘莎士比亞’嘅名傾偈嘅時候，佢哋講嘅係甲定乙呢？

甲：劇本‘羅蜜歐與茱麗葉’嘅真正作者史賓沙

乙：劇本‘羅蜜歐與茱麗葉’嘅冒牌作者莎士比亞

問題2:

當呢班人講：“莎士比亞係英國人。”呢個講法係：

甲：對

乙：不對