On Saturation in Weather Reports: A Defence of truth-Conditional Pragmatics

Abstract

Most contemporary theorists agree that aspects of the context of an utterance systematically contribute to the uptake of the truth-conditional content of the utterance. Disagreement arises over what extra-linguistic factors are relevant and how such factors are triggered or made salient by a given utterance for the speaker-hearer to exploit. The use of meteorological predicates in so-called 'weather reports' has been the focus of much of the debate and will be my focus, too. The paper argues, following Recanati, that meteorological verbs do not thematically (syntactically) feature a locative position, either as part of their syntactic projection or as part of their lexical content. This conclusion will be reached, however, not by way of Recanati's arguments (some of which will be rejected), but by way of general considerations on the syntax-semantics interface.

1: Introduction

Most contemporary theorists agree that aspects of the context of an utterance systematically contribute to the truth-conditional content of the utterance beyond the provision of values for the familiar stock of indexical items. Perhaps agreement ends there, for there is precious little concord about what extra-linguistic factors are relevant, how, if at all, the factors that are relevant are linguistically encoded, and how any relevant factors are triggered or made salient by a given utterance for the speaker-hearer to exploit.[1] The use of meteorological predicates in so-called 'weather reports' has been the focus of much of the debate and will be my focus, too. Here's the problem. Let's assume that a typical utterance of *It's raining* is construed as being about the particular

location where the speaker makes her utterance. Such a location is the relevant context. The utterance itself, however, does not contain a locative phrase, such as *in Manchester*, or *here*. How, then, is the normal definite, context-bound construal made salient to the hearer and intended by the speaker to be recognised without any apparent linguistic vehicle encoding the information about location? Following Perry (1986), the issue is often framed in terms of 'unarticulated constituents': propositional constituents that are unexpressed ('unarticulated') in the linguistic material that is used to covey the given proposition, such as a location for weather reports. We can, however, inquire into the phenomenon of weather report construal without committing to some or other definition of 'unarticulated constituent', a notion which, at its most anaemic, simply labels the phenomenon.[2]

In this paper I shall offer some general and specific reasons for a 'pragmatic' solution to the interpretive puzzle posed by weather reports. The solution is in sympathy with the position articulated by Recanati (2002, 2004, 2007, 2010). I shall, though, question his precise arguments and advance cases beyond his purview to offer a more radical or, at least, a less concessive pragmatism.[3] The overarching moral will be that one may arrive at a pragmatic position, not by considering the variety of contents that might be communicated by an utterance, but by reflection on the simplicity of what is proper to language alone, i.e., lexical items and syntax.

The general problem that weather reports exemplify is how, if at all, contextual aspects of utterance construal, such as the normal locative definiteness of weather reports, are licensed by language itself. An extreme view is to think that *all* contextual effects on interpretation are results of the valuation of putative syntactic variables, i.e., all semantic

context-sensitivity is linguistically licensed (Stanley, 2000, 2007). This view is extreme because of its scope (*all* contextual effects) and syntactic presumption (what and where are these variables?). It is, on the other hand, *not* extreme to consider syntactic structure to license any semantic construal that is mandated by language itself rather than the prevailing facts particular to linguistic exchanges or speaker-hearers' wider cognitive states. Such linguistically licensed construal is what Recanati (2004) calls *saturation*: the language encodes for a certain kind of valuation, even if the process of determining the particular valuation from occasion to occasion involves the (pragmatic) inferential resources of wider cognition. Recanati calls processes of construal determination that are not mandated by the language 'modulation' or 'free enrichment'. Clearly, these processes are pragmatic too, but are, we may say, purely pragmatic insofar as the options for construal are not constrained by the standing state of linguistic competence; the difference between the two processes is the difference of the extent to which stable linguistic factors canalize the pragmatic interpretation that is constitutive of both kinds of process. So, Stanley's view is extreme simply because it universalises saturation, and so takes on needlessly heavy syntactic commitments. One may think, in a milder or more ecumenical vein, of weather reports and other such constructions as saturational without positing variables; perhaps the argument positions constitute aspects of lexical content without necessary syntactic projection. Under various incarnations, this is the dominant position within the 'standard view'.[4]

So, saturation is a process mandated by language alone, and one natural way—I can't think of another way—of understanding this claim is that the target of saturation must be syntactic, i.e., a lexical item or a syntactic composition. In other words, saturation cannot

be triggered without an actual property of the linguistic material requiring a valuation it lacks as a standing item of linguistic information. This applies to would-be variables of the kind Stanley imagines and also to thematically construed argument positions whether syntactically projected or not. Thus, the pragmatism I am interested in defending does *not* deny the syntactic status of saturation; it simply claims that, relative to the propositions normally communicated, saturation is much less widespread than is commonly thought precisely because syntax is not in the business of fully encoding utterance construal; it lacks the required variables and positions. In particular, then, I argue that the quotidian definite construal of weather reports is non-saturational, and so is a case of free enrichment, because the reports lack a locative position. The moral here is that considerations of syntax militate *for* a pragmatic account of weather report construal, if syntax is viewed in its own right and not as a mere vehicle for utterance construal.

I conclude with some brief remarks about Recanati's (2010) appeal to variadic functions. Consequent on the moral just advertised, my claim will be that such an appeal amounts to a needlessly concessive response to anti-pragmatic complaints.

Before starting in earnest, let me make two very general remarks about syntax in order to sideline the issues. Firstly, my syntactic assumptions are broadly generative. Given the proliferation of syntactic approaches and the difficulty in discerning a common theoretical core to them, it would be pretty impossible, I think, to rely on a background of syntactic assumptions without picking a favoured approach. Moreover, as far as I can discern, the parties I shall primarily be discussing share my generative assumptions. That said, it seems to me that the positive claims I shall make about syntax apply across varied approaches and are by no means a quirk of the generative tradition. Secondly, I shall be

arguing that certain 'variables' posited as aspects of the interpretation of sentences are not, in fact, best understood as being syntactically realised. This invites a general query about the status of variables in syntax. I should like to argue that syntax, at least understood in the generative tradition does not admit variables as items that can be either free or bound. To support this general hypothesis, however, would require a great deal more space than is here available. Still, the extent to which the claims to be made are plausible, the general hypothesis is supported, albeit partially.

2: Preliminaries: weather reports, saturation and enrichment, and syntax

The job of a theory of linguistic content, as I understand that notion, is not to assign truth conditions to sentences, for sentences, as such, don't possess such conditions. An adequate theory, rather, will contribute to the assignment of truth conditions to utterances in concert with other theories dealing with wider aspects of human cognition. Linguistic content, therefore, may be rightly viewed as a massive interaction effect, involving language, but many varied aspects of human psychology as well. What is language-specific to the assignment and uptake of linguistic content is the syntax of natural language, which I assume to be cognitively unique, and the way conceptual information is lexically packaged. Some information will be encyclopaedic and vary more or less across the relevant population of speaker-hearers. Other information will be lexical proper and have an invariant syntactic signature in that it will affect how the word distributes. Grimshaw (2005, p. 76) puts the point nicely by saying that some aspects of lexical meaning are 'linguistically inactive', while other aspects are 'linguistically active'. I take some such distinction to be standard (see, e.g., Higginbotham, 1989;

Pinker, 1989; Pustejovsky, 1995; Levin and Rappaport Hovav, 1995; Hale and Keyser, 2002; Pietroski, 2005; Ramchand, 2008). One consequence of the distinction is that we must be very careful when attributing semantic properties to lexical items. It is not enough that the item can be rightly said to have this or that meaning; for some such meaning to be lexical, it must reveal itself structurally. For example, in the case of weather reports, it might well be that specificity of location is an aspect of the content of the utterances, but it doesn't follow that such specificity flows form the language itself, or is, in Grimshaw's terms, linguistically active. As we shall see, this poses a problem for variants of the 'standard view' of weather reports.

I shall freely talk of the 'context of an utterance', by which I simply mean the set of conditions or properties relevant to the stable interpretation of tokens of given sentence types. A context doesn't determine anything to be true or false. Still less is a context some kind of free-floating abstract entity. There are contexts only relative to chosen abstractions from the scene of an utterance. For example, as regards weather reports, we shall only be concerned with the locations of their utterances, which itself is not an independently specifiable external parameter that somehow interacts with the utterance. Which location is contextually relevant is determined by how we construe the report; it doesn't determine the construal.[5]

For most of the following, precise stands on these matters will not affect the arguments to be advanced, but having the positions stated should alleviate some potential for confusion. Let us now move to more substantial matters.

Although I shall appeal to varied data, my focus will be on weather reports of the kind exhibited in (1):

(1) It's raining/snowing/hailing

I shall also admit, but shall not discuss, variations, where the meteorological expression either occurs not as the main predicate, or is elided entirely, or occurs by itself exclamatorily:

(2)a It's pouring/pissing (down) with rain

b It's pouring/pissing down

c It's pouring/*It's pissing

d Rain!/Snow!

All that is important for our purposes is that a weather report has an expletive (pleonastic) subject and is at least standardly construed definitely, i.e., a weather report is about a definite location rather than some or other location. Typically, the relevant location is that of the utterer of the report, but it need not be. One might, in the course of a telephone conversation, say, report on the weather of one's interlocutor. The important point is that even in such cases, the relevant location remains definite. The issue that will chiefly concern us is whether weather reports admit indefinite readings and, more crucially, *punkt* readings, and, if so, what significance this has for our wider understanding of the contribution of contextual factors to linguistic content. An indefinite reading of *Its raining* would amount to *It's raining somewhere or other*, whereas the punkt reading would amount to *There is a raining event*. Anyone making the punkt claim, of course,

will believe the indefinite claim (plausibly, the two are truth-conditionally equivalent), but this will be a metaphysical inference, as it were, not one encoded linguistically (cf., Recanati, 2010, p. 89). It suffices for now if weather reports are acknowledged to be uncontroversially definite on most of their uses.

There are other kinds of weather reports, such as those involving adjectives (*It's sunny*), and more general reports on the environment. For our purposes, the kind of weather reports offered above will suffice, for my aim is to argue that they do not involve locative arguments. They offer the best case, though, of the covert locative arguments because verbs do take arguments. So, if there is good reason to doubt that the verbs do select locative arguments, the reasons will apply (*a fortiori*) to the case of non-verbal reports.

Let us settle on the terminology briefly mentioned in §1. Recanati (2004, 2010) usefully distinguishes between *saturation* and *free enrichment*/*modulation* as aspects of linguistic understanding. The former describes contextual contributions to content that are mandated by a linguistic token in the sense that it is part of the 'literal meaning' of the type that its tokens acquire a definite content from the context of their use. Pronouns serve as the paradigm here, but the same phenomenon appears to arise with the interpretation of complex expressions, too, such as in the interpretation of the genitive.[6] So, saturation is a context-sensitive process, but is built into the language itself as an aspect of the context-invariant contribution of the relevant lexical items or complex phrase types to their host structures.

Enrichment describes cases where the relevance of some contextual factor is not mandated by the linguistic material at all, but by wider, extra-linguistic factors, such as

general knowledge. For example, if someone says 'Let's meet by the lion in the town square', one naturally reads 'lion' to be here *modulated* as to be rightly interpreted as the 'the statute of the lion', or some such, not an actual lion liable to eat one. So-called 'meaning transfer' offers another example. If a waitress says, 'The ham sandwich still needs his bill', we hardly construe her to be saying that the actual sandwich—two pieces of bread and cooked meat, say—wants to pay a bill; rather, 'the ham sandwich' is modulated so that we take it to refer to the person who ordered the sandwich instead of the sandwich itself.

In general terms, saturation and enrichment can be thought of as 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' processes respectively. Saturation is bottom-up in that it concerns the fixing of an interpretation of a linguistic expression in a linguistically mandatory way, so that the host utterance lacks coherent truth conditions without the relevant expression being so fixed. The saturational contribution of context to truth conditions is licensed by the standing meaning of a relevant constituent of the utterance. On the other hand, modulation is top-down in that it involves a change in the meaning already possessed by an expression, so that the truth conditions of the host utterance are modulated in line with a modulation of the standing meaning of one of its constituent expressions. In this sense, modulation is optional in that the input to the process—what is to be modulated—may already be a complete meaning, a stable contribution to truth conditions (but it need not be; modulation may 'intrude' into saturation); saturation is mandatory precisely because it serves to fix a complete meaning in the first place under license from the language itself, as it were. Thus, for Recanati (2004), *optionality* becomes a key diagnostic for modulation: if tokens of a sentence type *T* express a full proposition with a context-

sensitive aspect or ingredient, and other tokens of *T* express full propositions that lack such an aspect or ingredient, then the aspect or ingredient is due to modulation. So, a token of *lion* referring to something other than a lion, such as a statue of one, is a matter of modulation, for tokens of *lion* can perfectly well refer to lions and only optionally refer to non-lions. Saturation is not optional in this way: all tokens of *Bill's car* must refer to a relation between Bill and a car, even if the relation may vary from context to context.

I shall assume that the distinction between saturation and enrichment is in good order and, for present purposes, that optionality is a sound diagnostic of the difference. It seems to me that Bach (2004, 2005) is right to think that there is a notion of *what is said* that is licensed by language alone and does not amount to truth conditions. A contextualist/pragmatist may agree with this thought by noting that saturation does not necessarily provide a full proposition; hence, optionality will only be a rough guide to the difference between saturation and modulation. As suggested, though, for the purposes of the following, we may treat saturation as delivering a proposition.

Note that taking so much for granted is not yet to take sides on the more general question of the extent of the contribution of contextual factors in the determination of *what is said*. For Recanati, at any rate, the optionality of modulation does not mean that some expressed contents are independent of 'pragmatic' processes that target an understanding of the speaker as opposed more narrowly to her language, for saturation is mandatory *and* pragmatic on Recanati's construal of it. Alternatively, one might acknowledge modulation to be optional and even commonplace, but construe saturation as non-pragmatic, i.e., the saturational context-sensitive contribution to truth conditions is wholly a linguistic matter free of any wider inferences about the you and your

interlocutor's context. So, on this position there is a notion of *what is said* constituted independently of pragmatic processes (cf. Stanley, 2007). In this light, notwithstanding their differences, Recanati (2010, p. 7, n. 5) is right to bracket Cappelen and Lepore (2005) and Stanley (2007) as occupying such an anti-contextualist position; indeed, it seems to me that perhaps most philosophers occupy such a position as default precisely because they seek to explain context-sensitivity as a narrow linguistic affair rather than something that turns on the wider context of the occasion of speech; that is, saturation is construed as an automatic effect of an utterance independent of the speaker's wider beliefs and intentions. Although I accept Recanati's distinction, my focus will be on saturation alone and whether it counts as a pragmatic process.

Finally, I contend that saturation must be syntactically marked in the sense that an item or a relation within syntactic structure is that which is saturated or valued relative to context. Most 'standard' theorists appear to be neutral on this syntactic claim; Stanley (2007) is exceptional in explicitly endorsing it. The position, however, should be amenable to all, if we include lexical relations and features within the purview of syntax, for lexical items and syntactic/phrase relations simply exhausts what narrowly belongs to language, and saturation is a narrowly linguistic process. It might be objected, of course, that lexical factors are not properly syntactic, but such a rejoinder rests upon confusion, albeit a common one. As earlier remarked, we must distinguish between the encyclopaedic and the structural content of a lexical item. The former content includes common knowledge and perhaps even invariant, innate content concerning properties of animacy and continuity, for example. None of this content, though, is peculiarly linguistic or lexical precisely because it does not affect the co-interpretability of items or the well-

formedness of host structures. The content that does have such import I call *structural*. Examples of the distinction are to be found wherever one cares to look. That *cat* refers to mammals is structurally irrelevant, for there is no linguistic pattern or class of expression that pertains to mammals. That *cat* has a count and mass reading, however, as opposed to an abstract reading is clearly structurally relevant. To arrive involves a journey in some sense, although being a word pertaining to a journey has no structural significance; that arrivals are punctual (lacking duration), however, is structurally salient for *arrive* does not admit durational modifiers along with other 'achievement' verbs. In short, structural content bears upon the systematic relations into which words may enter, and so captures similarities between words. Encyclopaedic content is important, but essentially linguistically arbitrary in the sense that it has no clear structural effects, as just indicated. Encyclopaedic knowledge, therefore, is of no particular theoretical interest. It is useful to think of encyclopaedic knowledge as expressing our 'metaphysics', i.e., how we expect and believe objects, events, acts, and states to be constituted. Some of this ends up being lexically encoded, but other aspects of it do not. So, patently, a raining event has a location, but it just doesn't follow that *rain* is therefore locative in a linguistic sense. One of the problems with which we shall be concerned is precisely how to tell whether a feature is metaphysical or linguistic.

It should also be noted that the typical cases of saturation are syntactic, such as pronoun valuation and the construal of nominal compound and genitive constructions. One might ask what saturation would be, if it were not syntactic. Such a conception of saturation is often what is meant by 'unarticulated constituent' in the sense of Perry (1986) and Crimmins (1992), or 'implicit argument' as used by Fillmore (1986), Partee

(1989), and Condoravdi and Gawron (1996); that is, an element of a proposition expressed by an utterance that does not correspond to any linguistic material used, but which is nevertheless not a pure pragmatic effect in that it is a stable features of the interpretation of the linguistic material.[7] It is indeed the case that we often use sentences to say a lot more than what is lexically or syntactically encoded on their surface; weather reports are a ready example. A problem arises with the thought, though, that an interpretation featuring an unarticulated constituent or implicit argument may be stable but non-linguistic. There is, in my broad sense, only syntax to constrain the occurrence of 'unarticulated constituents'. If the constituents are not syntactically constrained, then there is no particular reason to expect them to pattern one way rather than another, but we do not find mere arbitrariness in saturation. We need not, however, pause any further on this matter, for much of the following will precisely be concerned to argue for the central role of syntax in saturation.

I should say, to ward off any confusion, that I think Perry is absolutely right about the *phenomena* designated by the notion of 'unarticulated constituent'. My concern is how best to capture the phenomena theoretically. I agree with Stanley (2000) that genuine saturational effects should be syntactic, but he goes wrong in thinking that syntax will provide whatever is required to render unarticulated constituents saturational. For principled and detailed reasons, syntax just isn't so giving. In this sense, therefore, Perry is essentially correct, but leaves it a mystery why, given they are not syntactically mandated, unarticulated constituents should be systematic in their distribution. My answer to the mystery, at least as regards weather reports, is that the unarticulated

locative aspect is, in fact, less systematic than is often thought, so is not saturational at all.

3: Weather reports and variables

On the 'standard view', as Recanati calls it, the problem of weather reports is how to explain their obligatory definite locative construal; that is, why, for example, *It's raining* is construed as being about a definite location, as opposed to somewhere or other (indefinite) or no particular place at all (punkt). The answer provided by the standard view, according to Recanati (2010), is that the relevant lexical entries contain a locative argument position, a covert variable on some readings, which is valued for locations. So, for example:

(3) $\lambda l \lambda e[\text{rain}(e, l)]$[8]

Recanati does not make it clear just who is supposed to hold the 'standard view'. I take it, though, that notwithstanding real disagreement over detail, at least Perry (1986), Stanley (2000, 2007), Taylor (2001), Corazza (2007), and Neale (2007) agree that weather reports are construed as definite locatives as a matter of lexical understanding, or saturation, not pure pragmatics. In some sense, therefore, they are all committed to (3).[9] In fact, though, no-one serious could possibly think (3) records the relevant property of the lexical entry of *rain*, for *rain* is obviously usable outside of weather reporting, where no location at all, definite or indefinite, is relevant. Still, the thought is that a locative argument is saturated

in weather reports as a matter of the fixed logical form of the construction rather than due to pragmatic enrichment. So, the logical form of *It's raining* is (ignoring tense):

(4) $(\exists e)[\text{raining}(e) \wedge \text{Location}(e, l)]$[10]

Recanati (2010, p. 80) acknowledges, after numerous others, that putative covert arguments can take an indefinite construal, but thinks that such cases are best understood as arising from variadic functions, as we shall discuss later. Be that as it may, the kind of analysis exemplified in (4) has two things going for it. Firstly, like an overt pronoun, we can take the locative to be contextually valued, which would explain its putative obligatory definiteness: if the argument is contextually valued, then it must be valued as a definite location. Secondly, again like an overt pronoun, the locative argument can apparently be bound. Consider:

(5) Wherever I go, it rains

This appears to have the obligatory reading

(6) Every location *l* is such that, if I go to *l*, it rains in *l*.

For his part, Recanati rejects this reasoning, for he contends that weather reports do in fact support indefinite construals, and the binding criterion for the identification of argument positions is unsafe in general (Recanati, 2004, 2010). For my part, I shall argue

that Recanati is right that weather reports do support indefinite readings, although on more general grounds then Recanati offers; in particular, I think the contrasts he employs to exhibit his specific construal of *rain* fail. Furthermore, I shall argue that the binding criterion is not merely unsafe in general, but fails even in cases analogous to (5); that is, quantifier prefixes to weather reports admit *definite* construals, not only bound readings. Both of these claims will be shown to be in-line with my broader hypothesis that syntax doesn't admit items that may be either bound or free (contextually valued).

4: Recanati on definiteness

Recanati (2007, 2010) claims that the lexical entry for *rain* lacks any argument position other than an event position invariant over all predicates:

(7) λe[rain(e)]

A relevant whether report, therefore, might consist simply of the existential binding of the event variable (ignoring tense):

(8) ($\exists e$)[raining(e)]

The immediate problem with this proposal is that it fails to capture the apparently obligatory definite construal of whether reports. When one utters *It's raining*, one surely doesn't mean that there is a raining event taking place (somewhere or other). One cannot help, it would seem, but to speak of one's present location; or at any rate, a location

otherwise contextually salient, such as the location of one's addressee. For precisely this reason, as explained above, the 'standard view' represents the lexical entries of meteorological predicates as containing a locative variable. Recanati offers a three-part response to this view

Recanati's Position

(i) Scenarios are readily imaginable where weather reports have indefinite and even punkt construals, just as (7) predicts.

(ii) The admittedly quotidian definite construal of weather reports is made available by 'top down' pragmatic processes, not semantic ones.

(iii) There are two equally plausible ways of implementing the proposal in (ii): a pure pragmatic enrichment account and the variadic function approach, which does not contradict the letter of the 'standard view', but goes against its spirit as the variadic operation of argument addition/deletion is triggered pragmatically.

I shall commend (i), but register a key complaint against Recanati's presentation and suggest that his case is actually stronger than he imagines. I shall, as a consequence, also accept (ii), but as regards (iii), I shall argue that the variadic function approach is unsupported.

4.1: The weathermen

Recall that according to the 'standard view', meteorological predicates have a locative argument position that must be filled, if an utterance hosting the predicate is to be

semantically acceptable. Such a condition would explain the definite construal of weather reports being apparently mandatory. The view, though, appears to make a strong prediction: punkt construals of weather reports are unavailable; and while indefinite construals might be available, they would have to involve a quantification into the locative position. Recanati (2002, 2004) offers the following kind of scenario as a counterexample to this prediction:

The weatherman scenario

The earth has suffered a massive ecological catastrophe, the chief consequence of which is that rain no longer falls. The remnants of humanity have decamped to an underground bunker. Fortunately, before the survivors were forced from the surface, they placed sensors all over the planet in order to detect the hoped for future rain fall. The detection mechanism, though, is not that sophisticated; the console in the bunker's monitoring room, manned by the weatherman, lights up just if rain falls on any of the sensors, but it doesn't immediately record which sensor is so affected. To figure out the identity of the relevant sensor requires lots of laborious calculation. One propitious morning, the light on the console begins to flash. The weatherman excitedly cries to his colleagues, 'It's raining!'

The intended intuition elicited here is that the content of the weatherman's utterance is punkt, for neither he nor his audience know of the location of the rain; for sure, they know that it is raining *somewhere* or other, but this reveals some knowledge about the nature of rain, not what is saturated in the linguistic content. Thus, the logical form of the

weatherman's report would appear to correspond to (8), which lacks the putative obligatory locative argument position. It is important to note that the weatherman scenario is *not* intended as an argument for the possibility of it raining, but nowhere at all. If it is raining, then it must, indeed, be raining somewhere, whether or not one knows where. The point of the scenario, at least in my hands, and Recanati's (2010, pp. 88-90) too, I take it, is to show that there are punkt readings of weather reports that appear to require no variable binding. Thus, in the absence of a good reason to think that some kind of overt quantification is in play, the scenario militates for (8) being the appropriate logical form. The fact that the weatherman would acknowledge that it must be raining *somewhere* does not, in this light, belie (7) as a depiction of the lexical content of *rain*. There is much else to say here, but it is best delivered by way of the consideration of an objection.[11]

As presented so far, Recanati's weatherman reasoning suffers from a decisive objection. The weatherman scenario is perfectly coherent, but the weatherman's weather report is not genuinely indefinite, let alone punkt. To be *really* indefinite, the truth conditions of the utterance must be sensitive to every location: if it is raining *anywhere*, then the utterance is true. If some set of locations is constitutively excluded as being potentially determinate of the truth value of the utterance, then the complement of the set of such locations will constitutively include all and only the truth determining locations. So, in a broader sense, the utterance will not be indefinite, still less punkt, but definite relative to the relevant complement set of locations. In concrete terms, the weatherman's utterance is definite as regards locations on Earth, for neither the weatherman nor his audience would take the weather on another planet to be truth-conditionally relevant. The

weatherman's utterance is definite after all, albeit in a broader sense then we might at first imagine.[12] Such considerations suffice, I think, to confound the weatherman scenario's import as presented, but they invite a recasting of the scenario.

One can recast the scenario in two different ways that undermine the objection just raised. First off, consider a scenario just like the original weatherman one, except that the weatherman is entirely clueless about where he is. As far as he knows, he could be on Earth, Mars, or in a spaceship moving at near light speed; just so, he hasn't a clue where his sensors are scattered. In this scenario, the weatherman may still legitimately cry, 'It's raining' when his console flashes, but there is just no definite location, not matter how expansive, that may serve as the location that satisfies the weatherman's report; at any rate, the weatherman certainly cannot exclude any location as truth-conditionally irrelevant to his utterance, for he doesn't know his own location in order to exclude any other location. This 'ignorance' scenario, I think, clearly shows that weather reports do not need to be construed definitely.

Consider another scenario:

The intergalactic weatherman scenario

The earth has suffered a massive ecological catastrophe, the chief consequence of which is that rain no longer falls. The remnants of humanity have decamped to an underground bunker. Fortunately, before the survivors were forced from the surface, they placed sensors all over the planet in order to detect the hoped for future rain fall. They also sent probes into every corner of the universe in the hope of finding a habitable planet should rain not fall again on Earth. The detection mechanism, though, is not that sophisticated; the console in the bunker's monitoring room, manned by the weatherman, lights up just if

rain falls on any of the sensors, but it doesn't immediately record which sensor is so affected. To figure out the identity of the relevant sensor requires lots of laborious calculation. Similarly, the location of the probe that might send a signal back is very hard to determine—again, lots of laborious calculation is required. Even worse, the signals from both sensors and probes are routed through the one console. One propitious day, the light on the console begins to flash. The weatherman excitedly cries to his colleagues, 'It's raining!'.

If the objection to the initial weatherman scenario is merely that the weather report is definite because the Earth constitutes the definite value of the weather report on the grounds that non-terrestrial locations are excluded, then the latter intergalactic scenario would appear to spike the complaint. Arguments can be had here. Extrapolating from remarks by Neale (2007, p. 370, n. 77), Perry (2007, p. 545), and Korta and Perry (2011, pp. 112-3), one may suggest, for instance, that the entire universe remains a location, so the intergalactic scenario still doesn't provide a case where the weather report is construed as lacking a locative argument position.[13] The force of this objection is questionable.

The intergalactic scenario satisfies the just demand that a non-definite construal shouldn't exclude any space-time point as being truth-conditionally irrelevant. The riposte now is, in effect, that every location together amounts to a location. This is not a silly thought, but nor is it obviously true. Consider two cases. One may imagine a physicist saying, 'It is cold here', intending to speak about the temperature of the universe. Of course, we also have the age-old philosophical query, 'Why are we here?'.

One would miss the import of the philosophical query by responding with, 'What, you mean as opposed to there?'. The query is not intended to be about the set of locations, but all locations as such. Similarly, the physicist is not refuted by one's appealing to the core of the Sun, for he has in mind not this or that location, but all locations taken as a sum. Even granting, though, that the whole of space-time may constitute a location, the point of the initial complaint is answered: the weather report is non-definite to the degree to which no location is excluded as not being *here*. It would cease to be non-definite were we to imagine some location outside of the universe whose climate was irrelevant to the truth of the weather report. Fine. Now we just change the scenario again to include the multiverse, if you will. And so on and on. In short, establishing a genuinely non-definite reading of a weather report does not involve severing the very idea of a location from the interpretation of meteorological predicates; it suffices that no location is excluded by the reading.

The question remains, though, whether either the 'ignorance' or 'intergalactic' scenarios admit punkt construals of the weather reports. One line of reasoning for a negative answer is that in both cases we can render the weathermen's respective utterances as *It's raining somewhere*; indeed, the original weatherman scenario may be so rendered too. So, whereas in the scenarios the weathermen do not know where it is raining and so do not make claims about that location, they still may be understood as making a claim about some or other location, namely the one where it is raining. A defender of the 'standard view' may now claim that the locative position in the meteorological predicates can come in two forms: either contextually valued, as in the quotidian cases, or implicitly existentially bound, as in the *outré* cases just discussed. So,

the logical form of the non-definite cases is indefinite, with a bound locative position, not punkt, with no such position at all.

I shall return to this issue below (§5) in relation to Recanati's discussion of variadic functions. Independently of further considerations, though, I do not think that there is a knock-down argument against this reasoning in favour of the monadic account offered by Recanati. That said, the reasoning bolsters the 'standard view' more than it defeats the monadic view, for the argument as presented simply assumes that the fact that raining must take place at some location is built into the semantics or lexical entry for *rain*. Such a constitutive relation, though, is the very issue of contention. The opponent of the 'standard view' is not *obliged* to produce a punkt scenario, but only to cast doubt on whether readings of weather reports are best explained in terms of saturation of locative positions. Indeed, given the metaphysical connection between rain and its location, the opponent might well happily acknowledge that no scenario could possibly produce a clearly punkt construal, but by itself that does not show anything about the status of the would-be locative argument position. What is required for progress here is a syntactic or lexical account of the putative locative position.

4.2: Argument or adjunct for *rain*?

One upshot from the above reasoning is that *pace* Neale (2007, p. 305), we shouldn't say that Taylor (2001) is 'vindicated' in his thought that *rain* encodes a theme locative position, for from the data it remains unclear how the locative aspect of *rain*, definite or indefinite, is lexically encoded, whether it is encyclopaedic or lexical proper. Moreover, as explained above, what belongs to a lexical item as an invariant feature is that which has a stable *structural* effect. Taylor's syntactically inert or 'suppressed' in the

'subsyntactic basement' (Taylor, 2001, p. 53) theme argument does not satisfy such a desideratum. This general complaint also stymies the further thought that Neale (2007, p. 305) advances: even an indefinite construal involves an argument position, albeit one essentially indefinite; so, again, *rain* appears to be essentially locative. We should agree that *rain* is locative, but we have good reason to think that this feature is encyclopaedic, not lexical, precisely because the locative aspect is structurally inert. Thus, it is perfectly true that every weather report implies a location, definite or indefinite. The issue of contention is whether the implication is licensed by encyclopaedic/metaphysical knowledge or the lexical entry proper. The weatherman scenario (in its 'ignorance' and 'intergalactic' variants, at least) suggests the former position, because it offers *at least* an indefinite reading (and a punkt one too, I think) in the absence of any overt quantification into the putative locative position. It is important to note here that the supposed implicit existential quantification into the putative locative position to support the indefinite construals is strictly a bit of semantic gerrymandering, for which there is no independent semantic evidence and no syntactic evidence at all. The language itself, therefore, *appears* indifferent to the locative character of weather reports, which might then be taken to flow from a non-linguistic understanding of raining events. The same reasoning applies to every verb designating an event that must have a location, but where the verb itself does not insist on a locative argument. Consider *dance*, which we shall look at more below. Any dancing must take place at a location, but it doesn't follow that *dance* takes an argument (explicit or implicit) that takes the location of the dancing as a value. The reason is that there is no structural basis for there being such an argument. Why weather reports should excite different intuitions is perhaps due simply to the salience of the

location in the communicative understanding of a weather report; with reports of dancing, it is the actors who are salient (see below). Whatever the reason might be, arguments have a structural signature and are not licensed merely by intuitions about cases.

Perhaps there is room to manoeuvre for the 'standard' theorist. Neale (ibid., pp. 321-2) offers a reading of Taylor which he also commends. The basic idea is this. A lexical item of the relevant kind (think verbs) encodes both syntactic thematic positions and thematic roles. The number of the two may diverge, though; in particular, a verb may encode *n* positions, whose filling results in a clause, say, but encode *n*+1 roles, whose filling results in a complete proposition. We may specify, therefore, perfectly complete sentences, at whatever level of analysis is deemed relevant without, *eo ipso*, specifying complete propositions. The basic idea is that a lexical item might express more semantic roles than it syntactically encodes (up to acceptability).

There is something correct, incorrect, and unclear about this thought. The correct bit is that conceptual adicity is often greater than (but never less than) lexical adicity. The familiar example is the concept of BUY, which is 4-place: the buyer, the buyee, the goods, and the payment. The syntactic adicity of *buy*, however, is clearly 2-place. So, we at least have a model of how *rain* lacking a syntactic position for location might not preclude it from lexically encoding a locative role. All of this is so.

The incorrect bit is that Neale provides no reason to think that syntactically inert argument positions are argument positions at all. The problem is that since they have no signature within language, there is no reason to posit them as aspects of the lexicon rather than let them be aspects of pre-lexicalised concepts or encyclopaedic knowledge. Furthermore, much recent thinking on argument projection firmly associates roles with

structural positions (Hale and Keyser, 2002; Ramchand, 2008; Harley, 2011). So, the basic distinction between positions and roles might well not be a distinction within language itself.

The unclear bit of Neale's reasoning concerns the status of complements of *rain* when they do occur overtly. If we are to think of *rain* as possessing a typically unexpressed theme role, we should wonder if and how it can be expressed. The Neale/Taylor idea seems to be that semantic arguments can occur as optional adjuncts. One immediate query this view should attract is why semantically essential information would be optionally expressed. The query is pressing because it is quite plausible that language admits a range of *obligatory* adjuncts or modifiers, i.e., items that must occur for acceptability, but which are not in argument positions, or are otherwise adverbial or adpositional (cf., Grimshaw and Vikner, 1993; Baker, 2003). The locative prepositional phrase obligatory for *put* might be a case (see below); as might an adverbial for the verb *to word* (*Mary worded the letter poorly/well*). One might well ask, therefore, why weather predicates are not of that type, i.e., why should the putative argument be typically covert when the information can be readily expressed in an obligatory manner albeit not as an argument? Of course, one might think that the overt item corresponding to the would-be covert locative information of *rain* is an argument. *Rain*, of course, *appears* to accept locative theme arguments, such as in (9):

(9) It's raining here[14]

This is unlike the case of *buy*, say, where if one of the roles is to be articulated, a new position needs to be formed by way of a prepositional phrase. On such a view there is no mystery: there is always a locative argument for *rain*, sometimes occurring overtly, but mostly occurring covertly. Such a view is far from obvious. Neale's thought, I take it, is that *here* in (9) is a *syntactic* adjunct, but a *semantic* argument, which would pattern *rain* with *buy*, insofar as its full set of conceptual roles are only introduced into syntax as (optional) adjuncts. This option would also make *rain* somewhat similar to *put* or *word* on the above suggestion, save for the adjunct being mostly covert as opposed to obligatorily overt. Furthermore, it would be consistent with the fact that other locative roles of *rain* are explicit adjuncts:

(10) It is raining *(in) Manchester

So, Neale's idea that *rain* takes syntactic adjuncts to express essential semantic information is not wildly implausible, and it gains further support from *here* being adjunct-like, or, more generally, the place where a locative item would sit in the weather predicate being a position of adjunction. There are a number of considerations in favour of this view.

Firstly, if *here* is an adjunct in (9), one would expect it to be symmetrical with other adjuncts. Is this so? Consider the positions of *today*—a temporal adjunct—in relation to other adjuncts in contrast to *here*, which *apparently* must occupy complement position:

(11)a It's raining today in Manchester

b It's raining in Manchester today

c It's raining here in Manchester

d ?It's raining in Manchester here

Prima facie, this pattern suggest that *here* is not an adjunct, but an argument, for it appears that *here* must occupy complement position, i.e., an adjunct, such as *in Manchester*, cannot intervene between *here* and the verb. The judgement depicted in (11d), however, is not secure. Note that *here* seems to prefer to mark out a sublocation (proper or improper) of the values of any further locatives in a sequence of locatives ordered in terms of containment from the least inclusive to the most inclusive. (11c), for example, has a preferred reading under which *here* just refers to Manchester (improper inclusion) as the relevant location the speaker occupies. (11c) also admits a reading that carries the implication that it is not raining at some other location in Manchester (here is properly contained). So, what might be wrong with (11d), if anything, is that the containing location is referred to prior to the contained location. That certainly seems to make sense of the oddness of (11d). This would also be consistent with *here* being admissible in complement position with a temporal adjunct, e.g., *It was raining today here*. It is, however, not clear that (11d) is even bad. Imagine a scenario where there is an interplanetary conversation about rainfall on the respective planets. The person on Earth might utter (11d) to his interlocutor on Mars, with Manchester picking out the sublocation of Earth, which is referred to as here (as opposed to Mars).[15] Indeed, (11c) may also be used to similar effect (a pause between *here* and *in Manchester* aids the uptake). In either case, *here* picks out the proper containing location. So, while *here* does

prefer to be at least most specific in a sequence of locatives, such a reading appears not to be mandatory. In short, *here* need not occupy complement position and, indeed, more or less enjoys the freedom of an adjunct. What appears to be peculiar to *here* is that it marks a contrast between perspectives (here as opposed to there or elsewhere) which other locatives do not do. Hence it might be that *here* prefers to be most specific, for, most naturally, the relevant location is where one is in contrast to where other salient events or interlocutors are, but, as witnessed, *here* can be more or less inclusive. In general, however, the placement of *here* relative to its main verb or other apparent adjuncts is not a decisive test, for being an adjunct does not equate with being able to occur freely anywhere; in particular, the so-called 'cartography project' has made it at least plausible that adjuncts and other modifiers (adnominal adjectives, adverbials) are hierarchically organised into a fixed template. So, even if *here* were to much prefer to be next to its verb, it wouldn't follow that it was an argument; it might be an adjunct that mandatorily occurs at the base of any spatial/temporal hierarchy of adjuncts.[16]

Secondly, *here* flunks the ellipsis test for argumenthood. The test is that a verb under ellipsis is understood along with its argument complement; adjuncts, in distinction, are free to be substituted. Consider the following contrast:

(12)a Bill drinks wine in the evening, but Mary does so in the morning

b *Bill drinks wine in the evening, but Mary does so beer in the morning

c Whenever it's raining here, it's doing so there/in Manchester

d It is always raining here, but never doing so there

So, *here* doesn't behave like an argument.

There are other tests for the argument/adjunct distinction that pertain to nominal complements (e.g., the interpretation of anaphoric *one*) and verbal complement positions, but these are not applicable to *rain* (see chapter hnbh for a thorough discussion of potential argument vs. adjunct tests in relation to predicates of personal taste). Still other tests rest on movement options. An insight of the GB framework was that adjuncts are more restricted than arguments in their movement (more 'minimal' in the distance they may move), adhering to both island constraints (for our purposes, subjancency), and the ECP (Empty Category Principle).[17] The basic import of the ECP is that the construal of moved items meets certain conditions that have the consequence that in some environments adjuncts only support a local or short construal, whereas arguments (object arguments, at least) support a long construal.[18] It has proved difficult to be precise about the generalisation that appears to be underlying this descriptive fact (see Hornstein and Weinberg, 1995). Furthermore, in recent minimalist theorising, the notion of government, essential to the traditional ECP, has been abandoned (Cheng and Corver, 2006). Still, regardless of the theoretical status of ECP, the long vs. short construal might offer a test for distinguishing arguments from adjuncts. Compare:

(13) Where did you think that George drank beer?

(13) is ambiguous between the location of the thinking event and the location of the drinking event. In contrast, (14) is not ambiguous:

(14) Where did you think that Caesar conquered?

(14) is not the most felicitous way to ask 'Which country did you think that Caesar conquered?', but nonetheless it has only one reading: the one on which *where* undergoes *wh*-movement as an argument of *conquer*, for *conquer* obligatorily selects a theme argument. So, the thought here is that *where* cannot be base generated to modify *think* and move locally up to the SPEC CP position, for that would leave *conquer* without an argument. One way of generating a test for the argument/adjunct distinction, therefore, is to see if *wh*-movement creates ambiguity between a long and short construal in a multi-clause structure such as (13). If so, then the movement is from an adjunct position, because, all else being equal, an adjunct may modify different positions freely and must have at least a local interpretation (thinking or drinking, as it were). If *wh*-movement only has a long construal, then the movement is from an argument position, because such a position must be satisfied, which precludes the short construal. Hence, in (14), *where* cannot modify *think*. I'll assume that the test is sound.

Consider, then, (15):

(15) Where will John think that it is raining?

Is a reading available where it is the location of the thinking event that is being queried rather than the location of the raining event? If not, then it would seem as if *where* has moved from an argument position. For what it is worth, I have no difficulty finding the relevant reading. The reading is not obvious because of the verb *think* and a lack of setting. Substitute *radio-in* for *think*, and imagine that John is being pursued by a posse who want to discover his location by tracking his radio signal. Alternatively, consider:

(16) Where will the weatherman discover that it is raining?

Given the weatherman scenario, the ambiguity stands out ('In his bunker' or 'Eventually, Manchester'). What is clear is that the relevant reading is by no means as inaccessible as a *wh*-adjunct construal of (14). One may formulate similar test cases with subjacency violations and negation, but I think the results come out the same; indeed, the adjunct status of where seems to be confirmed, assuming the test is in good order.

Consider:

(17) Where did John figure out whether it is raining

If *where* were an argument of *rain*, one would predict (17) to be marginal, being a weak subjacency violation (in this case, a 'weak island' violation) on its *only* reading. It seems to me, however, that the natural reading of (17) involves *where* modifying *figure out*, which renders (17) perfectly acceptable, for *where* is construed short and so is neither an ECP nor a subjacency violation. If this is so, then (17) should pattern with a clear case of adjunct movement:

(18) How did John figure out whether it is raining

Clearly, *how* here *only* has a short construal modifying *figure out* and doesn't have the reading where *how* modifies the manner of the raining (torrential, say). Of course, the precluded reading here is much worse than the subjacency-violating reading of (17). The factors making for such a difference are difficult to tease apart because the location of the raining event is naturally construed as coincident with the place of the event of the adoption of an attitude towards the raining event, whereas the manner of raining is not so generalizable. In other words, the difference appears to be a matter of semantic interference. To see this, compare locative *where* with temporal *when* and manner *how* in

the following dialogues, where B's question are interpreted with the fronted *wh*-item modifying *rain*:

(19)a A: Mary wondered whether it is raining in London. Jane wondered whether it is raining in New York.

B: ?Where did John wonder whether it is raining?

b A: Mary wondered whether it is raining at 1pm. Jane wondered whether it is raining at 2pm.

B: ??When did John wonder whether it is raining?

c A: Mary wondered whether it is raining hard. Jane wondered whether is raining light.

B *How did John wonder whether it was raining?

It strikes me that all of the B responses are pretty bad, perhaps degrading from (19a) to (19c) as indicated. This is even with the heavy priming of the A statements. From a purely syntactic condition on movement, however, that is (i) only sensitive to the difference between arguments and adjuncts, and (ii) entails that adjuncts cannot be interpreted low in such cases (because of the intervening *wh*-item *whether*), there should be either a stark difference between these cases, marking the difference between arguments and adjuncts, or no difference, marking all the *wh*-items as adjuncts. A natural explanation of the difference does appear to obtain, therefore, is that there is an interference effect, which makes location more salient for the interpretation of the weather predicate than time or manner. If the weather predicate did select a locative argument, then there shouldn't be anything the least bit untoward in the low readings of

(17) and (19a). The fact that (17)-(19) all have natural high readings patterns all the items as adjuncts, regardless of precisely how the acceptability of the low readings pattern.

If we are to assume, therefore, that weather predicates do not syntactically select an argument to be interpreted locatively, it remains odd why the putative locative argument role should only surface as an adjunct, for *rain* does accept theme non-locative arguments:

(20)a It's raining cats and dogs

b It rained frogs

c It rained a hard rain

More generally, why should argument roles surface as adjuncts? In the case of *buy*, there is something of an answer, in that, plausibly, no lexical item codes for more than two argument positions.[19] Hence, the 4-place concept of BUY cannot be lexically encoded, so the extra semantic arguments must surface as adjuncts of *buy*. No such general rationale makes sense of Neale's proposal, for the dispute is whether *rain* has a single argument, not three or four. Furthermore, the occurrence of obligatory adjuncts, if such there be, do not furnish a decisive test in favour of optional adjuncts expressing semantically essential information. The exact point about such cases as *put* or *word* is that their adjuncts are obligatory, not optional, whereas the locative adjuncts of *rain* are optional, which precisely suggests that the information they express is not argument-like or semantically essential; if it were, the adjunct would be obligatory, one would think. Moreover, as just

indicated, *rain* does take nominal arguments, whereas *put* does not (**Bill put the glass the table*).

As it stands, therefore, the Taylor/Neale proposal is not obviously false and does, I think, accurately render the locative phrases associated with weather reports as adjuncts rather than arguments. Furthermore, the position would, if sound, make good sense of the peculiar status of meteorological predicates in weather reports. Still, the proposal is dubious precisely because it is exceptional. To show that a predicate takes a *syntactic* argument position is to show that there is evidence for its thematic content (however that might be determined) being essential to the content of the predicate, i.e., the evidence, *qua* syntactic, is independent of our intuitions about what would be involved in the relevant claims being true or false. Such truth-conditional intuitions are unreliable in the present case, and perhaps all other cases too, because they don't distinguish between semantic content proper as an invariant feature of the language and pragmatic or encyclopaedic factors that might be constant. Thus, to forgo a syntactic differentiation of the encoding of semantic information in terms of argument/adjunct risks a return to intuitions about truth conditions, whose unreliability make so tempting the thought that weather reports express locations as syntactic arguments. In short, talk of semantic arguments syntactically realised as adjuncts is just obscure without some clear conception of what is involved in a feature being semantically essential but linguistically optional. In effect, the position is suggesting that some linguistic differences do not make a difference to the language.

Notwithstanding all of the above, my commendation of Recanati's position against the 'standard view' does not depend solely on the weatherman case. The second strand to the 'standard view' is that weather reports admit bound readings in which the putative locative argument position is quantified into. I shall propose that *definite* readings are available for such cases as instances of a general semantic phenomenon. This line of argument is independent of the weatherman scenario, so is immune to any qualms over it. Before presenting my case for this claim, though, I first want to consider and *reject* another aspect of Recanati's case for meterological predicates being non-locative.

4.2: *Rain, dance,* and *arrive*

If the lexical entry for *rain* lacks a locative argument position, then one should expect it to pattern with verbs whose entries uncontroversially lack such a position, and not to pattern with those verbs whose entries uncontroversially feature such a position. Such reasoning is pursued by Recanati (2010, pp. 82-6) by way of a comparison of *rain* with *dance* and *arrive*.[20]

Recanati takes it as given that *dance* takes a sole theta-marked agentive argument and an unmarked event argument mandatory for all verbs:

(21) $\lambda e \lambda \alpha$[dance(e, α)]

This entry gives rise to the following kind of logical form:

(22)a Sam dances

b. $(\exists e)$[dancing(e) $\wedge$ AGENT(Sam, e)]

To be sure, any dancing going on is going on somewhere or other; there is no dancing outside of space. Still, no location is obligatorily semantically encoded in tokens of *dance*. The locative content of a token of *dance* may arise 'metaphysically' on the basis of our general understanding that dancing involves physical movement. It may also arise 'pragmatically' by way of the context of utterance providing a salient location:

(23)a Did Mary enjoy the disco?

b. Oh yeah! She danced with everyone

The dancing spoken of in (23b) was dancing at the disco, not just somewhere or other, perhaps in the distant past. In such cases, we may speak of the logical form of the utterance as being contextually enriched with a locative theta-relation that takes the disco and *e* as its arguments.

(24) $(\exists e)(\forall x)$[dancing(e) $\wedge$ AGENT(Mary, e) $\wedge$ PATIENT(x, e) $\wedge$ LOCATION(disco, e)]

Finally and trivially, locative information can be explicitly provided by various kinds of adjuncts (e.g., *here*, *at the ball*, *on the roof*, etc.). The crucial point in all of this is that (21) is the lexical entry and so *dance* freely admits non-definite construals and it seems

clear that its lexical understanding is punkt, unless we reckon every activity verb to feature a locative position.

On Recanati's view, *arrive* is different (cf. Partee, 1989, pp. 270-1). It semantically encodes three argument positions: (i) the obligatory event position, (ii) an agentive position, and (iii) a locative position:

(25) $\lambda e \lambda \alpha \lambda l$[arrive($e$, α, l)]

Since *arrive*, like *dance* (on the relevant reading), is intransitive (neither takes an obligatorily non-empty complement), how is one supposed to tell if the putative lexical difference between *dance* and *arrive* is genuinely lexical or merely metaphysical or pragmatic? Recanati offers the following data:

(26) A: John has danced.

B: Where has he danced?

A: I have no idea

(27)A: John has arrived.

B: Where has he arrived?

A: *I have no idea.

The acceptability of (26) indicates that there is no lexically encoded locative position in *dance* because the saturation of the position is optional as signalled by A renouncing any

definite locative construal of her initial statement. In (27), on the other hand, A's renouncing of a definite locative construal leads to unacceptability, which signals that *arrive* is locatively marked, even if the position is not morphophonemically marked. If we assume that this kind of discourse pattern is revelatory of the adicity of the verb, we can test it on *rain* and, of course, if the weatherman scenario is kosher, then *rain* indeed patterns with *dance*, not *arrive*:

(28) A(the weatherman): It's raining!

B: Whereabouts?

A: I don't know—we must do the calculations

I find this argument unpersuasive; indeed, it seems to me that the considerations are actually inconsistent with the weatherman reasoning. First off, I assume that Recanati's position on *dance* is obviously correct, i.e., the verb does not lexically encode a locative position. The reason I think this is true, though, is not to do with the particular properties of *dance*; rather, *no* verb lexically encodes a locative argument in the manner Recanati suggests. Before we get to *arrive*, consider a verb such as *load*.

(29) Joe loaded hay all day

Joe must have been loading the hay onto something, but is this implication lexically encoded? It seems so insofar as *load* takes locative as well as theme complements:

(30)a Joe loaded the truck with hay

b Joe loaded hay onto the truck

These two constructions are subtly different, but for our purposes the crucial point is that *load* selects a locative complement in direct object position.[21] On the other hand, consider:

(31)A: Stan loaded coal all his life

B: What did he load coal onto?

A: How should I know?

Thus, even a verb that selects an explicit locative argument fails Recanati's discourse test.

Consider the English locative *par excellence*: *put*.

(32)a *Jane put the glass

b Jane put the glass on the table/into the cabinet/etc.

c Jane put the glass down

Here, it looks as if *put*, unlike *load*, obligatorily selects a locative complement, either as a propositional phrase or as a resultive.[22] The important thing to note, though, is that the complement cannot be implicit, merely understood, for (32a) is quite beyond the pale. Given all of this, then, there is little reason to think, *pace* Recanati, that *arrive* has a

lexically encoded locative position: the putative test for the locative nature of *arrive* doesn't generalise and the paradigmatic locative *put* can only take explicit locative complements, which *arrive* characteristically lacks. The situation is actually worse than this.

Recall the original weatherman scenario. Imagine that our weatherman is somewhat less excitable than the one earlier described. Upon seeing the light on his console flash, he doesn't exclaim 'It's raining', but, having a sense of the occasion, solemnly intones 'Rain has arrived'. It seems patent to me that if the original weatherman scenario indicates that *rain* lacks a lexically encoded locative position, then our new scenario shows that *arrive*, too, lacks such a position, for both admit a non-definite construal (punkt, even). In fact, finding non-definite construals for *arrive* is not hard. Imagine a couple whose respective jobs involve lots of air travel, so much so that neither can keep track of where the other one is most of the time. Still, being a loving couple, whenever either of them land, they send a text to the other saying 'I've arrived'. Clearly, the only available construal is non-definite and so is one, without further ado, that is consistent with a punkt reading of the lexical item.

None of the above should lead us to think that *rain*, *dance*, and *arrive* are structurally equivalent. My conclusion is only that none of them lexically encode a locative position. *Dance* is as Recanati reckons; in particular, it is an unergative verb that thematically marks its mandatory subject as agentive. As an *activity* verb, it is also durational and so admits durational modification:

(33) George danced for an hour

Arrive is standardly taken to be an unaccusative, a verb that theta-marks its mandatory argument as a theme, not an agent. Semantically, unaccussatives typically describe events of change of state or movement (compare: *fall*, *die*, and so on), where the value of the argument is not construed as initiating or causing the event. The structural reflex of this property is that the grammatical subject argument of intransitive *arrive* starts life in the object complement position, and undergoes movement to land in the subject position. Such a difference has its surface signature:

(34)a At the stroke of midnight arrived the late guests

b *At the stroke of midnight danced the late guests

c Just in time there arrived the telegram

d *Right on cue there danced the guests

Here we see that *arrive* may lack a subject, unlike *dance*, or may take an expletive subject *there*, again unlike *dance*. Furthermore, being an achievement, *arrive* is punctal and doesn't admit durational modification:

(35) *George arrived for an hour

Any sense of *arrive* possessing a locative argument position, I think, perhaps derives from its being telic, i.e., the verb does entail some definite point of termination or goal. This point, though, is not a definite location, but simply the durationless termination of a

process, which can occur somewhere or other. So, I think it is acceptable to think of *arrive*, qua achievement, as having a lexically implied goal, but I can see no reason to think that such a goal is lexically mandated as an argument position, still less a definite locative.

What of *rain* itself? We may think of it as an agentless unergative, if you will excuse the oxymoron. Following Hale and Keyser (1993, 2002), think of unergatives ('pure' intransitives) as formed by the conflation of a nominal argument with an abstract verbal head, which surfaces as the unergative. Thus:

(36) [$_{XP}$... [$_{vP}$ AGENT *v*+dance [$_{N}$ <dance>]]]

Such an account readily explains why unergatives often admit a cognate theme argument. Thus:

(37) Mary danced a dance/sneezed a sneeze/walked a walk

Rain, I submit, is just like *dance* save that it lacks an agentive argument: nominal *rain* conflates with an abstract verbal head to delver the meteorological verb; hence it is that *rain* can take objects:

(38) It's raining rain/cats and dogs/frogs/etc.

The unmarked case, of course, is where there is no complement.[23] A nice consequence of this position is that *rain* is given a theme argument, albeit one conflated, for it is reasonable to think that all verbs must take at least one argument.[24]

Overall, then, I share Recanati's view that *rain* lacks a locative position, but not because it patterns with *dance* rather than locative *arrive*, but because no verb has a locative position in the intended implicit sense. Verbs can take locative arguments, of course, but they are always explicit. So, barring a proper spelling out of Neale's (2007) proposal to save Taylor (2001), as discussed above, *rain* is non-locative as far as language is concerned, even if any raining event must take place in some location.

4.3: Quantifying in

The second strand to the 'standard view' is that meteorological predicates must contain a locative position because we can quantify into it. If there were no such position, then the quantifications would be, contrary to fact, illicit. The relevant data are exemplified in (39):

(39)a Wherever I go, it rains

b Every location *l* is such that if I go to *l*, it rains at *l*

The exhibited reading of (39a) is enabled by an implicit position licensed by *rain* being bound by the prefixed quantifier phrase, or so claims the 'standard view'. That is to say, *It rains* contains a locative variable in nonquantificational constructions; hence it is that it can be bound in (39a). If this is so, then we supposedly have a criterion for the presence

of a variable item, *viz*., a bound reading is available. Note that in cases such as (39a), the quantificational phrase is an adjunct, which did not start life in an argument position. The supposed binding relation, therefore, cannot be underwritten by standard movement operations, such as quantifier raising (QR) or the like, which move an item and leave a trace/variable behind. This is obvious enough, for the putative locative variable is neither a trace nor an occupier of an argument position, as far as one can tell. Still, (39) appears to have *rain* pattern with other relational items (nouns, adjectives and verbs), which lends weight to the thought that *rain* itself takes a locative argument in some ('covert') sense as suggested above. Consider these examples adapted from Dowty (1982) and Partee (1984, 1989), where the bracketed material corresponds to what Partee calls *implicit arguments* and what we have been describing as syntactically unexpressed thematic positions.

(40)a For most Arabs, America is the enemy [of the Arabs]

b Everyone prefers a local [to them] bar

c Whenever the copyeditor made a mistake, the proof-reader would notice [the mistake]

Recanati (2004) doesn't so much reject this argument from quantification as doubt that it is as compelling as its proponents imagine. I have to agree. Recanati suggests that the principle in operation here overgenerates, i.e., it obliges us to posit hidden variables where there aren't any just because we can find a quantificational reading. In other words, Stanley's (2000) claim that where we have semantic binding, we have syntactic binding, is far too strong a condition, for it obliges us to posit syntactically realised

variables for any verb one cares to mention, any verb that can enter into the kind of quantification context exemplified in (39).[25] So, consider (41):

(41) Whenever Bill cooks mushrooms, Sam eats

Assume we naturally understand this sentence to mean that Sam eats mushrooms on all those occasions when Bill cooks mushrooms. It would now appear, though, that we have to posit a variable as the object of *intransitive eat* in order for it to be bound—an unwelcome result.

Martí (2006), endorsed by Stanley (2005a, p. 226; 2005b, p. 244), rejects Recanati's reasoning on the basis that (41) is not essentially quantificational. Consider the following discourse:

(42) A: Whenever Bill cooks mushrooms, Sam eats

B: #No he doesn't; curiously, he eats something else

The intuition marked in (42) is that B's response is anomalous. In distinction, the corresponding discourse about rain is OK:

(43) A: Whenever Bill lights a cigarette, it rains

B: No it doesn't; curiously, it rains somewhere else

If, the reasoning goes, (41) is a case of quantification into the putative object position of *eat*, (42) should be fine, for A's utterance would, indeed, be false, as B reports, should Sam eat something other than mushrooms. In (43), there is no corresponding problem, which is meant to indicate that A's utterance in (43), but not in (42), is genuinely quantificational.

I find this argument unconvincing. Recanati's point need not be construed as the claim that (41) *must* take a bound reading, only that it may do so. Such a possibility suffices to support the overgeneration criticism, for the claim Recanati is challenging is that bound readings mandate as a matter of saturation a variable position into which a prefixed phrase may quantify. A single case is enough to refute the generalisation. That general point aside, B's response in (42) is not necessarily deviant. The response, 'No he doesn't', is elliptical for 'No he doesn't eat' or 'No he doesn't eat mushrooms', where these completions correspond to what B may intend by his response. On the first construal, B's response is incoherent, for B is simply contradicting herself, saying that A both eats and doesn't eat. On the second construal, B's response is perfectly fine, but is only enabled if *eat* in A's utterance is construed transitively with its object supplied by the prefixed phrase. The situation is the same for (43). The phrase, 'No it doesn't', is elliptical for either 'No it doesn't rain' or 'No it doesn't rain whereabouts Bill lights a cigarette'. Again, on the first construal, B's response is incoherent without further ado, for B is being self-contradictory. On the second construal, the response is fine. The cases are therefore symmetrical; the potential for asymmetry arises from differential construal of the ellipsis. Of course, the presumption of the argument is that the ellipses are filled in differently in the two cases, which generates the differences suggested, but there is no

argument for this that I can discern, for both ellipses admit the two fillings I have suggested. The question is which one is favoured, if any, which I shall turn to below.

Stanley (2005a, pp. 226-7) offers a further consideration in support of Martí's examples. Suppose that Sam's dirty plate is on the table and A says, 'Sam ate', intending to communicate that Sam ate the mushrooms Bill cooked for him. It is anomalous for B to respond with (44):

(44) #No he didn't; Sam ate broccoli

Again, the thought is that if *eat* could pick up the mushrooms as the referent of an implicit argument, then (44) should be fine. That (44) is anomalous thus indicates that *eat* doesn't express the relevant argument. Now imagine that A, located in Manchester, is on the phone to B, who is watching the live football from Manchester at her home in London. As usual, it is raining in Manchester, but B sees clear skies on her TV during a rare break in the weather. A utters, 'It's raining', only to be contradicted by B, who utters (45):

(45) No it isn't; it's sunny

Stanley's thought is that the coherence of the negation in (45), but not in (44), is due to *rain* taking a free locative variable, to which different speakers may coherently predicate different properties (A and B disagree precisely they are talking about the same location, which A would express by *here* and B by *there*). So, *rain* is distinct from intransitive *eat*,

which doesn't take an object, implicit or not. As before, the argument is persuasive only if we assume a certain filling for the ellipses.

If we fill out the ellipsis of (44) as 'No he didn't eat', then of course the claim is anomalous, self-contradictory. If it is filled out as, 'No he didn't eat mushrooms', the claim is not anomalous. Imagine, then, that we are looking at where the mushrooms are kept and find the spot bare. We both know that Sam loves mushrooms and has no qualms about leaving the rest of the household with none. So, you say, 'Sam ate'; I, who am in the know, respond with (44). Such a scenario saves the supposedly anomalous discourse. Similarly, (45) as it stands is a perfectly OK, but can be rendered *incoherent*. It is fine when B's ellipsis is filled with 'No it isn't raining whereabouts you are', but if the ellipsis is construed as 'No, it isn't raining here in London', then B's response is incoherent.

If the above thoughts are correct, then the ellipsis test doesn't produce an argument against Recanati's overgeneration complaint: we can, indeed, quantify into positions of object-deleted transitives, which, without further ado, renders every such verb as selecting a variable in a way that was supposed to be peculiar to *rain*. Just what we should say about object deletion will be discussed below. That issue aside, we need not conclude that the ellipsis test tells us nothing. What the examples show, I think, is that we default construe intransitive *eat* as semantically indefinite (i.e., *eat something or other*), and default construe *rain* as locative. The reasons for this pattern are perhaps not hard to fathom. Since *eat* comes in the two forms, there is no reason to assume that a transitive construal is intended in the absence of explicit contextual cues. *Rain*, on the other hand, simply takes a locative reading on the basis of salience. Where an explicit locative phrase would be redundant, its absence signals a deictic reading. This difference explains, I

think, the appearance of anomaly in the examples above; it is simply easier to read *rain* as taking a bindable argument because its default construal is locative, whereas intransitive *eat* is most readily construed indefinitely precisely because it lacks an object; if we intend a definite object, it is preferred to say which one or kind, so it is not most felicitously expressed elliptically. With some little reflection, though, the cases are seen to be symmetrical. So, there is a difference between *eat* and *rain*, but, *pace* Stanley (2005a, p. 227), it is not a difference that tells one what is proper to semantics and what is proper to wider cognition.[26]

We can, however, advance beyond Recanati's overgeneration criticism. One might imagine scenarios in which weather reports in the scope of a quantificational phrase have a definite rather than bound reading. Indeed, this is to be expected because we can insert a locative phrase even in the presence of the quantificational phrase (*Wherever I go, it rains in Manchester*). It doesn't follow that the predicate cannot encode a locative position, but the quantificational data do not necessitate such a position, precisely because the quantifiers are not obligatorily read as quantifying into that position. So, quantificational cases are not evidential of the presence of locative argument positions.

Consider the following scenario:

The shaman scenario: There is a shaman who serves a group of villages. When he visits a village, he is invariably asked to perform a dance in order to ensure rain. Although he enjoys the power and prestige, he is not self-deluded; he begins to doubt whether his dancing has any affect on the climate at all. In one village in particular, it is always raining whether he dances there or not. One day he airs his doubts about his powers to the

village chief. The chief is unconvinced by the shaman's scepticism; in particular, he points out that it rains in his village when the shaman does his dance. 'Look', the chief implores, 'only when you dance here does it rain'. 'Rubbish!', protests the shaman amid a typical deluge, 'Wherever I dance, it rains'.

The shaman's assertion can here be construed as in (46b)

(46)a Wherever I dance, it rains

b For all locations *l*, if I dance at *l*, it rains at *l′*

Even if this is accepted, it might still be protested that the reading the 'standard view' builds its case upon remains available—it is the default reading, no less. So, there must after all be the locative position for the reading to be available. Stanley (2000), for instance, assumes that all semantic binding is necessarily supported by a syntactic relation, e.g., a variable-operator relation. There is no syntactic basis, however, for a claim of such strength (cf., Collins, 2007; Neale, 2007; Pupa and Troseth, 2011). At any rate, in the present dialectic, the claim that that a locative variable is a necessary condition for the quantificational reading assumes what needs to be established: that the locative position needs to be syntactically present for the quantificational reading to be possible. If the definite construal is available in the manner I have suggested, though, then that shows us that the relevant quantificational reading is not mandated by the linguistic structure alone, for if it were, the reading would be necessary. We remain free,

therefore, to think of the definite and indefinite readings as being non-saturational construals.[27] This position is further buttressed by the possibility of indefinite readings where the locative position is not bound by the explicit prefixed quantifier. Imagine the shaman again. He could express his scepticism about his powers in terms of a general dissociation between where he dances and where it rains: it is always raining somewhere or other regardless of where he dances. So, when he says, *Wherever I dance, it rains*, the shaman does not identify where it rains, either contextually or via the quantifier; he simply asserts that when he dances somewhere or other it rains somewhere or other.

If our reasoning is sound, it might be though that we should find a similar pattern across relational expressions, such as *enemy, local,* etc. As it is, the pattern doesn't generalise. We can certainly get definite readings of *enemy* even in the scope of a prefixed quantifier phrase. Again, consider *For most Arabs, America is the enemy*. Imagine the topic of discourse being world opinion about the geopolitical standing of Indonesia, and the conversation turns to the important question of Arab opinion, given the largely Muslim population of Indonesia. In this context, it seems straightforward to construe the sentece as saying that, for most Arabs, America is the enemy of Indonesia. Can we get an indefinite reading, where America is the enemy of someone or other? Perhaps we can with enough 'cleverness', but it is unclear to me, at any rate, how to do so. We need not tarry on this matter, though, for we can readily get indefinite readings for *local*. Consider:

(47) All the men preferred a local bar.

The bound reading associates each of the men with some bar local to them. The contextually definite reading picks out a bar local to someone salient (the men and woman are arguing about whether to go into the city or go to one of some bars near Fred's house). The indefinite reading picks out some or other bar that is local to someone or other—a bar not in the city, say. If this is right, *local* is more like *rain* than *enemy*. The moral, at any rate, is that there is no evident reason to demand that *rain* should pattern with other so-called relational items, at least not if it is assumed that such items resist an indefinite reading.

In general, then, we have found reason to dispute some of Recanati's arguments against the 'standard view', but have found the 'standard view' to be wanting regardless: indefinite readings of weather reports are available, and the putative locative position of *rain* is not necessarily bound in the presence of a quantifier, which means that the quantificational readings do not support the hypothesised saturational nature of the locative position.

No matter how persuasive proffered readings and scenarios might be, the mere presentation of examples will always be unsatisfactory to the extent to which we lack a general theoretical explanation of why certain readings are available or not. Such an explanation, even were I able to provide it, is beyond my present scope. In the next section, though, I shall offer some general reasons to think that syntax does not contain free positions of the kind the 'standard view' supposes. Before that, let's consider a variation on the locative variable proposal.

4.4: Event variables

We have so far followed Recanati in supposing that the 'standard view' of weather reports is that they include a locative argument position lexically mandated by the meteorological predicate. Stanley, who appears to be the paradigm of the 'standard' theorist for Recanati, in fact favours an alternative. Stanley (2000, p. 53, 2007, pp. 257-8; cf., Cappelen and Hawthorne, 2007) suggests that we may account for weather reports with just the bare event variable; there is no need for locative variables. Thus:

(48)a Whenever Sam lights a cigarette, it rains

b $(\forall e)$[Sam lights a cigarette at $e \rightarrow$ rains(e)]

The unbound bare weather reports are accounted for as follows:

> In a bare use of "it's raining", the speaker makes deictic reference to a particular event or situation, and says of it that it is a raining event. The event has a location (say, New York City). So, on this account... "It's raining" is about a particular event, which is the value of an event variable in the syntax of the sentence... [T]he speaker and hearer know where the event is taking place because of their general knowledge about the world (Stanley, 2007, p. 258)

Let us accept that the kind of form depicted in (48b) adequately captures the bound reading of (48a). The analysis could also be finessed to capture an indefinite ('shaman') reading of the kind presented above; for example, in the scope of the universal quantifier, we could existentially quantify into the event position of *rain* inside the scope of the

universal quantifier. What is much less clear is how a contextually definite reading can be captured, as regards quantifier cases (our shaman scenario) and, perforce, the bare weather reports.

Stanley's reasoning, as quoted above, is difficult to understand. He appears to claim that a speaker deictically refers to an event with implicit *e* and predicates *rain* of *e*. At any rate, it is difficult to see how else the reference takes place. Thus, the location value of *e* is not a matter of saturation, but, it seems, pragmatic enrichment.

First off, it is somewhat opaque how one is supposed to use an implicit variable to refer deictically to an event.[28] As usually understood, event variables are saturated automatically by the use of a verb with its arguments, which triggers an existential generalisation over the event positions (e.g., Higginbotham, 1985; Parsons, 1991; Pietroski, 2005). One does not deictically refer to an event and predicate the verb to it along with the nominal participants; one refers to the event simply by using the argument taking verb: it is part of its content that an event of the relevant kind is picked out. This is hardly odd, for how else would one pick out the relevant events other than by the use of the relevant linguistic items? A speaker needs no special deictic access to kicking events—a privileged way of employing *e*—in order to predicate kickingness of them; she simply needs to use *kick*, which gets its event position saturated free of any intentions on her part. The same with *rain*. A speaker needs no deictic access to raining events; a competence with *rain* suffices to achieve reference to the events. The event itself is just too abstract or bare to be picked out other than by its very predicates. Another way of putting this point is that with the normal event saturation to which I am appealing, the event is indefinite in the sense that it is some or other event with various properties (a

raining event, a kicking of Sam by Harry event, etc.). An event is only made deictically definite if it can be picked out uniquely. The event, therefore, cannot be deictically picked out other than by some unique property; the event itself is too abstract or bare. The unique property relevant to weather reports is precisely the location of the event, which by Stanley's own lights is not a matter of saturation, but pragmatic enrichment. I cannot, therefore, see Stanley's proposal as anything other than self-defeating, at least if the idea of it is to avoid a pragmatic account of the truth conditional content of weather reports.[29]

So far, then, we have discussed some reasons for commending Recanati's account of the definiteness of colloquial weather reports. The remaining issue is how we might account for indefinite saturation of the kind witnessed in the weatherman scenario.

5: Variadic functions

Inspired by Quine's (1960) idea of how variables might be 'explained away', Recanati (2002, 2004, 2010) entertains, without entirely commending, a variadic function account of indefinite saturation. Before explaining the idea, let me make a general remark. Quine's account is in the tradition running from Curry and Feys (1958) up to Jacobson (1999) and much subsequent work on so-called 'variable-free semantics'. As I explained above, my animus towards construing syntax as featuring free variables clearly has a resonance with this rich tradition, but the positions are orthogonal. 'Variable-free semantics' seeks to implement a type theory without the use of bindable free variables in one's lambda abstractions. Variables, on this model, are mere artefacts of the theoretical representation; they are not part of the semantic machinery itself, such as being objects in

the model. In distinction, my interest is in syntax conceived of as independent of any particular model-theoretic interpretation. Furthermore, the purpose of Recanati's variadic function approach is not to eliminate variable binding from one's type theory. Recanati's intent is to offer a semi-productive operation that accounts for lexical content in some instances (e.g., *eat*) and may serve as a means of fixing context-bound transitive readings of intransitives in other cases (e.g., *notice*, *finish*). Recanati, therefore, appears to be adopting a position on the much discussed topic of object deletion, *inter alia*, which, to the best of my knowledge, has developed orthogonal to Quine's original idea.[30] As previously noted, the approach might also serve to account for bound locative readings of *rain*, which Recanati (2004) suggests as an alternative to Stanley's account of weather reports. The crucial point is that variadic functions are imagined to be a resource which language has available to it, which, as far as one can tell, Recanati imagines to be freely employable. The critical comments I shall make of Recanati, therefore, do not in the least speak against the variable-free tradition in combinatory logic and semantics.

A variadic function takes predicates of adicity *n* as inputs and maps onto them predicates of adicity ±*n*. Such a function is 'recessive', if the adicity is decreased, and 'expansive', if the adicity is increased. If the former, the elided argument positions are construed as existentially quantified; if the latter, the extra argument positions are supported as the arguments of new predicates.[31] Schematically, for the single argument case, we have the following:

(RVF) $f_R(\lambda x_1,... \lambda x_n[Fx_1,... x_n]) = \lambda x_1,...\lambda x_{n-1}[(\exists y)[Fx_1,... x_{n-1}, y]]$

(EVF) $f_E(\lambda x_1,... \lambda x_n[Fx_1,... x_n]) = \lambda x_1,... \lambda x_n, \lambda y[Fx_1,... x_n \wedge G\, y]$

For Recanati, RVF allows us to understand how, with enough ingenuity, we can cook up a linguistic scenario whose interpretation allows for relational predicates to be monadic (*notice*, *finish*, etc.), for in such cases, an argument position can be understood to be existentially wrapped-up (i.e., made indefinite) in the item. How does the approach work for weather reports in particular? Another way of posing the question is to ask: what is the adicity of the bare meteorological predicate? The approach gives us a choice. In the weatherman scenario, we may take *rain* to be primitively non-locative as regards argument position, which is what Recanati originally suggests. The quotidian locative uses of weather reports are the result of an EVF that provides a locative argument. Alternatively, we may construe *rain* as used by the weatherman as the result of an RVF, which, in effect, quantifies away the locative argument position that is saturated in the quotidian case. Note that the latter approach to the weatherman scenario is consistent with the 'standard view' insofar as the contribution *rain* makes to the weatherman's content is not the bare predicate, but (49):

(49) $\lambda e[(\exists l)[\text{rain}(e, l)]]$

Recanati (2010, pp. 118) is sanguine, though, about the choice, because, 'from a general methodological point of view' (ibid., p. 119), either option as to what is lexically primitive would involve mapping a modified form onto the bare form, and this mapping would be the result of 'free pragmatic enrichment', not saturation. For the same reason,

Recanati is sanguine about the very idea of variadic functions as an alternative to a pure pragmatic approach, as it were, i.e., one that modifies content 'top-down'.

It is important to note that, for present purposes, variadic functions are understood to be lexical (part of conventional meaning, if you will) or more generally implicit. For example, the move from *Billy kicked the ball* to *Billy kicked the ball into the net*, might be described as a case of EVF, where the prepositional locative is the extra argument+predicate. We may remain neutral on that because our concern is for the potential of 'pragmatic intrusion' into content which is not exhibited in the kind of explicit case just offered. Moreover, while Recanati (2004) appeals to EVF to account for bound indefinite readings of weather reports, we saw above that such readings are not mandatory, so we do not require a special EVF feature or mechanism to account for such readings. In distinction, there is a prima facie syntactic/lexical case for RVF as attested in the literature on object deletion. Besides which, it is the RVF case that offers the 'standard view' an alternative perspective on the weatherman scenario. So, regardless of its formal coherence, is there good reason to think that RVF is operative in natural language? It is worth being explicit about the dialectic. If RVF is to be 'pragmatically' or freely available to support indefinite consturals in the weatherman scenario and other outré cases, then it must be lexically-syntactically unconstrained; for otherwise, the availability of RVF would be licensed as a matter of saturation, and so not be 'free'. If RVF is not free, then it is not a viable option for Recanati, and his sanguinity is out of place. As it is, I think RVF applies nowhere without restriction, and the constraints on argument deletion are very robust and do not support an RVF reading. If all that is so, then Recanati is being far too concessive to the 'standard view', at least as regards RVF.

There are many cases of object deletion. Our interest is in those cases that might be taken to support an RVF analysis insofar as their construal is existentially indefinite. In what follows, I shall go through a range of such cases and show that none of them are happily described in terms of RVF.[32]

(i) The parade example of RVF is *eat*, which as an intransitive appears to be the output of RVF applied to transitive *eat*, i.e., to eat is to eat something. Such a construal, though, seems to give the wrong lexical content, as has been noted numerous times since Katz and Postal (1964) first proposed a rule of direct object deletion.[33] The implicit argument of intransitive *eat* is not just *something* eaten, but some *food* (at any rate, something edible), much as *Let's eat something* is a request to eat some food, not sand or a volume of poetry or the number 7. The same goes for other verbs that might *prima facie* be viewed as involving RVF in their lexicalisation, such as *read*, *drink*, *file*, *bake*, *weed*, *cook*, and numerous others. The verbs involve an implicit theme insofar as there is an understanding of the kind of object that may be related to the verb in the absence of an explicit object, such as, a text, fluid, food, etc. (cf. Bresnan, 1978; Dowty, 1982; Jackendoff, 1990).[34] It might be that the verbs are formed via the conflation of a nominal with an abstract verbal head, which would explain their construal as involving a kind of object (Martí, 2011). Yet in none of the cases is this 'implicit object' a mere something or other. Firstly, when we talk of someone, say, reading or eating *something*, the *something* marks ignorance or indifference, not the optional construal of someone eating gravel, say. The verbs do not seem ever to admit a *something* reading. Secondly, as Mittwoch (1982) pointed out, transitive and intransitive *eat* differ in aspect. Intransitive *eat* is an activity verb with no marked termination (to eat is not necessarily to finish eating something), but

transitive *eat* is an accomplishment with a termination (to eat an apple is to finish the apple). The same holds, more or less, for the other relevant verbs.[35] If all these verbs in the intransitive were in fact cases of RVF, they would be accomplishments, contrary to fact.

The bare idea that the content of lexical items often features a kind of frozen RVF structure *is* very attractive. For instance, as noted above with reference to Neale (2007) and Taylor (2001), conceptual adicity is often greater than lexical-syntactic adicity, which suggests that the missing arguments are somehow existentially wrapped up in the lexical item. None of that, though, ameliorates the advertised problem. Besides, if we view RVF only as a frozen feature of lexical items, then it is difficult to see how it may fulfil the general pragmatic role Recanati would have it perform.[36]

Just how we ought to understand this class of verbs is way beyond the scope of the present paper. All I hope to have shown is that the construal of the verbs appears to be more nuanced than a straightforward RVF can capture.[37]

(ii) A related problem is that existential quantification often does not deliver the right scopal readings (Fodor and Fodor, 1980; Dowty, 1982; Partee, 1984). Consider:

(50)a Sam didn't eat

b Sam didn't notice

c Sam isn't a father

d Sam isn't an enemy

We naturally read (50a) in line with an RVF reading (*modulo* the above complaint) as a narrow scope existential relative to negation, where Sam simply didn't eat anything at all, rather than there being something in particular (asparagus) that Sam didn't eat. This parallels (50c), where Sam isn't a father of anyone at all, rather than not the father of some particular person. On the other hand, (50b) is naturally read with existential wide scope, where there is something in particular Sam didn't notice, rather than it not being the case that Sam noticed something; that is, (50b) does not attribute a general lack of noticing to Sam. This reading patterns with (50d), where a token of the sentence remains true, even if Sam is an enemy of someone or other, just not the person salient, i.e., the existential reading takes wide scope relative to negation. It appears, therefore, that the variadic approach is at best restricted and fails to explain the scopal difference exhibited, which seems to be licensed by the relevant verb or nominal.[38] In particular, the problem for Recanati here is that many transitive verbs that do accept, with sufficient 'cleverness', an intransitive form, do not, unlike *eat*, *drink*, and so on, have a narrow scope existential reading (e.g., *notice*, *finish*, etc.). Thus, the claim that a general object deletion option (RVF) is freely available cannot simply be generalised from the properties of *eat*, *drink*, etc.

(iii) Not all predicates admit argument deletion, for example, *devour*, *persuade*, *expect*, *tie*, *solve* and so on and on. It might be suggested that argument deletion is permissible in such cases, but that it is highly marked, not lexicalised as in the case of intransitive *eat* (cf., Neale, 2007, p. 366, n. 48). Well, maybe, maybe not. There remain predicates that definitely do not admit object deletion:

(51)a Bill gave Mary flowers

b *Bill gave Mary (= Bill gave Mary something)

c Sam had a cat

d *Sam had

e Chris put the glass down

f *Chris put the glass

The point is not merely that the *-ed cases do not mean what the RVF account would predict, but that the cases are ill-formed, not merely highly marked. What one wants to know from the defender of the variadic approach is why some predicates admit RVF and others do not. It is not enough to point to arbitrary lexicalisation, if such it is, for, to repeat, the above *-ed cases are not highly marked, so do not become acceptable merely by imagining a sufficiently odd discourse.

(iv) With predicates where argument deletion is possible, the deletion often gives rise to a distinct stable content lacking an argument position, not the same content save for an existentially generalised argument position. Here are some examples of activity verbs:

(52)a Harry walked the dog

b Harry walked

c Bill danced the tango

d Bill danced

e Mary swam the Channel

f Mary swam

For Harry to walk is not for him to walk anything at all; *mutatis mutandis* for the other two examples.[39] Again, the question for the RVF account is why it is so narrow, if extant at all: not only is it not always applicable, but even when it seems to apply, the resulting content is not a mere generalisation, but a content entirely lacking the argument position.

(v) A similar effect is witnessed with *ergative* verbs, i.e., ones that admit a transitive/intransitive alternation, where, in the intransitive case, the subject is a theme, not an agent or natural cause:

(53)a The vase broke the window

b The vase broke

c The rain cleared the snow

d The rain cleared

Plainly, the RVF reading is ruled-out in these cases precisely because of the unaccusative effect: the theme subject is not an agent/natural cause, but is construed in the object position in the intransitive cases.

(vi) Other constructions admit object deletion too, but retain an understood argument position referentially dependent on an argument in a higher clause; that is, the construal is not one of existential generalisation. Consider the following familiar kind of cases (e.g., Lasnik and Fiengo, 1974):

(54)a Sam is small enough to lift Mary

b Sam is small enough to lift

c Sam is too clever to hire Jane

d Sam is too clever to hire

Note that, without further ado, these data are not inconsistent with an RVF account. In particular, (54b,d) are ambiguous between a construal where Sam lifts/hires someone/something and a construal where Sam is lifted/hired. The former construals, where the matrix subject is the understood infinitive subject, are hard to get, but remain perfectly legitimate and not inconsistent with an RVF account. Still, the resulting ambiguity of the object deletion remains unexplained.

(vii) There are verbs where the argument position is understood to be present, but is reflexively construed, not existentially generalised; for example, *shave*, *bathe*, *wash*, *dress*, *strip*, etc.[40] These cases are different from the cases above where no argument position is understood; moreover, the verb remains thematically the same with the provision of a non-reflexive explicit argument (e.g., *shave/bathe a patient*). They also differ from the cases in (54) in a more subtle way. For example, on neither reading does (54b) mean the same as *Bill is small enough to lift himself*; it may mean the same as *Bill is small enough for someone or other to lift him*. The present point is simply that the reflexive class constitutes a case of lexicalised argument deletion that is not RVF; so, again, we find reason to think of RVF, if extant at all, as a heavily constrained operation, not a free pragmatic process.

From this somewhat brief survey of deletion in natural language, we may conclude, I think, that Recanati's sanguinity about RVF is unduly concessive to the 'standard view'. Recanati is right that RVF does not strike at the heart of truth-conditional pragmatics, because pragmatic conditions are still required to trigger the recessive effect, where not lexicalised. Recanati need not even admit that much, though, for variadic functions, if extant at all in natural language, play a very narrow, highly constrained role, or so it would seem. If that is so, then RVF is not a free pragmatic process.

7: Concluding remarks

If my reasoning is sound, and we may be permitted to generalise from our weather-bound examples, then Recanati's brand of pragmatism is too concessive. By taking syntax as our starting point, we should endeavour to keep it simple and not posit whatever is apparently required in order to capture readings we imagine to be stable. In this way, we arrive at a so-called radical pragmatic position, not by way of reflection on the variety of things we may say with an utterance given a context, but by way of reflection on how minimal the constraints from the language itself are on what we can say. From this 'bottom up' perspective, 'radical pragmatics' is not best viewed as a radical claim; it is a properly conservative claim that credits to language no more than belongs to it as an invariant structure we employ from context to context rather than as a structure constitutively answerable to such contexts. Sometimes, one must acknowledge mess to see what is clean and simple.[41]

Notes

[1] If we assume a broadly Gricean picture, we may think of context as that which must be mutually salient if the speaker's linguistic intention is to be recognised by the hearer.

[2] See Sennet (2011) for discussion of the problems with the typical ways of defining 'unarticulated constituent'. Definitional problems apart, one reason to be leery of the notion is that it suggests, if not entails, that sentence tokens express structured (Russellean) propositions. We don't want such a heavy duty theoretical commitment built into the very identification of a linguistic phenomenon.

[3] Recanati's (2007) is more or less reproduced in his (2010). Where I need to cite material occurring in both works, I shall only cite the latter work.

[4] The 'standard view' is Recanati's expression, and just who are the 'standard' theorists is not obvious, but I take Recanati to mean at least Perry (1986, 2007), Taylor (2001, 2007), Stanley (2000, 2007), and Neale (2007). Fillmore (1986) and Partee (1984, 1989) might also count. See below for discussion. Martí (2006) is not mentioned, but, although she partially defends Stanley position against Recanati, she is unlike the others mentioned in positing syntactic variables that are adjuncts not arguments. The presence of the variables, therefore, is not supposed to be licensed by syntax or lexical content. This position will be discussed below.

[5] The point should be trivial. *It's raining here* doesn't pick out any kind of location at all without some construal of what a given utterer has in mind by *here*: the very spot, the area, the town, the country, etc.

[6] *Bill's car* takes as its value a car somehow related to Bill, but the nature of the relation is linguistically unspecified: the car Bill owns, the car he wants, the car that hit him, etc.

[7] Perry (1986, 2007) and Crimmins (1992) are clear that unarticulated constituents cannot be encoded by explicit linguistic material. They seem neutral about the possibility of unarticulated constituents being the values of implicit syntactic material (cf., Neale, 2007, pp. 271/317-9), although Korta and Perry (2011, p. 111) entertain scepticism of the very idea of a 'logical form' that might house the constituents. Sennet (2011) convincingly argues that such sanguinity is misplaced, for it looks, in general, to be impossible to identify an unarticulated constituent of a proposition without giving the constituent a structural position that mirrors the syntax of the relevant utterance. Thus, if there are unarticulated constituents, they appear to require a syntactic home. None of this, of course, militates by itself for a 'standard' view. So much the worse for unarticulated constituents and the 'standard view' might be one reaction.

[8] The lambda abstractions employed here and below are to be understood as *our* representations of what the speaker-hearer understands by the relevant lexical item, not as descriptions of what the speaker-hearer represents. We do not, for instance, credit the speaker-hearer with lambda abstraction consciously or subconsciously. The 'reality' of the operators lies only in their marking the invariant combinatorial adicity of the relevant lexical item.

[9] Roughly, Perry (1986, 2007, p. 548) is neutral about how the locative position of *rain* is realised, as are Cappelen and Hawthornse (2007) and Hawthorne and Manley (2012). Taylor (2001, 2007) thinks the position is lexically encoded, but syntactically inert. Korta and Perry (2011p. 110) endorse Taylor's view, but consider such lexicalisation as 'a social phenomenon' contingent on the peculiarities of given speakers rather than a shared lexical competence. Neale commends Taylor's view on a more cognitive construal,

without quite endorsing it. Stanley (2000, 2007) thinks the locative position is marked by a variable in a projected syntactic position (Corazza, 2007, holds a variant of this view). Fillmore (1986) and Partee (1984, 1989) may also, at a push, be viewed as 'standard' theorists, although neither, to my knowledge explicitly, discusses weather reports. Fillmore appears to favour a thoroughgoing 'integrationist' approach to content determination that does not sanction a clean separation of lexical content from pragmatics from 'construction content' (cf., Goldberg, 1995). By current lights, therefore, he is not a standard theorist. Partee, on the other hand, appears to be neutral, somewhat like Perry, about the ultimate locus of what she refers to as 'implicit arguments' (especially see Partee, 1984, pp. 171-3, but also see below). If one objects to talk of 'standard views', then it will not affect my arguments if 'Perry *et al*.' Substitutes for the offending phrase.

[10] Nothing hangs on my use of eventish logical forms; I am following Recanti's (2007, 2010) presentation. Arguments that turn on event variables will be discussed later, though, so the use of the eventish format is convenient.

[11] It is also worth noting that the weatherman scenario has some similarity to the cancellability criterion for an implicature, which, as a pragmatic feature of utterances would militate for location not being a semantic feature. Thus, the weatherman may say, 'It's raining, but I don't know where', apparently cancelling the implicature that the speaker has a definite location in mind. In general, however, the kind of pragmatic 'completion' and 'expansion' to which contemporary pragmatists appeal is not solely a matter of implicature, so the locative aspect of weather reports is, indeed, cancellable, but so much does not suggest that the aspect is implicated.

[12] In essence, this is the objection raised by Neale (2007, pp. 301-4).

[13] Perry and Korta (2011) and Perry (2007) raise the issue not in response to Recanati's weatherman scenario, but Cappelen and Lepore's (2005, 2007) 'minimalism', according to which unarticulated constituents are a 'myth'. So, minimalism has it that *It's raining* always expresses some minimal proposition, which is apparently true just if there is rain anywhere at all, even on Venus, say. To accept the intended import of the intergalactic weatherman scenario, however, is not to endorse minimal propositions. All I intend the scenario to show is that location is not saturational because it is optional. It doesn't follow that every grammatical sentence is apt to express a (minimal) proposition, or any proposition at all. Still, the minimalist and the pragmatist are free to exploit the same scenarios for different ends.

[14] I shall assume that *here* and other so-called 'r-pronouns' (*here*, *there*, *where*) are non-complex arguments that are thematically assigned a locative interpretation (*inter alia*) by the relevant verb. Kayne (2004) has persuasively argued that the items are more determiner-like, selecting a covert nominal (PLACE, THING, REASON). This more complex analysis of r-pronouns introduces irrelevant detail in the present context, so I shall hereafter ignore it. It bears noting, though, that if the r-pronouns are determiner phrases, then it is somewhat peculiar for them to be obligatorily overt, for I can think of no predicates that obligatorily select determiner phrases as arguments.

[15] In such a context, (11d) sounds fine to my ear, but my informal survey of opinion is mixed; still, none of my informants would offer it a '*'.

[16] See chapter vbvn for discussion and references to the cartography project. For discussion of locative and spatial adjunction in particular, see Cinque and Rizzi (2010).

[17] For classic discussion of the relevant phenomena, see Chomsky (1981, 1986, 1995), Huang (1982), Lasnik and Saito (1984, 1992), Rizzi (1990), and Cinque (1990).

[18] In more theoretical terms, this means that adjuncts have to cycle through a series of adjoined positions on maximal projections to reach their target position, whereas arguments can apparently move less cyclically. That means that adjuncts are liable to be blocked in their progress in ways that arguments are not.

[19] See Larson (1988) for seminal discussion and Harley (2011) for an overview.

[20] Recanati takes his lead from Taylor (2001), who also compares *rain* with *dance*. Taylor suggests that the former lexically encodes a locative theme syntactically unexpressed in weather reports (ibid., p. 54). I agree with Recanati in finding this position unsatisfactory. The data do not militate for a lexical specification of a theme argument at the expense of the locative construal being an effect of general conceptual or encyclopaedic knowledge. We should posit as lexical only that information that has a structural effect. See above.

[21] (30a) entails that the truck was loaded with hay; (30b) doesn't support this entailment—it remains true even if Joe put a single load of hay onto the truck, which remained unloaded.

[22] I do not here assume that the complement of *put* is an argument; it might be an obligatory adjunct (Baker, 2003, pp. 319-21). The only important thing for present purposes is that the complement is locatively interpreted.

[23] A similarly oxymoronic position would be to treat *rain* as a themeless unaccusative, with the theme being admitted as a cognate object. It is not clear, however, if unaccusatives generally admit cognate objects (see, e.g., Pesetsky, 1995).

[24] Cappelen and Hawthorne (2007, p. 101) argue that 'there is no deep structural difference between 'rain' and 'dance', at least as far as locations are concerned'. On the basis of the forgoing considerations, I think they are correct in this judgement as regards locations in particular, but a general claim of the absence of a structural difference between *rain* and *dance* (and presumably all other activity verbs) is patently incorrect. Cappelen and Hawthorne's claim turns on the fact that the progressive form of *dance* may take an expletive subject without an object, just like *rain* may:

(i) There will be dancing

(ii) It will be raining

So much is true and does indeed show that a specification of a location is required for both cases if a natural level of 'informativeness' is to be achieved by utterances of the sentences. In no sense whatsoever, though, does this phenomenon suggest that *dance* and *rain* share the same argument structure; the data just tells us about the progressive form, not the structure of the verbs that are the roots of the progressive. This is evident. Firstly, even when in progressive form, the agentive participant of a dancing event may be specified in a way that is impossible for *rain*:

(iii) Bill's dancing horrified the guests

(iv) *Manchester's raining shocked the Londoner

The difference here in fact reinforces Cappelen and Hawthorne's point that the specifications of locations are required for informativeness when the subject of a verb is missing; for (iii) does not demand an understood location in the way (i) does, at least as far as the requirements of 'informativeness' go. Still, the difference between the verbal roots remains. Secondly, when not in the progressive, *dance* and other activity verbs,

unlike *rain*, have a mandatory agentive subject and do not accept an expletive in that position, unlike (i):

(v) *There dances/danced

(vi) *It dances/danced [with *it* as expletive]

(vii) It rains/rained

An unaccusative-like form of *dance* appears to be acceptable in some English dialects, but even here, the agent needs to be present:

(viii) There danced three couples

[25] Recall, the point of the quantificational cases is to show that the relevant verbs select locative arguments in general, which is evidenced by the variable being bindable by a quantificational adjunct. That is, the quantifer does not alter the structure of the phrase it quantifies into.

[26] A further consideration is offered by Cappelen and Hawthorne (2007) and Sennet (2008, p. 150), who correctly points out that Martí's discourse test patterns *dance* and other verbs with *rain*:

(i) A: Everywhere Jane went, she danced.

B: No she didn't, she only danced in a few places.

So, on the assumption that *dance* isn't inherently locative, the binding argument overgenerates.

[27] It is perfectly consistent with such a position that the construals that are available are syntactically constrained, e.g., argument structure may remain invariant. Stanley (2002) and Sennet (2011) are mistaken, therefore, in assuming that if syntax doesn't encode or

determine a construal, then it cannot constrain it (cf., Elbourne, 2008; Pupa and Troesth, 2011)

[28] Also see Neale (2007, pp. 335-44) for bemusement at the notion of deictic covert variables. Unlike Neale's objections, my complaints to follow do not turn on the perspectival nature of indexicality.

[29] Cappelen and Hawthorne (2007) also offer an 'event analysis' of the bound readings under which the relevant pair of verb phrases (e.g., *lights a cigarette* and *rains*) are implicitly domain restricted as events that take place at the same time, which is determined by a higher implicit temporal quantification. As Cappelen and Hawthorne rightly note, though, this kind of construal is available across the board for any pair of events (e.g., *Whenever I am at the disco, Nina is dancing*; *Whenever I throw a party, Jason drinks too much*; etc.) and does not require any dietetic reference. Moreover, there is no syntactic reason to think that the relevant restrictions are syntactically realised, for the bound readings in general are not mandatory; e.g., Nina could be dancing somewhere other than the disco, and Jason could be getting drunk other than at the party.

[30] Katz and Postal (1964) viewed direct object deletion as an optional syntactic rule. Problems with this view were duly noted: principally, the interpretation of the deleted object position is selectionally constrained and scopal differences exist between the transitive and intransitive forms (Bresnan, 1978; Fodor and Fodor, 1980; Dowty, 1982; Mittwoch, 1982; Gillion, 2012). In a sense, Recanati combines the lexical approach of Bresnan and Dowty, where existential generalisation is an aspect of lexical content, with Gazdar's (1982) account of the interpretation of optional elements of phrase structure

rules. Neither, Bresnan nor Dowty nor Gazdar, though, view the existential operation as free in Recanati's sense.

[31] Recanati equates his 'recessive' function with Quine's *derelativization* function, *Der*. From a Quinean perspective, *Der* does not deliver an existential quantification as an output; its very point is to offer something in place of the quantification. What Recanati takes from Quine is the thought that the quantification is wrapped-up, as it were, in the lexical predicate that is the output of *Der*.

[32] There is, to my knowledge, no general explanation of why object deletion is possible in some cases but not others, or why it exhibits the particular features it does, such as differential scope assignment (see below). The literature cited here is more or less dedicated to identifying the phenomena rather than explaining it. Of course, if Recanati is right about variadic functions being a free option, then an explanation is at hand, although one, as we shall see, that smooths over the apparent difference between cases precisely because variadic functions are a free option. Gillion (2012) offers a detailed survey of deletion cases and offers an explanation in terms of different lexical items having different complement lists, which mark whether an item allows deletion. The approach, however, strikes me as more descriptive than explanatory because the differences between items does not submit to a generalisation, but wholly devolves upon what is in an items complement list.

[33] See Næss (2011) for an overview of food and drink verbs.

[34] Randall (2010, pp. 91-2) suggests that such verbs might involve two lexical entries, one for the transitive, another for the intransitive. Such a position faces the problem of explaining the obvious semantic relation between the verbs and the apparent lack of any

ambiguity effect given the one morpheme (cf., Gillion, 2012). Randall appeals to 'lexical rules', which do the trick, but at the cost of stipulation (see note 34). More interesting for our concerns is Randall's claim that the very restrictiveness of the theme interpretation of the intransitives militates for the 'two entry' view, for the transitive is much less restricted. One can, say, eat much about anything that is matter (*Bill literally ate his house; he chopped it all up into bite-sized chunks*), but this cannot be expressed with the intransitive, which is restricted to food. Similarly, intransitive *drink* on one construal is restricted to alcohol, even though the transitive may take any theme argument denoting a fluid (cf., Mittwoch, 1982). Neither of these considerations is entirely persuasive. It seems plain to me that the foodstuff construal of intransitive *eat* is the unmarked case (not lexically determined); context can shift the construal; what is food for one is not food for another. Might one talk of the survivors of a plane crash eating a fellow passenger as having eaten? Does one have to be a cannibal to do so? Or what of eating dogs and monkeys? As for *drink*, it seems equally plain that there are two lexical entries, but *drink* is a unique case in the sense that intransitive *read, cook,* and *eat* do not have construals restricted to a subset of texts and food. It will be noted that neither a single nor dual entry view of the verbs offers succour to the RVF approach. First, the issue Randall raises is restricted to lexicalisation, and suggests nothing about the general, free availability of RVF. Secondly, the problem for RVF is the restrictedness of the implicit theme of the intransitive cases, which is a feature of both views.

[35] The activity/accomplishment distinction is not entirely clear in all cases. One can say *Mary went fishing, but Bill read a book instead*, without suggesting that Bill finished the

book. Familiarly, too, the accomplishment reading depends on the object being count; a mass object renders the transitive case an activity.

[36] Recanati (p.c.) suggests that the verbs select an argument of the relevant kind, such as things that are edible, and so forth. If so, then an RVF account is not inconsistent with the restrictedness of the intransitive construction, for the bound object remains selected, albeit covertly. The problem with this thought is that the transitive forms of the verbs appear to be much less restricted, i.e., not selective of any kind of argument. One could say that any object of *eat*, say, is construed as edible (*mutatis mutandis* for the other cases). The problem now is that selection appears to be entirely empty, as any 'material' object at all will be construed as edible relative to *eat*. For example, in *Bill ate Jupiter*, the planet is construed as edible, which makes a mockery of the notion that selection may target 'food' or the 'edible' as a subclass of the 'material'.

[37] The nuance is such as to undermine the kind of meaning postulate account offered by Fodor and Fodor (1980) and Dowty (1982), where the object deletion case (e.g., *Bill read*) is stipulated to be equivalent to the case of the indefinite object (*Bill read something*). What the stipulation misses is how the deletion case is restricted in a way the indefinite case isn't.

[38] Partee (1984, 1989), after Dowty (1982), appeals to existential generalisation in a way suggestive of the variadic function idea, but she appears to have in mind nothing more than the distinction exhibited, where the narrow scope reading indicates an existential generalisation whereas the wide scope reading indicates a deictic valuation.

[39] For Mary to swim is for her to swim some distance, which is a metaphysical rather than semantic fact. It would be true that Mary swam, if Mary were never to stop swimming.

[40] Plural cases of the relevant kind are *meet*, *kiss*, *embrace*, etc., where, in the unmarked case, the missing object must be a reciprocal.

[41] Thanks...

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