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Particularism and the Spatial Location of Events

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Abstract According to the Particularist Theory of Events, events are real things that have a spatiotemporal location. I argue that some events do not have a spatial location in the sense required by the theory. These events are ordinary, nonmental events like Smith's investigating the murder and Carol's putting her coat on the chair. I discuss the significance of these counterexamples for the theory.

Keywords Particularist theory of events · Spatial location of events · Spatiotemporal location

One of the main theories about the metaphysical status and nature of events is the Particularist Theory of Events. Versions of this theory have been defended by Davidson (1980, pp. 181–187), Brand (1976, 1977, 1981), and Kim (1966, 1969, 1973, 1976). The theory maintains that events are real things. It further maintains that events are particulars. They are, according to the theory, unique, unrepeatable entities that have a spatiotemporal location.

In this paper, I want to focus on the part of the theory that says that events have a spatial location. I take it that this claim means that events themselves have a spatial location. That is, it means that events themselves stand in a spatial relation to one or more places or physical things. Some particularists hold that the spatial location of an event is parasitic on or to be determined by considering the spatial location of one or more physical objects–e.g., the participants in the event. But when they say that events have a spatial location, I assume, they do not mean that events stand in a nonspatial relation, e.g., the relation of being participated in by, to physical objects and that the physical objects are what actually have spatial locations.

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On the most natural interpretation of it, the claim means that all events have a spatial location. Kim (1976, p. 165) expresses uncertainty about whether mental events have a spatial location. To take this into account, we should interpret it as saying that all events have a spatial location with the possible exception of mental events. As I explain at the end, it is a mistake to handle the possibility that mental events do not have a spatial location in this way–by making them possible exceptions to the doctrine. But let us suppose for now that this is acceptable. I want to consider whether there are any counterexamples to the doctrine so modified.

Hacker (1982) contends that Cambridge changes such as Xantippe's becoming a widow do not have a spatial location. Some of these events are not mental. However, Cambridge changes may not count as counterexamples to the doctrine since it is arguable that they are not events.[1]

There is another class of events that falsify the tenet. One of my aims here is to call attention to it. The other is to bring out the significance of it for the theory.

In what follows, I shall be using certain technical terms whose meanings need to be explained. They are 'an event sentence', 'a referential event sentence', 'a nonreferential event sentence', 'a spatial locative event sentence', 'a RS sentence', and 'a NS sentence'.

I use 'an event sentence' as it is used in Davidson's writings. Davidson applies the term to sentences that have the following characteristics: the sentence belongs to a natural language. Traditional grammar would classify the sentence as a simple sentence. The sentence is about an event. It reports the occurrence of an event or ascribes a property to an event. The term applies to such sentences as

(1) Jones buttered the toast

and

(2) The explosion produced a deafening noise.

(2) contains a singular term for an event. If an event sentence has this property, I shall say that it is a referential event sentence. If an event sentence does not contain any singular terms for events, then I shall describe it as 'a nonreferential event sentence'. (1) is an example of a nonreferential event sentence.

A spatial locative event sentence or a spatial locative sentence for short is an event sentence that attributes a spatial location to an event. The sentence contains a spatial locative modifier that attaches to its verb or verb phrase. Some spatial locative sentences, e.g.,

(3) Jones buttered the toast in the bathroom

are nonreferential event sentences. I term these sentences 'NS sentences'. Others such as

(4) The explosion occurred in the basement

are referential event sentences. I shall refer to them as 'RS sentences'.

In describing these kinds of sentences, I used language that may be suggestive of elements of the Particularist Theory. For example, I said that an event sentence reports the occurrence of an event. This statement may suggest that events are

[1] Cleland (1996) says that sounds such as shrieks and bangs are events and that there is a possible world in which they do not have a spatial location. The world is P. F. Strawson's No-Space world (in 1959). I do not know whether to count them as counterexamples in part because it is not clear to me what sounds in Strawson's No-Space world are.

entities that exist. I regard this language as part of ordinary language. It allows for different possible analyses. Not all of them presuppose elements of the Particularist Theory. (More about this below.)

Consider the following events: Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize, Smith's investigating the murder, the bumper's touching the wall, the ball's reaching the bottom of the hill, Carol's putting her coat on the chair.[2] If these events have a spatial location, then it should be possible to express their locations. One does not have to assign an exact or determinate spatial location to the event. But one must at least be able to say that the event is somewhere. To express the location of the event, one would have to use a true spatial locative sentence. As I make clear, there is one kind of spatial locative sentence that could be true and which, in the ordinary language sense, attributes a spatial location to one of these events. But as I explain below, this sense does not involve what particularists mean by 'an event's having a spatial location'. Put in another way, the aforementioned events do not have a spatial location in the sense required by the Particularist Theory. They do not have a spatial location in that sense because there cannot be a true sentence that ascribes a spatial location to them in that sense.

In defending this thesis, I shall give the argument for Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize. What is said about it is intended to hold for the other events unless I indicate otherwise.

If there is a true spatial locative sentence about Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize, it is either a RS sentence or a NS sentence. I shall first argue that there cannot be a true NS sentence about this event. In speaking of a NS sentence (and other nonreferential event sentences) as being about a specific event such as Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize, I use this expression in a stretched sense. I mean that the event is of the sort specified in the sentence and that it therefore *could be* the event that the sentence is about. Since a NS sentence does not contain a singular term for an event, it does not single out a specific event. Rather it is about some event of the sort it specifies. If a specific event is of that sort, it could be the one the sentence is about.

We want to consider NS sentences that are about Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize. One can obtain a NS sentence by adding a spatial locative modifier to a nonreferential event sentence that is not itself a NS sentence. If the latter is about Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize, then the NS sentence formed from it should also be about that event.

(5) Carter won the Nobel Peace Prize

is about Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize. For 'Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize' is a nominalization of (5). And in general, if a singular term for an event is a nominalization of a nonreferential event sentence, that sentence will be about its referent. Suppose we add a spatial locative modifier to (5) – say 'in Georgia'. We get

(6) Carter won the Nobel Peace Prize in Georgia.

If someone used (6) to make an assertion, you would be puzzled by his statement. Taken at face value, it has no clear meaning. You would assume that the speaker was not correctly stating what he, the speaker, had in mind. You might ask him whether

[2]Some, e.g., Zeno Vendler (1967) and Jonathan Bennett (1996) would deny that they are events on the ground that I used imperfect nominals to refer to them. However, there is good reason to think that imperfect nominals can refer to events. See McCann (1979).

he meant that Carter was in Georgia when he got the news of his having been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

The spatial locative modifier in a NS sentence is an adverbial modifier. Philosophers and linguists have for a long time recognized that a verb may resist modification by certain adverbial modifiers. This may be due to an incompatibility between the verbal and adverbial meanings. In such cases, the result of combining the adverbial with the verb is odd (Ryle 1949, p. 151; Dowty 1979, passim; Katz 2003, p. 458; Ernst 1984, pp. 68–69). When confronted with an example of such oddness, a hearer or reader often reacts by reinterpreting the sentence so as to save the utterance. He assigns it a comprehensible meaning. He may be required to do this by a Gricean maxim (Katz 2003, p. 459).

When you ask the person who uttered (6) whether he meant that Carter was in Georgia when he got the news of his having been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, you do not regard

(7) Carter was in Georgia when he got the news of his having been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize

as a possible paraphrase of (6). You offer it as substitute for the original sentence – as a proper statement of what the speaker had in mind when he said (6). (7) is not a paraphrase of (6): (7) makes sense. (6) does not. But it is not necessary to insist on this for the purpose of showing that (6) cannot be a true NS sentence about Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize. Suppose (6) were not odd. Suppose (7) were a paraphrase of (6). (7) does not attribute a spatial location to an event. It attributes it to a person, Carter. If (7) is synonymous with (6), then the same is true of (6).

It does not matter what the spatial locative modifier is that is added to (5). The sentence produced by combining it with the verb phrase in (5) either has no clear meaning, which I think really is the case, or it does not attribute a spatial location to Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize.

There are some sentences about other events, not the counterexample to the particularist thesis, that can be true NS sentences about them. They have a clear meaning and they attribute a spatial location to the event. Some examples are (3) and

(8) John ran in the park.
(9) Mary skied down the hill.
(10) Mary ate in the kitchen.
(11) John kissed Mary under the mistletoe.
(12) I bought an antique at the flea market.[3]

These sentences are the results of adding a spatial locative modifier to (1) and the nonreferential event sentences

(13) John ran.
(14) Mary skied.
(15) Mary ate.
(16) John kissed Mary.
(17) I bought an antique.

[3] An anonymous referee noted that (12) could mean either of the following: I bought an antique that was at the flea market when I bought it. I bought an antique and I was at the flea market when I bought it. I agree. But I think that it can also mean that the action of buying the antique, the transaction, took place at the flea market.

(1) and (13)–(17) are about Jones's buttering the toast, John's running, Mary's skiing, Mary's eating, John's kissing Mary, and my buying an antique. If one compares the meanings of (1) and (13)–(17) with (5), one can see why one can produce possibly true NS sentences about these events by combining a spatial locative modifier with (1) and (13)–(17) whereas one cannot obtain such a sentence about Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize by similarly changing (5).

Certain facts about (1) and (13)–(17) are relevant. I have labeled the statements of them '(I)', '(II)', and '(III)'.

(I) The sentence belongs to category (A) or category (B).

(A) The verb in the sentence is not 'move'. But an object's having moved is reported by the sentence or follows from what is reported by it.

(B) There is an analogy between something that is reported by the sentence or that follows from what is reported by it and an object's having moved.

(1) and (13)–(16) are in category (A). (13) reports that John moved. (14) reports that Mary moved. (1), (15), and (16) do not report that an object moved but that an object moved follows from what is reported by the sentence: that some butter moved is not reported by (1) but it follows from Jones's buttering the toast, which is reported by (1). That something – whatever it is that Mary ate – moved is not reported by (15) but it follows from what is reported by (15) – that Mary ate. (16) does not report that John's lips moved. It reports that John kissed Mary. If John kissed Mary, his lips moved. (A sentence can report more than one thing – e.g., (13) can report that John ran and that John moved.)

(17) is in category (B). It reports a transfer of possession to me. If the possession of an object was transferred to me, then its ownership changed. A change in ownership is analogous to a change in location.

Since the notion of what is reported by a sentence is important in this paper, defining it is desirable. However, a proper discussion of it would be involved and would take us away from the main purposes of this paper. It is an intuitive concept and I leave it to the reader to rely on his understanding of it in evaluating what is said about it.

(II) If a sentence is in category (A), it entails sentences that refer to different objects. A paraphrase of the sentence contains one or more expressions that spatially relate these objects and guarantee that they are in close proximity.

Consider (1), for instance. (1) entails sentences that refer to Jones, some butter, and the surface of the toast.

(18) Jones transferred some butter from a place that is not on the surface of the toast to a place that is on the surface of the toast

is a paraphrase of (1). It contains 'transferred' and 'to a place that is on'. 'To a place that is on' spatially relates some butter to the surface of the toast and guarantees that they are in close proximity. 'Transfer' has a disjunctive definition. It means "to convey or cause to pass from one place, person, or thing to another" (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 3rd ed.). The disjunct 'to convey' spatially relates objects and guarantees that they are in close proximity. Insofar as this is true, 'transferred' does the same. It spatially relates Jones and some butter.

(II) is relevant to an explanation of the fact that (3) and (8)–(11) can be true NS sentences about the events reported by (1) and (13)–(16). They are the results of adding a spatial locative modifier to (1) and (13)–(16). Though the spatial locative modifier attaches to just the verb or verb phrase in the latter, semantically the scope of

the modifier is the entire sentence: the modifier assigns a spatial location – the same one – to all the objects referred to in the sentences (1) and (13)–(16) entail. The spatial locative modifiers in (3) and (8)–(11) assign locations that are relatively small regions of space. In order for all the objects to have the spatial location, they must be in close proximity.

(III) If a sentence is in category (A), it entails one or more sentences that say that an object moved. If the object moved, then it moved from one place to another. When one adds a spatial locative modifier to the sentence, one attributes a spatial relation to these places and, indirectly, attributes it to the object that occupies them.

Suppose, for example, that the sentence is (14). (14) entails that Mary moved and that her skis moved. If one adds 'down the hill' to (14), one obtains (9). (9) attributes *being on the hill* to the places that Mary and her skis moved from and to. This is evidenced by the fact that (9) entails 'Mary moved from one place on the hill to another' and 'Mary's skis moved from one place on the hill to another'. In attributing this spatial relation to the places, (9) also attributes it to Mary and her skis because they are at the places in question.

A sentence in category (A) may entail one or more sentences that refer to an object none of which say that the object moved. If one combines a spatial locative modifier with the sentence, the modified sentence attributes a spatial relation to it. It is the same spatial relation that is referred to in (III).

Take (14) again. (14) does not entail that a surface moved, but it does entail sentences that refer to a surface, namely, 'The surface Mary moved on exists' and 'Mary moved on a surface'. (9) also attributes *being on the hill* to the surface Mary moved on. This can be seen from the fact that (9) implies 'The surface Mary moved on is on the hill'. That the spatial relation is also ascribed to these other objects is a consequence of the conjunction of (II) and (III).

Intuitively, (3) and (8)–(11) do not attribute a spatial relation to just the participants in an event. They attribute a spatial relation to the activity the sentence is about. This may appear to be inconsistent with (III). But it is not. (III) does not say or imply that these sentences do not attribute a spatial location to an activity. In fact, the opposite is true. According to (III), they attribute spatial relations to certain places. These places are the ones that are implicitly referred to in *motion* sentences that are entailed by the sentences from which (3) and (8)–(11) are obtained by spatial modification. This accounts for the intuition that they attribute a spatial location to an activity. To account for this intuition, one need not suppose that these sentences ascribe a spatial location to an event-entity.

(12) can be a true NS sentence about my buying an antique because of its analogy with category (A) sentences.

One can use (I)–(III) to explain why one cannot obtain a true NS sentence about Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize by adding a spatial locative modifier to (5). (5) does not belong to category (B). I do not think that it fits the description of a category (A) sentence either. However, it will perhaps be said that it belongs to category (A) because it entails that certain actions were performed and one cannot perform an action without moving something. The actions in question are whatever it is that Carter did that was the basis for giving him the Prize and actions on the part of those who were authorized to award it. I do not think that these actions require moving something. But it is not necessary to press this point. Suppose we grant that

(5) is in category (A). A paraphrase of (5) does not contain expressions that spatially relate Carter and those who were authorized to award the Prize. If one adds a spatial locative modifier to (5), the modifier should assign a spatial location – the same one – to these objects. But there is nothing in the meaning of (5) that insures that the objects can have the same spatial location.

At this point, a distinction must be made between Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize and some of the other counterexamples to the particularist thesis about spatial location. Consider the bumper's touching the wall. 'The bumper's touching the wall' is a nominalization of

(19) The bumper touched the wall.

This sentence is not in category (B). Nor is it in category (A). It entails sentences that say that an object – the bumper – moved. But the contents of these sentences are not reported by (19). They also do not follow from what is reported by (19). (19) reports the occurrence of an event that is describable as 'the touching of the wall by the bumper'. That event is the bumper's coming to be in contact with the wall. We would not describe it as 'the bumper's touching the wall' unless the bumper's being in contact with the wall was due in a noncausal sense to the bumper's moving. But the event itself does not include the motion of the bumper. The motion of the bumper is a prelude to or background for the event. If what is reported is just the occurrence of the event and the event does not include the motion of the bumper, then not only is the motion of the bumper not reported by (19), it also does not follow from what (19) reports.

Why does this matter for the possibility of obtaining a true NS sentence about the bumper's touching the wall by adding a spatial locative modifier to (19)? Generalizing (III), the addition of a spatial locative modifier to a nonreferential event sentence assigns a spatial relation to the places implicitly referred to in entailed motion sentences. This can give us the sense that the spatial relation is attributed to the event that the nonreferential sentence is about only if the motion is part of the event, which is not the case for (19).

As far as the relevant explanations are concerned, Smith's investigating the murder may be assimilated to Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize. The explanations for the ball's reaching the bottom of the hill and Carol's putting her coat on the chair are like the one just given for the bumper's touching the wall.

The following objection may be made: 'Carter won the Olympic Gold Medal in Barcelona' is not odd. If it is not odd, then the oddness of (6) cannot be due to an incompatibility between the verbal and adverbial meanings. (6) may sound odd because 'win' does not have "its straight meaning" in this sentence. One cannot, literally, win the Nobel Peace Prize because there is no real competition. So, one has to understand the sentence as saying that Carter was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in Georgia. 'Carter was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in Georgia' is not odd, though it is false.[4]

(20) Carter won the Olympic Gold Medal in Barcelona

is odd if it attributes being in Barcelona to Carter's winning the Olympic Gold Medal. It does not appear to be odd because one can interpret it as attributing the

[4] An anonymous referee called my attention to this objection.

spatial location to another action. That action is not a winning of anything. A sentence that ascribes being in Barcelona to this other action is not odd. But it does not contain 'win'. Consequently, the fact that it is not odd does not entail anything about whether the meanings of 'win' and 'in Barcelona' are compatible.

The most common meaning of the transitive verb 'win' is "to achieve victory or finish first in" (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 3d ed.). This is its intended meaning in (6). The statement of this meaning does not specify what must be done to finish first. This is made known by the rules of the relevant competition. That competition is specified by the direct object of 'win'. If the direct object is 'the Olympic Gold Medal', the rules for the competition are those for a particular Olympic event. Those rules require that a competitor perform an action or actions that have a spatial location. For example, the rules for the one hundred meter dash require that a competitor run. A sentence that attributes being in Barcelona to one of those actions may not be odd. For example, 'Carter ran in Barcelona' is not odd. In using (20), one may be attributing the spatial location to one or more of these actions. Thus, for example, if one says (20) and the Gold Medal that one is referring to is the one for the one hundred meter footrace, then one may be saying that the running that was required for Carter to win the race occurred in Barcelona. If this is what (20) means, (20) is not odd. But the fact that it is not is not relevant.

One could also question the objection's explanation of (6)'s being odd. 'Win' in (6) can have its most common meaning – to achieve victory or finish first in. Contrary to the objection, there is a real competition for the Nobel Peace Prize. In a given year, there is a plurality of candidates for the Nobel Peace Prize. It is claimed that each candidate did something that made a significant contribution to world peace. The Nobel Peace Prize is given not to some candidate who made such a contribution. It is given to the person who made the *most* significant contribution to world peace. The competition is between candidates. (Compare with winning an Academy Award for best actor.)

Why not treat (12) the way I treated (20)? Why not say that (12) is not odd because we read it as attributing being at the flea market, not to my buying an antique, but to another action or actions that met requirements for buying the antique – for instance, my handing a fifty dollar bill to the owner of the antique?

The spatial location we assign buying the antique is the location of one or more of these other actions. But when a person says (12), he does not mean that what has the spatial location is just one or more of these other actions. I have two reasons for thinking that this is so. One is the intuition that one is not speaking loosely when he says (12). By contrast, if a person says (20), my intuition is that he is speaking loosely. The second and more important reason concerns the complexity of 'buy'. Buying involves movements at two levels. There are the movements that are involved in (some of) the actions that meet conditions for buying. But there is also the metaphoric movement that consists of the change of ownership. It is this that makes it appropriate to qualify spatially the buying itself. This second level of movement is absent in the case of winning (in the competition sense) the Olympic Gold Medal.

We need to consider other possibilities for a true NS sentence about Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize. We need to identify a nonreferential event sentence

other than (5) to add a spatial locative modifier to. The nonreferential event sentence will be a sentence in which a definite or indefinite referring expression '*a*' is combined with a verb or verb phrase '*V*'. If it is to report the occurrence of an event that could be Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize, Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize must be a *V*ing by *a*. How is this to be ascertained?

Particularists hold that events are entities. If Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize is an entity and if it is a *V*ing by *a*, then there should be a *V*ing by *a* that it is identical with. If Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize is an entity, it will have a criterion of identity. One should be able to use it to determine whether the Carter event is identical with a certain *V*ing by *a* and hence whether it is a *V*ing by *a*. We consider only criteria of identity that are consistent with the Particularist Theory. So as to avoid begging the question, we must set aside criteria of identity that entail that events have a spatial location. Two candidates for identity conditions meet both of these requirements. One is Davidson's causal criterion and the other is Kim's identity condition. I leave the causal criterion out of consideration because there seems to be a consensus that it is unacceptable. This leaves Kim's.

Kim's criterion requires that '*V*' and 'won the Nobel Peace Prize' "express" or "pick out" the same property (1969, pp. 205–206; 1976, p. 168). Kim does not state a criterion of property identity. But he does remark "it is not necessary for two predicate terms to be synonymous or logically equivalent for them to refer to, or express, the same property; for example, 'is blue' and 'has the color of the sky' clearly show this" (Kim 1969, p. 206). If properties are identical, then they are entities. Entities are referred to or named by singular terms. Since a predicate is not a singular term, to say that a predicate expresses or picks out a property cannot be to say that it refers to or names the property. To say that a predicate expresses or picks out a property is to say that it can be used to ascribe the property to something or that it means having the property. This creates a problem for using Kim's criterion of event identity. Having a property is a state. If '*V*' expresses a property in the sense just explained, then '*a V*' reports the existence of a state. If it reports that, then it cannot report the occurrence of an event that could be Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize since that is not a state.

One might also question Kim's assumption that nonsynonymous predicates can express the same properties. As Jackson (1982) has shown, the mere fact that there are true contingent statements of property identity does not justify Kim's belief. If '*V*' and 'won the Nobel Peace Prize' must be synonymous to express the same property, then a sentence produced by adding a spatial locative modifier to '*a V*' will either have no clear meaning or will not ascribe a spatial location to Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize.

We have exhausted the possibilities for obtaining a true NS sentence about Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize. Let us turn now to referential event sentences that contain spatial locative modifiers. Consider, for example,

(21) Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize occurred in Georgia.

I would say the same kind of thing about it that I said about (6): it cannot be a true spatial locative sentence about Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize because it either has no clear meaning or it does not attribute a spatial location to an event.

There is a further reason to deny that it can be a true spatial locative sentence about Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize – the relation between (21) and (6).

(22) John's running occurred in the park

entails (8). (22) and (8) appear to be related as (21) and (6) are. (22) entails (8). Given that this is so, one expects (21) to entail (6). As I said before, I do not think that (6) has a clear meaning. If it does not, it cannot be true. But then any sentence that entails it cannot be true. So either (21) does not entail (6) or (21) cannot be true. One might hold that (21) does not entail (6). But one would have to explain why their relation is different from the relation between (22) and (8).

It will perhaps be said that (6) has a clear meaning. Let us suppose that it does. Then (21) can be true and entail (6). If this is so, then the relation between (21) and (6) would not be a reason to deny that (21) can be true. But it would be a reason to deny that (21) attributes a spatial location to Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize. For if (6) has a clear meaning, then (6) does not do that. If (21) entails (6), then the same should be true of (21).

It is, of course, possible to refer to Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize with a singular term other than 'Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize'. Suppose Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize is the only event that made him happy. Then one could refer to the event as 'the event that made Carter happy'. One could use this expression in a RS sentence about Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize. For example, one could say

(23) The event that made Carter happy occurred in Georgia.

I shall not try to argue that such sentences cannot be true RS sentences about the event in question. What I shall argue is that if they are, they do not attribute a spatial location to Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize in the sense required by the Particularist Theory: they do not express that an event-entity stands in a spatial relation to one or more places or physical things. Such a sentence expresses this only if the singular term in it refers to an event-entity and the verb plus the spatial locative modifier in it attributes a spatial relation to that event-entity. On this construal, the event singular term has purely referential occurrence in the sentence. Consequently, replacing the singular term in the sentence with another coreferential singular term should preserve the truth value of the former. The result of replacing 'the event that made Carter happy' in (23) with 'Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize' is (21). (21) should be true if (23) is, and (21) should attribute a spatial location to Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize if (23) does. But as was just explained, (21) can be true only if it does not attribute a spatial location to Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize.

Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize and the other events I grouped with it are not mental events. Since they do not have a spatial location, they are counter-examples to the particularist thesis about the spatial location of events. The Particularist Theory is supposed to be about events in the ordinary language sense. It is supposed to tell us what events in the ordinary language sense are. My counterexamples are events in the ordinary language sense: they are changes; they occur or happen. Some of them are actions, which are events. Consequently, they cannot be treated as exceptions to the particularist thesis about spatial location. One might note that for the same reason it is also wrong to treat mental events as exceptions. Mental events have special properties that explain why they might not have a spatial location. But these properties do not explain why mental events should be exceptions to the particularist doctrine since mental events also count as events in the ordinary language sense.

The Particularist Theory is inferred from an analysis of the ordinary language concept of an event. If there are counterexamples to the theory, then a mistake was made somewhere and one place that it could have been made is in the analysis of the concept it is based on. I think that this is the case as far as my counterexamples are concerned.

The ordinary language concept of an event is used when speakers of ordinary language call the seeming referents of certain singular terms 'events'. They also use this concept when they characterize certain sentences as reporting the occurrence of an event and certain sentences as attributing a property to an event. To analyze the concept is to say what speakers of ordinary language mean when they use this language. In analyzing the ordinary language concept of an event, the central task is analyzing event sentences. For our understanding of singular terms for events depends on their use in referential event sentences. Moreover, most singular terms for events are either nominalizations of nonreferential event sentences or depend for their references on singular terms that are.

In order to infer the particularist thesis that events have a spatial location from an analysis of an event sentence, one must construe the sentence as assigning an event-entity a spatial relation to one or more places or physical things. The sentence in question would have to be a NS sentence or a RS sentence. One mistake that some particularists may have made is assuming that NS and/or RS sentences have this construal. If one gives it to, for example, (3), one cannot explain why (3) can be a true NS sentence about Jones's buttering the toast, whereas (6) cannot be a true NS sentence about Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize, not in a satisfying way. All that one can say is that the property of buttering the toast (or being a buttering of the toast) is compatible with the property of being in the bathroom whereas the property of winning the Nobel Peace Prize (or being a winning of the Nobel Peace Prize) is not compatible with standing in spatial relations. Similarly, if one gives (22) the particularist interpretation, then one cannot explain why it can be a true RS sentence about John's running whereas (21) cannot be a true RS sentence about Carter's winning the Nobel Peace Prize.

Davidson (1980, pp. 181–182) and Brand (1976, p. 135) cite Davidson's analysis of nonreferential event sentences as support for the Particularist Theory. Davidson's analysis gives NS sentences what I have been calling 'a particularist construal'. The problem with it is not just that it interprets the spatial modifier as assigning a spatial relation to an event-entity. It fails to distinguish between an entailment whose content is reported by the sentence, an entailment whose content is not reported by the sentence but which follows from what is reported by it, and an entailment that does not have either of those properties. An analysis of NS sentences must recognize these distinctions. Otherwise one cannot use the analysis to explain why, e.g., (3) can be a true NS sentence about Jones's buttering the toast whereas 'The bumper touched the wall in the parking lot' cannot be a true NS sentence about the bumper's touching the wall. Davidson's analysis consists of representing the sentence as a sentence of an interpreted formal language. The same objection can be made to any analysis of a NS sentence that consists of a formal representation. The distinction between reported and nonreported content, by the way, does not correspond to the distinction between form and meaning: the content of 'John moved' is reported by (13) but is not a syntactic consequence of (13).

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