

Mini-course *Transitive Intensional Verbs*

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## Handout 1

### **Kinds of Intensional verbs, Criteria for Intensional Verbs and the Objects of Verbs of Absence**

#### **1. Some examples**

- (1) a. John is looking for a horse.  
       b. John seeks mere relief from horselessness. (Quine)
- (2) John bought a bottle of wine (on the internet).
- (3) John worships the devil.

#### **2. Criteria for intensionality**

##### Possible tests for transitive intensional verbs

- Failure of substitution of co-referential terms, of co-extensional predicates

- (4) a. John needs an eye doctor.

      John needs an ophtamologist.

- b. John wants an eye doctor.

      John wants an ophthalmologist.

- Possible nonexistence

The complement may stand for a nonexistent object

- Failure of *existential quantification*

- (5) NP V Q N  $\rightarrow$  For Q(x): N(x), NP V(x)

- (6) John needs a horse

      There is some horse x John needs x

##### The test of nonspecificity

- (7) a. John needs a coat, any will do.  
       b. John owes Mary a dime, any will do.

##### The use of special quantifiers

##### Lack of Anaphora Support

- (7) a. # John is looking for a horse. Mary is looking for it too.  
 b. John saw a horse. Mary saw it too.  
 c. John is looking for a horse. It must be white and have a golden mane.

#### Use of impersonal proforms

- (8) a. John is looking for something, namely a secretary.  
 b. #John is looking for someone, namely a secretary.  
 c. # John met something, namely a secretary.  
 d. John met someone, namely a secretary.
- (9) a. What is John looking for? – A secretary.  
 b. # Whom is John looking for? – A secretary.  
 c. # What did John meet? – A secretary.  
 d. Whom did John meet? – A secretary.
- (10) a. John is looking for two things, a secretary and an assistant.  
 b. ?? John is looking for two people, a secretary and an assistant.  
 c. # John met two things, a secretary and an assistant.  
 d. John met two people, a secretary and an assistant

#### Identity conditions

- (11) a. John is looking for the same thing as Mary, namely a new assistant.  
 b. # John is looking for the same person as Mary, namely a new assistant.  
 c. # John met the same thing as Mary, namely a new assistant.  
 d. # John met the same person as Mary, namely a new assistant.
- (12) a. John is looking for what Mary is looking for, namely a new assistant.  
 b. # John is looking for whomever Mary is looking for, namely a new assistant.  
 c. # John met what Mary met, namely a new assistant.  
 d. John met whomever Mary met, namely a new assistant.

### **3. The clausal analysis**

- (13) a. John needs a car tomorrow.  
 b. John needs to have a car tomorrow.

Some arguments against a clausal analysis:

- Overt clauses impossible

(14) John is looking for a horse.

- No propositional content involved:

(15) a. John painted a house.

b. John saw a ghost.

- Difference in the interpretation of quantifiers

(16) a. John needs at most one assistant.

b. John needs to have at most one assistant.

(17) a. John promised exactly two papers.

b. John promised to write exactly two papers.

Two kinds of non-clausal analyses:

- Intensional quantifiers as arguments (Montague, Moltmann)

- Properties as arguments (Zimmermann)

#### **4. Kinds of intensionality phenomena**

'True' transitive intensional verbs:

*need, look for, buy, sell, owe, ..*

Intentional verbs:

*worship, fear, admire, like, think about, describe, mention*

Failure of reference and failure of substitutivity

No non-specificity

(18) ??? John fears a disaster, any will do.

Intensionality phenomena with extensional transitive verbs

Predicates of evaluation:

(19) a. This object is interesting

b. This book is interesting.

c. This nineteenth century novel is interesting.

Predicates of description:

(20) a. John described the object.

b. John described the book.

c. John described the novel.

(21) a. John described the building.

b. John described the house.

c. John described the townhouse.

Contrast: predicates of emotional attitude:

(22) a. John likes his teacher.

b. John likes his neighbor.

(23) a. John likes his teacher Joe.

b. John likes his neighbor Joe.

## 5. Kinds of transitive intensional verbs

### 5.1. Verbs of absence

#### 5.1.1. Modal verbs of absence: *need*

Lack of definite anaphora support:

(24) John needs a pen. Mary needs # it / one too.

(25) a. John needs something / ? someone, a housekeeper.

b. What / # Whom does John need? – A housekeeper.

(26) a. John needs the same thing as Sue, namely a housekeeper.

b. John needs what Mary needs, a housekeeper.

#### 5.1.2. Psychological verbs of absence: *look for, want, long for*

#### 5.1.3. Completion-related verbs of absence: *lack, is missing*

(27) a. A screw is missing.

b. John lacks a good education.

### 5.2. Verbs of transaction and possession: *owe, buy, sell, own*

(28) John owns half of the estate.

There is a half x of the estate. John owns x.

? *have, ?give*

### 5.3. Verbs of creation: *paint, draw, hire, find*

(29) a. John hired an assistant.

There is an assistant x, John hired x.

b. John found a wife.

There is a wife  $x$ , John found  $x$ .

5.4. Epistemic verbs: *find, recognize, see*

(30) a. John recognized a great talent

Invalid:

b. John found a person able to solve the problem.

There is a person  $x$  able to solve the problem, John found  $x$ .

Psychological verb of absence + epistemic verb / verb of creation

(31) a. John was looking for a blue pen.

b. John was looking for a new assistant.

(32) a. John tried to find (i.e. come across) an  $x$  while recognizing that  $x$  is a pen.

b. John tried to find (i.e. come across) an  $x$  to make  $x$  his new assistant.

5.5. Verbs of comparison

(33) a. John resembles a ghost.

b. John compared Bill to a unicorn.

c. Bill is bigger / has a different color than a unicorn.

d. Charlie differs from a unicorn in that he has two tails.

e. John acts like a ghost.

Tests:

Lack of definite anaphora support:

(34) a.# Bill resembles a unicorn, and Max resembles it too.

b. Bill resembles a unicorn, and Max resembles one too.

Restriction to impersonal proforms:

(35) a. What does John act like? – John acts like a king.

b.#Who does John act like? – John acts like a king.

Identity conditions:

(36) Charlie resembles the same thing as Max, namely a Greek god.

But no quantificational complements

## 6. The object of transitive intensional verbs

What do special NPs with intensional verbs stand for?

Focus on verbs of absence and transaction

(37) a. John needs the same thing Mary needs, namely a house.

b. John would like what Mary wants too, namely an apple.

(38) a. John buys whatever (the thing / those things) he needs.

John needs car.

John buys a car.

b. John needed car.

John bought a car.

John bought what he needed.

(39) a. John promised Mary only what she really needed, namely a car.

b. Mary needs what she lacks.

(40) a. John promised Mary what Sue really needs, namely a car.

b. John himself lacks what Mary needs.

Special quantifiers do not range over quantifiers:

Difficulties with Montague's approach

Invalid:

(41) Mary needs a book

John read a book.

John read what Mary needs.

Except on a reading involving coercion:

(42) Mary needs books.

John reads books.

John reads what Mary needs

(43) a. ? John drank what Mary needs.

b. ? John destroyed what Mary built.

No coercion possible

(44) a. There were nine students in the class, but John counted ten students.

b. ??? John counted what Mary met.

No special quantifiers with extensional verbs

(45) a. \* John met what Bill is looking for, namely a rich heiress.

b. \* John talked to what Bill needs, namely an assistant.

(46) a. \* John met what Bill met, local politicians.

- b. \* John met something, namely local politicians.
- (47) a. ?? John read the same thing that Bill read, namely a book.  
 b. ?? John bought what Bill destroyed, namely a car.
- (48) a. John bought what he needed. – actual situation is satisfaction situation  
 b. John bought what Mary really needs. (but John did not buy it for her)  
 – type of situation is satisfaction situation  
 c. John got what his grandfather always dreamt of, namely a Ferrari.  
 – type of situation is satisfaction situation
- (49) a. John has what Mary needs. (thus Mary should ask John for it).  
 – actual situation is possible satisfaction situation  
 b. John has what Mary once needed. – type of situation is satisfaction situation
- (50) a. John gave Mary what she wanted. – actual situation is satisfaction situation  
 b. John gave Mary what Sue wanted (John gave Mary a horse, Sue wanted a horse).  
 – type of situation is satisfaction situation
- (51) a. John promised Mary only what she really needed, namely a car.  
 b. Mary needs what she lacks.
- (52) a. John promised Mary what Sue really needs, namely a car.  
 b. John himself lacks what Mary needs.
- (53) a. I found what I needed.  
 b. John offered Mary what she wanted (namely a glass of wine – he actually did not get to pour her one).  
 c. I now own what I needed (namely half the estate).  
 d. He accepted what I offered him (namely a glass of wine, but before I could pour him one, a fire broke out).
- (54) a. ?? John owns what Mary found, namely a white horse.  
 b. ?? This resembles what I need. (This resembles a horse, and I need a horse).  
 c. ?? John is building what Mary gave Sue, namely a box.

What is shared are satisfaction situations or types of satisfaction situations.

More precisely: functions from satisfaction situations to individuals

Or functions from types of satisfaction situations to individuals

## 7. A further, related construction

Definite NPs with intensional relative clauses

(55) a. The book John needs to write must be short.

b. \* The book John needs to write is short.

(56) a. The castle John is looking for must be huge.

b. \*? The castle John is looking for is huge.

(57) a. The secretary John is looking for may be Hispanic.

b. \*? The secretary John is looking for is Hispanic.

Modal compatibility requirement

'The book John needs to write' as an individual concept:

Function from worlds to individuals

But: in a given world  $I$  which John's needs are satisfied, John may have written several books meeting his needs.

Solution:

choose parts of such a world that exactly match John's needs.

The function mapping any situation  $s$  exactly satisfying John's need to a book in  $s$  that John writes in  $s$ .

## 8. Monotonicity behaviour (Zimmermann)

(58) John is looking for a green sweater.

John is looking for a sweater.

with special quantifiers upward monotonicity is no longer valid:

(59) John is looking for a sweater.

Mary is looking for a book.

There is something John and Mary are looking for.

*Something* is possible in this context only if the full intentional objects are the same:

(57) John is looking for a sweater

Mary is looking for a sweater.

There is something John and Mary are looking for.



