

APPENDIX B

Can *logos* Be Used Equivocally?

One of the difficulties one might have with the interpretation I proposed for John 1:1 in Paper #5 is the equivocal use of *logos*. In Paper #5 I argued that the structure of the argument makes it highly likely that John is using *logos* equivocally. Nevertheless, some may object that it just is not linguistically possible to have exactly the same word being used in back-to-back assertions with significantly different meanings. In order to demonstrate that such a phenomenon is in fact possible, I list here several hypothetical statements in English where the very same word is used with different, but related meanings—just as I am proposing is the case in John 1:1.

In all of the following examples, within a sentence or two, the same word is used to mean something different, but related:

- I didn't get a single **sale** today; even though I advertised a huge **sale**.

sale (1st occurrence) = *a transaction exchanging goods for money*

sale (2nd occurrence) = *a marketing tool used to increase the number of transactions exchanging goods for money*

- It was time for the third **watch**. Everyone was asleep, except John. John was **watch** that night.

watch (1st occurrence) = *designation of a period of time where a certain activity is to take place*

watch (2nd occurrence) = *designation of the person who is to engage in the above activity*

- The **defense** was splendid in last night's game. John is part of the **defense**; but he didn't get to play last night.

defense (1st occurrence) = *a team's execution of a particular phase of their game*

defense (2nd occurrence) = *the set of players on a team whose role it is to execute a particular phase of that team's play*

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Note that in all the remaining examples, one occurrence describes the source of cause of what is denoted by the other occurrence. This corresponds to how we are taking John 1:1. We take the second occurrence of *logos* (author of the script) to be the source of what is designated by the other occurrences of *logos* (the script).

- The only reason we have **light** to see by is because John brought a **light**.

light (1st occurrence) = *the energy necessary for one's ability to see*

light (2nd occurrence) = *a source of that energy necessary for one's ability to see*

Note that in all the remaining examples, one use of the word is the product of some activity and the other use of the word is the activity itself, the capability to perform that activity, or the person who performs that activity. This corresponds to how we are taking John 1:1. We take the first occurrence of *logos* to be the product of the activity of a mind (script). The second occurrence of *logos* we take to be the person that produced that product by performing the requisite activity (author of the script).

- John is the **tackle** who made the **tackle**.

tackle (1st occurrence) = *the person who performs the action described below*

tackle (2nd occurrence) = *an action that occurs during a football game*

- I babysat last night. It was **trouble** right from the beginning. I have never had it so bad. Tommy is **trouble**. He started up the minute I arrived.

trouble (1st occurrence) = *a particular state; a state of some kind of hardship*

trouble (2nd occurrence) = *the person who is the cause of that above state of hardship*

- In our band, **rhythm** was the key to our success. Without **rhythm** our music would not have been what it was. John was **rhythm**. I was melody.

rhythm (1st occurrence) = *an element in the making of music*

rhythm (2nd occurrence) = *an element in the making of music*

rhythm (3rd occurrence) = *a person who creates the above element in the making of music*

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Note that in all the examples that follow, the assertions go from using the word in one way, switch to using the word in a different, but related meaning, and then return to using the word as it was used originally. This is what I have proposed is the structure we find in John 1.

Notice further that in all the examples below, any ambiguity that might result from using the same word in a different sense is eliminated by a final assertion that repeats and reaffirms the initial assertion or two. This is what I have proposed is the way John eliminates ambiguity in John 1.

- In the first place, the chimney desperately needed a **sweep**. So, finding a **sweep** was the first thing we needed to do. Fortunately, John was a **sweep**. But, the **sweep** was definitely the place we had to start.

sweep (1st occurrence) = *an action to be performed*

sweep (2nd occurrence) = *a person who performs the action in occurrence 1*

sweep (3rd occurrence) = *a person who performs the action in occurrence 1*

sweep (4th occurrence) = *an action to be performed*

- In the beginning was a **thought**. It was a good **thought**. It was a **thought** from the depths of **thought** itself. Now the **thought** itself was God. God had the very first **thought**.

thought (1st occurrence) = *a particular product of intellectual activity*

thought (2nd occurrence) = *a particular product of intellectual activity*

thought (3rd occurrence) = *a particular product of intellectual activity*

thought (4th occurrence) = *the capability of producing the products of intellectual activity*

thought (5th occurrence) = *the capability of producing the products of intellectual activity*

thought (6th occurrence) = *a particular product of intellectual activity*

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- In the beginning was the **intention**. The **intention** was co-existent with God himself. Indeed, God was **intention**. Now the **intention** was with God himself from the beginning.

intention (1st occurrence) = *a particular purpose that is formed out of the mind and volition of a person*

intention (2nd occurrence) = *a particular purpose that is formed out of the mind and volition of a person*

intention (3rd occurrence) = *the capability of forming a particular purpose out of one's mind and volition*

intention (4th occurrence) = *a particular purpose that is formed out of the mind and volition of a person*

- In the foremost was **rhythm**. **Rhythm** was the key to it all. John was the **rhythm**. **Rhythm** is more important than anything.

rhythm (1st occurrence) = *an element in the making of music*

rhythm (2nd occurrence) = *an element in the making of music*

rhythm (3rd occurrence) = *a person who creates the above element in the making of music*

rhythm (4th occurrence) = *an element in the making of music*