

When are two tokens of a name tokens of the same name? According to this paper, the answer is a matter of the historical connections between the tokens. For each name, there is a unique originating event, and subsequent tokens are tokens of that name only if they derive in an appropriate way from that originating event. The conditions for a token being a token of a given name are distinct from the conditions for preservation of the reference of a name. Hence a name may change its reference. Defending the theory requires considerations about the identity of acts, and about empty names and disagreement. The upshot is a causal theory of the identity of names, but not what would normally be counted as a causal theory of the reference of names. Although reference is often transmitted causally, what determines semantic reference is conventionalized speaker-reference.