



EGG 2018: Perspective sensitivity (week 1)

Session 4: Faultless disagreement and the account in Lasersohn 2017

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Yesterday's class

- ▶ **Modification of the formal system:**
 - ▶ addition of a parameter that encodes the perspectival centre
 - ▶ the value of that parameter is contextually provided
 - ▶ ensure that the parameter cannot be manipulated by the same operators as other parameters
- ▶ Modification captures the difference in behavior between pronouns and perspective-sensitive items identified in Bylinina et al. 2015.
- ▶ **More data:** data about dissent seems to distinguish two subclasses of perspective-sensitive items – locatives vs. aesthetic / personal taste predicates

Today: further explore the dissent data and see how Lasersohn (2017) accounts for it



Roadmap

Intro

Faultless disagreement

Lasersohn's (2017) account of judge dependence

Summary



“Faultless disagreement”

For **predicates of personal taste**, disagreements as in (1) are characterized as examples of “**faultless disagreement**”.

(1) [Context: A and B just downed a shot of rakija.]

A: This rakija is tasty.

B: ?No, that's not true / it isn't. (*better*: I don't think so.)

- ▶ A and B disagree on the tastiness of the rakija.
- ▶ A and B both state something true.

(see Lasersohn 2017)



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▶ A and B both state something true. (see Lasersohn 2017)

Similar “faultless disagreement” with **aesthetic predicates**:

(2) [Context: A and B discuss which box to use for C's present.]

A: The blue box is pretty.

B: ?No, that's not true / it isn't. (*better*: I don't think so.)



Can Bylinina et al.'s semantics capture intuitions of “faultless disagreement”?

(3) [Context: A and B just downed a shot of rakija.]

A: This rakija is tasty.

B: No, that's not true / it isn't.

(4) $[[\text{tasty}]]^c = \lambda x_e. x \text{ is tasty for } P_c$

Assumption: P_c is automatically contextually set to A (like for locatives).

(5) $[[\text{(3)}]]^{(A, s_c)} = 1$ iff r is tasty for A

⇒ B's dissent is predicted to be about A's claim that r is tasty for A.

⇒ **Intuitively:** B disagrees by saying that r is not tasty for B.



Further difference

Remember:

[Context: A asks D to help him choose a box.]

- (6) A: What about the left box?
D: Your left or my left?
- (7) A: What about the pretty box?
D: ?Your pretty or my pretty?



Further difference

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D: Your left or my left?
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D: ?Your pretty or my pretty?

Do we have distinct types of perspective sensitivity?



Interim summary

Locatives:

- ▶ The value of P_c is apparently kept fixed if there is dissent.
- ▶ **Good:** a theory that fixes P_c and the value of P_c becomes part of the content

Aesthetic / personal taste predicates:

- ▶ The value of P_c is apparently not kept fixed if there is dissent.
- ▶ **Problematic:** a theory that fixes P_c and the value of P_c becomes part of the content

How can the dissent data be captured for aesthetic / personal taste predicates? What would predict that the two interlocutors can disagree on the basis of their own aesthetic / taste standards?



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- ▶ **Two-step system:** distinction between *character* and *content*
(Kaplan 1989; also Stalnaker 1970 and later work)
 - ⇒ context enters into the interpretational process in two distinct roles
 - ⇒ **determination of content** vs. **determination of truth**



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 - ⇒ **determination of content** vs. **determination of truth**
- ▶ **Determine for context-dependent expressions:** which role does context play wrt. this expression?
 - ⇒ determines the step at which a parameter enters the computation
 - ▶ (Kaplanian) context parameter c ⇒ step 1
 - ▶ variable assignment g ⇒ step 1
 - ▶ world/time of evaluation w, t ⇒ step 2



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Note: I am omitting details about the syntactic system and syntax-semantic-interface proposed in Lasersohn 2017. Chapter numbers refer to the published book.



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- ▶ **Context of use**: provides the Kaplanian context and the values of the variable assignment
⇒ modelled via the world of use u
- ▶ **Context of assessment**: provides a perspective p

$$(8) \quad p = \langle x, t, a \rangle$$

x ... individual/assessor/judge
 t ... the time of assessment
 a ... the world of assessment



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- ▶ **Full assortment of parameters**: $\llbracket \alpha \rrbracket^{u,w,p} = \llbracket \alpha \rrbracket^{u,w,\langle x,t,a \rangle}$

Important: world of assessment a not dependent on world of evaluation w



Semantics of predicates of personal taste (Chapter 5)

Predicates of personal taste depend on p :

$$(9) \quad \llbracket \text{tasty} \rrbracket^{u,w,\langle x,t,a \rangle} = \lambda y_e. \lambda t'_i. y \text{ is tasty at } t' \text{ in } w \text{ by the standards of } x \text{ at } t \text{ in } a$$

$$(10) \quad \llbracket \text{fun} \rrbracket^{u,w,\langle x,t,a \rangle} = \lambda y_e. \lambda t'_i. y \text{ is fun at } t' \text{ in } w \text{ by the standards of } x \text{ at } t \text{ in } a$$

$$(11) \quad \llbracket \text{stink} \rrbracket^{u,w,\langle x,t,a \rangle} = \lambda y_e. \lambda t'_i. y \text{ stinks at } t' \text{ in } w \text{ by the standards of } x \text{ at } t \text{ in } a$$

Compare:

$$(12) \quad \llbracket \text{sleep} \rrbracket^{u,w,\langle x,t,a \rangle} = \lambda y_e. \lambda t'_i. y \text{ sleeps at } t' \text{ in } w$$



The pragmatics of p (Chapter 7) – I

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- ▶ **Value for p :** “normally = conventionally” set to the speaker
(see also Predelli 2005)
 - ⇒ another way to think about default speaker-orientation



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 - (see also Predelli 2005)
 - ⇒ another way to think about default speaker-orientation

- ▶ **But:** this convention can be violated intentionally by the speaker
 - ⇒ p is under the “intentional control” of the speaker
 - ⇒ the speaker can intend to use a perspective-sensitive expression relative to another individual, time, or world



The pragmatics of p (Chapter 7) – II

Restriction: deviation of the norms and conventions needs to be
“purposeful, public, and cooperative”. (→ Gricean pragmatics)

- (13)
- a. The berries stank, although at the time I liked that kind of smell.
 - b. The berries smelled good, although I don't like that kind of smell any more.



The pragmatics of p (Chapter 7) – II

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b. The berries smelled good, although I don't like that kind of smell any more.
- (14) [**Context:** John tries to decide whether to buy a ticket for his son Bill for the merry-go-round. He asks Mary about the merry-go-round. John, himself, knows that he finds rides that go in circles tedious.]
John: Can you recommend the merry-go-round?
Mary: Yes, it's fun.



Summary

- ▶ “Faultless disagreement” with aesthetic predicates and predicates of personal taste adds another restriction to be met by formal accounts:
 - ⇒ the perspectival centre must not be fixed at the level of content
- ▶ Lasersohn 2017:
 - ▶ two-step model of interpretation
 - ▶ context comes in to determine the content and the truth of the content
 - ▶ the context dependence of perspective sensitivity is of the latter kind



Literatur

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