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## **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



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

⇒ 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

**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?

**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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## Basic set-up of the system (Chapters 1, 3, 5)

- ▶ **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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⇒ 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  
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(8)  $p = \langle x, t, a \rangle$   
 $x$  ... individual/assessor/judge  
 $t$  ... the time of assessment  
 $a$  ... the world of assessment
- ▶ **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:

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



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(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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