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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Debates on Semantic Relationism: Against the Psychological Variant

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Abstract: This paper deals with the debates on whether semantic relationism can adequately address belief reports. Soames argues that semantic relationism encounters difficulties in addressing belief reports, to which Fine provides a reply. However, Pinillos contends that Fine's responses are problematic and proposes an alternative theory that, he claims, can handle belief reports without issues. The primary aim of this paper is to argue against Pinillos's claims. I begin by discussing the Fine-Soames debate on semantic relationism, focusing on the propositions suggested by Fine. I then introduce Pinillos's criticism of Fine's response to Soames's objection and argue that this criticism is inconclusive. Following that, I outline Pinillos's alternative view and demonstrate that it faces a serious problem. Finally, I conclude by summarizing the main points discussed throughout the paper.

Keywords: Semantic Relationism; belief ascriptions; Frege's puzzles; Kit Fine; Ángel Pinillos.

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1. Introduction

According to semantic relationism, there is a semantic relation that holds between expressions.[1] Semantic relationists postulate such relations to explain the cognitive difference between identity claims containing co-referential terms. For example, they argue that the cognitive difference between the sentences "Hesperus is Hesperus" and "Hesperus is Phosphorus" can be explained by the fact that their semantic relations differ. While the two occurrences of "Hesperus" in the former sentence are positively (or strongly) coordinated with each other, the occurrence of "Hesperus" and the occurrence of "Phosphorus" in the latter are negatively (or weakly) coordinated.[2] On their view, the information that the two occurrences of "Hesperus" co-refer to the same object is semantically encoded in the former sentence, but the one that "Hesperus" and "Phosphorus" co-refer is not so in the latter; in the relation between "Hesperus" and "Phosphorus," the fact that they co-refer is merely empirically, not semantically, confirmed.[3]

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[1] See, e.g., Putnam (1953), Tascheck (1995; 1998), Fine (2007; 2010), Pinillos (2011; 2015), Gray (2017; 2022), and Yoon (2021; 2022).

[2] The term "coordination relation," sometimes also referred to as "de jure coreference," does not necessarily refer to a *semantic* relation. Indeed, different philosophers define this term in various ways. For different interpretations of this term, see Salmon (2012), Schroeter (2012), Heck (2014), Recanati (2012; 2016), Contim (2016), Bonardi (2019), and Lee (2019).

[3] The anaphoric relation between a proper name and a pronoun can serve as a good example of a positive coordination relation, just as the relation that typically holds between repeated occurrences of the same name in ordinary discourse. Consider the sentence: "Sally sent an email to Tom, but he didn't reply." In this sentence, "Tom" and "he" are typically interpreted as standing in a positive coordination relation; a competent speaker who understands it must recognize that the two expressions co-refer. In contrast, just as two distinct yet co-referential names can illustrate a negative coordination relation, so too can a name and a co-referential pronoun used demonstratively. Consider the sentence: "When Cicero was consul, he [pointing at someone who happens to be Cicero] denounced Catiline" (Goodsell 2014, 292). Although "Cicero" and "he" in this sentence co-refer to the same individual, they are negatively coordinated. Because the pronoun is used demonstratively, someone who understands the sentence may wonder whether "Cicero" and "he" in this sentence refer to the same individual.

Semantic relationists have two logically possible options regarding *where* coordination relation obtains. The first option is to postulate that coordination holds in a piece of concrete (or usual) discourse which is characterized by the continuity of time and place in which sentences are uttered. The second option is to postulate that coordination holds in the universal discourse where all utterances and inscriptions ever made are included. If semantic relationists adopt the first option, then coordination does not hold across different pieces of concrete discourse. In contrast, the second option implies that coordination always holds in the universal discourse.

Kit Fine (2010) adopts the second option to avoid Scott Soames's objection (2010).[4] Soames argues that semantic relationism cannot deal with belief reports involving three different co-referential terms. Fine partially concedes this objection but claims that his view can resolve the raised issue by adopting the notion of a token proposition based on the second option. However, despite Fine's efforts, Ángel Pinillos (2015) claims (i) that this notion generates a new problem, and (ii) that, without relying on it, his alternative view can address belief reports in a way that avoids the problem raised by Soames.

In this paper, my goal is to move the debate on semantic relationism forward by challenging the two claims made by Pinillos. While his view is a relatively recent addition to the debate on semantic relationism, it has so far been left largely undiscussed. So, I believe that a close examination of his view, which could provide valuable insights, is worth pursuing.

The paper is structured as follows. In Sections 2 and 3, I discuss the Fine-Soames debate on semantic relationism, with a focus on the propositions suggested by Fine. Then, in Section 4, I introduce Pinillos's criticism of Fine's response to Soames's objection and argue that Pinillos overlooks the possibility that a subject can assent to a sentence without exactly grasping the content of the sentence to which they are assenting. In Sections 5 and 6, I outline Pinillos's alternative view and argue that it encounters a serious problem. Finally, in Section 7, I conclude by summarizing the main points discussed throughout the paper.

[4] It is rather unclear whether Fine (2007) adopts the second option from the outset in his initial work.

2. Coordinated Propositions and Soames's Objection

According to the basic idea of semantic relationism, a coordination relation should be reflected in the semantic content of a sentence because the relation is semantic. To articulate this idea, Fine (2007) contends that the semantic content of a sentence is a coordinated proposition. A coordinated proposition, according to Fine, can be obtained by adding a coordination relation to a singular proposition, where the semantic content of a name in a singular proposition is simply its referent. Consider the following two sentences:

(1) Hesperus is Hesperus.
(2) Hesperus is Phosphorus.

While (1) and (2) express the same singular proposition that can be represented by <Venus, Venus, being identical>, they express different coordinated propositions. This is because the names in (1) and (2) have different coordination relations; as mentioned in Sect. 1, the occurrences of "Hesperus" in (1) have a positive (strong) coordination relation, whereas the occurrences of "Hesperus" and "Phosphorus" in (2) have a negative (weak) coordination relation.[5]

However, for (1) and (2) to express different contents in this way, a coordination relation must also hold between *individuals* in singular propositions in a way that corresponds to the coordination holding between expressions.[6] Consequently, the coordinated propositions expressed by (1) and (2) can be represented by (1p) and (2p), where the bold and wavy lines represent a positive and negative coordination relation, respectively:

[5] Some philosophers might think that having a negative coordination relation means that there is no coordination relation between two expressions. I disagree with this understanding. This is because such an understanding entails that knowing a coordinated proposition with a positive coordination guarantees the knowledge of the corresponding proposition with a negative coordination. For example, on such an understanding, knowing the content of (1) implies knowing the content of (2). One way to block this undesirable consequence is to understand that a negative coordination relation is itself a relation, such as a weak coordination.

[6] On this point, Fine (2007, 54) says, "Differences in semantic relationship between names will actually show up as differences in content."

(1p) <Venus, Venus, being identical>
(2p) <Venus, Venus, being identical>

One characteristic that might be considered an advantage of adopting coordinated propositions is that it seems to enable semantic relationists to address the presumed semantic difference between belief reports involving co-referential names. Consider the following sentences:

(3) Tom believes that Hesperus is Hesperus.
(4) Tom believes that Hesperus is Phosphorus.

Intuitively, sentences (3) and (4) can be *judged* as semantically different by ordinary people, especially when Tom agrees with (1) but disagrees with (2). Semantic relationists can explain why ordinary people make such judgments if they treat coordinated propositions as the objects of our beliefs.[7] According to this strategy, the reason why ordinary people may judge that (3) and (4) are semantically different is that the sentences are indeed semantically different: the coordinated proposition expressed by the that-clause in (3) and the one expressed by the that-clause in (4) are different as shown in (1p) and (2p). Thus, at first glance, semantic relationists can deal with belief reports involving co-referential names in a way that respects ordinary people's intuition.

Despite this initial attraction, assuming coordination occurs in a piece of concrete discourse, Soames argues that coordinated propositions understood as the objects of our belief pose a problem for semantic relationists. According to him, the problem becomes evident in belief reports involving three co-referential terms.[8] To illustrate this, consider the following sentence:

[7] Fine (2007) denies that coordinated propositions are the objects of our beliefs. In his initial work, given the Paderewski case, he argues that it is nearly impossible to determine which type of proposition can be regarded as the object of belief. Thus, this articulation merely illustrates one possible approach a semantic relationist might take in dealing with belief reports. However, in his later work (2010), Fine admits that he at least needs to propose a proposition corresponding to the objects of belief.

[8] As mentioned in footnote 5, this objection is somewhat misleading, as Fine (2007) clearly denies that coordinated propositions are the objects of our beliefs. Nevertheless, it motivates Fine (2010) to address the question, "Then, which type of proposition is the

(5) Venus is Phosphorus.

Now, suppose that (2) and (5) are uttered in different pieces of concrete discourse. In this case, the occurrence of "Hesperus" and the occurrence of "Phosphorus" in (2) are negatively coordinated with each other. But the same applies to (5). Even a competent language user may ask whether the occurrence of "Venus" and the occurrence of "Phosphorus" in (5) refer to the same object. This suggests that their relation does not semantically indicate that they refer to the same object. As a result, (2) and (5) express the same coordinated proposition. The problem is that this forces semantic relationists to accept that the following belief report is true when belief report (4) is true:

(6) Tom believes that Venus is Phosphorus.

This consequence is undesirable for semantic relationists because they already admit that (3) and (4) are semantically different. Yet, they cannot maintain this distinction for (4) and (6) because the coordinated proposition expressed by the that-clause in (4) is the same as the one expressed by the that-clause in (6). Thus, when (4) is true, (6) has to be true. However, ordinary people may still judge that (4) and (6) are semantically different, especially when Tom agrees with (2) while disagreeing with (5).

3. Fine's Reply: Introducing Token Propositions

To avoid the unwanted result that (4) and (6) are semantically the same, Fine (2010) clarifies his view by stating that he adopts the second option—that coordination occurs in the universal discourse rather than in a piece of concrete discourse. This implies that Fine must propose a more complex picture of propositions than the one shown in (1p) and (2p), where coordination seems to be assumed as holding in a local piece of discourse. Based on this motivation, Fine (2010) introduces a new type of proposition, namely, a token proposition.

object of our belief?" Consequently, Fine acknowledges a theoretical gap in his theory of belief reports. We will examine Fine's response to this objection in the next section.

Token propositions are structured entities that consist of token individuals, token properties, and token relations. According to Fine (2010), there is a universal body, say *D*, that contains all *occurrences* of singular propositions ever expressed. Fine contends that the numerical identity of a token individual, token property, and token relation is determined by the equivalence classes of positive coordination in *D*.

To illustrate this, imagine that the only uttered sentences throughout human history are (1), (2), and (5), and they have been uttered many times. In this case, there are three numerically different token individuals. This is because there are three equivalence classes of positive coordination in *D*: one corresponds to occurrences resulting from the uses of "Hesperus," another to those resulting from "Phosphorus," and the last to those resulting from "Venus." These token individuals are different from ordinary individuals and are thus commonly viewed as abstract objects. Thus, I will represent token individuals in italics to distinguish them from ordinary individuals. As a result, we can say that there are three token individuals, namely, *Hesperus*, *Phosphorus*, and *Venus*.

Although the whole picture may seem complex, the underlying idea is simple: if there are *N* (where '*N*' to be replaced with a number) legitimate lexical items that have referents, there are *N* numerically different token individuals as long as there are no synonyms.

In what follows, the numerical identity of a token individual, token property, and token relation determines the numerical identity of a token proposition. For example, suppose that John utters, "Hesperus is a planet" following his utterance of "Phosphorus is a planet." In this case, the token propositions expressed by John's two utterances are numerically different because they contain numerically different token individuals, *Hesperus* and *Phosphorus*. But, if John utters "Hesperus is a planet" again after uttering the previous two sentences, then the token proposition expressed by this utterance is numerically the same as the one expressed by John's earlier utterance of "Hesperus is a planet."

It is worth noting that two numerically different token propositions are semantically different. This is because their numerical distinctiveness implies that one of their constituents stands in different semantic relations with others. As a result, by adopting token propositions, Fine can address Soames's

objection: assuming that token propositions may be construed as the objects of our beliefs, (6) does not have to be true when (4) is true. This is because the token propositions expressed by (4) and (6) are numerically different. The one expressed by the that-clause in (4) contains *Hesperus* and *Phosphorus*, whereas the one expressed by the that-clause in (6) contains *Venus* and *Phosphorus*. Therefore, on this view, sentences (4) and (6) may differ in their truth value, which aligns with ordinary people's judgement.

4. Pinillos's Criticism of Token Propositions

Pinillos (2015) argues that although the strategy of adopting token propositions helps semantic relationists avoid Soames's objection, it generates a new problem. To argue for this, Pinillos (2015, 332) asks us to consider the following situation, assuming that token propositions are what belief subjects believe as Fine does:

Peter utters "Hesperus is a planet" at time t_1. After Betty overhears Peter's utterance, she accepts it right away because she fully trusts him. So, Betty self-reports it sincerely by saying, "I believe that Hesperus is a planet." After a while, Peter utters "Hesperus is a planet" once again at t_2. Even though Betty has no idea whether the two occurrences of the name "Hesperus" in Peter's utterances refer to the same object, she also accepts his second utterance after overhearing it, and sincerely makes another self-report by saying, "I believe that Hesperus is a planet."

Let's call Peter's first and second utterances A and B, and Betty's two self-belief reports P and Q, respectively. Pinillos argues that A, B, and the that-clauses in P and Q express numerically the same token proposition. This is despite the fact that Betty does not know whether the two instances of the name "Hesperus" in Peter's utterances refer to the same object. This is because, according to Pinillos, Betty intends to refer to the same object as the one Peter wants to refer to, and all of Peter's uses of "Hesperus" indeed refer to the same object, Venus. Thus, Pinillos concludes that A, B, and the that-clauses in P and Q express not only the same singular proposition but also numerically the same token proposition.

Now, Pinillos argues that this consequence raises a problem. The reason is that, according to his description, Betty herself thinks that her belief

reports P and Q are about her two distinct beliefs. Pinillos takes this to conflict with Fine's view. That is, from Pinillos's perspective, if A, B, and the that-clauses in P and Q all express numerically the same token proposition, then it cannot be the case that Betty believes that her self-reports are about two distinct beliefs.

It is worth noting that, for this line of objection to work, it must be the case that Betty believes the token propositions expressed by Peter's two utterances (i.e., A and B) when she sincerely assents to them. Indeed, since the token propositions expressed by A and B are numerically the same, if she believes the token propositions expressed by the sentences to which she sincerely assents, then she cannot believe that P and Q are about two distinct beliefs, so long as she is rational. The principle that licenses this move is the disquotational principle, which connects sincere assent with belief: if a normal speaker, on reflection, sincerely assents to the sentence "S," then she believes that S (Kripke 1979). Since Betty sincerely assents to A and B, *if* the disquotational principle applies in this case, it seems to follow from Fine's view that she cannot believe that her belief reports are about her two distinct beliefs, which is contrary to what actually happens.[9]

[9] Pinillos also appears to recognize that his objection significantly weakens if Fine rejects the disquotational principle. One potential problem is that, as the reviewer notes, Fine explicitly states that he does not aim to offer a fully compositional semantics—though he may still aim to do so to a reasonable extent without fully abandoning the principle. Despite this, Pinillos maintains that his objection "at the very least" poses a problem even in this case, since the two occurrences of "Hesperus" in P and Q should be negatively coordinated, given that Betty could wonder whether they refer to the same object, yet P and Q express the same token proposition on Fine's view. However, I do not think this threatens Fine's view. First, even if Betty could raise such a question, it would make no sense for Peter to do so, and Betty defers to Peter's referential intentions in her reports. Second, Fine now holds that coordination obtains in universal discourse, thereby abandoning the view that coordination is non-transitive. While this conflicts with his earlier position (2007), it does not undermine his current proposal (2010) unless further reasons are given. Thus, I will consider whether Pinillos's objection can succeed under the assumption that Fine could endorse the disquotational principle, except for hard cases like the Paderewski case. (Fine does in fact seem to do so in developing his notion of token proposition, at least when responding to Soames's objection.)

However, I do not think that Pinillos's criticism refutes the idea that token propositions are the objects of our beliefs. This is because the disquotational principle does not hold in the Betty and Peter case. More specifically, the principle applies only to cases where a subject clearly understands what she sincerely assents to. And this seems like a reasonable constraint: a subject cannot believe what she does not understand. In fact, a recent version of the disquotational principle already adopts this constraint explicitly: if S (a sentence) means P (a proposition) and a speaker *understands* and sincerely accepts S, then the speaker believes P (Speaks 2010).

The important point is that, in this case, Betty does not understand the content expressed by the sentences to which she assents. This is evident for two reasons. First, as mentioned, Peter's two utterances express numerically the same token proposition. So, if Betty really understood the content of the sentences to which she assented, she would have recognized that her belief reports are about the same belief. However, according to Pinillos's description, this is not the case. Thus, Betty's judgment about her belief reports provides good reason to think that she does not understand the content of the sentences to which she assents. Second, and more straightforwardly, Betty is partially ignorant of the content of the token proposition expressed by Peter's two utterances: she has no idea whether the referent of "Hesperus" in A is the same as the referent of "Hesperus" in B.

Now, if Betty does not understand what she assents to, then there is no reason to accept that it must be the case that Betty believes the token propositions expressed by A and B merely because she sincerely assents to them. This is because the disquotational principle cannot be applied in this case. But if so, then there is no problem at all with Betty believing that P and Q are about her two distinct beliefs. The lesson from this is that it is one thing to say that a sentence or belief report uttered by someone expresses some semantic content, but it is another thing to say whether she stands in a position to know what such semantic content is.

Before ending this section, let me briefly compare the Betty and Peter case with the Paderewski case in order to clarify the structure of Pinillos's objection and its limitations. The two cases are similar in that they are both intended to generate a difficulty if the disquotational principle holds. According to one well-known version of the Paderewski case, a subject assents

to the sentence "Paderewski had musical talent" and also to the sentence "Paderewski had no musical talent," while being unaware that the name "Paderewski" in both sentences refers to the same person. Since the subject is assumed to be rational, if the disquotational principle holds in this case, it leads to a problematic result—namely, that a rational person can hold contradictory beliefs.

However, the difference is that, in the Paderewski case, it is assumed that the subject understands the contents expressed by the sentences to which they assent. This is because the propositions the subject is supposed to grasp in the case are singular propositions, not token propositions, and thus we can say that the subject does in fact understand them, since the subject is acquainted with Paderewski when they assent to the two sentences. The subject simply does not know that Paderewski under one mode of presentation is the same person as Paderewski under another. Thus, the Paderewski case genuinely challenges the notion of singular proposition, unless one gives up the disquotational principle.

The Betty and Peter case has exactly the same structure: it is originally intended to challenge the notion of token proposition, unless one gives up the disquotational principle. However, the problem is that, in the Betty and Peter case, Betty does not understand the content expressed by the sentences to which she assents, as she does not even know what the referent of the two occurrences of "Hesperus" is. Therefore, the disquotational principle cannot be applied in this case, and thus the case does not pose a problem for Fine's notion of token proposition.

5. Pinillos's Alternative View

After presenting his criticism of the adoption of token propositions, Pinillos suggests an alternative view on belief reports that a relationist might adopt. He believes that without introducing the universal body or discourse, presumably retaining the first option that coordination holds in a concrete piece of discourse, coordinated propositions alone can address Soames's objection to semantic relationism. In this section, I will outline Pinillos's alternative view before arguing that it still faces several problems.

The key idea of Pinillos's view is that when we evaluate a belief report, we should consider what is presupposed by the speaker in the discourse where the belief report is uttered and incorporate it into a semantic content. According to Pinillos, there are two types of presupposition that the speaker of a belief report might have: one is specific, the other is non-specific. Under the specific presupposition, the ascriber (i.e., a speaker) presupposes that the ascribee (i.e., the target agent of a belief report) is thinking of an object in a specific way that relates to a definite description. Under the non-specific presupposition, the speaker simply presupposes that the ascribee is thinking of an object in some way. Pinillos argues that considering these presuppositions helps a relationist view address problems related to belief reports.

Taking Soames's idea (2002) as motivation, Pinillos (2015, 333) argues that if a speaker involves a specific presupposition, then a belief report made by the speaker not only expresses a semantic content, but also conveys a content resulting from what is asserted by it. Following Soames, Pinillos calls the latter type of content a *descriptively enriched proposition*. According to Pinillos, descriptively enriched propositions may reflect the speaker's specific presupposition and, thus, may contain the mode of presentation of an object as part of its content.

For example, suppose that John presupposes that Mary is thinking of Venus as the brightest object visible in the morning sky. Also, suppose that Mary does *not* know Hesperus is Phosphorus. Now, John utters the following sentence:

(7) Mary believes that Phosphorus shines.

According to Pinillos's view, the contents associated with a sincere *de dicto* use of (7) can be represented by (7p) plus (7pr), where (7p) represents what is expressed by (7), and (7pr) represents what is asserted by (7). The novel idea of Pinillos is that the occurrence of Venus in (7p) is positively coordinated with the one in (7pr), and therefore, allows (7pr) to make a *semantic* contribution to the truth condition of (7) as shown below.

(7p) <Believes, Mary, <Venus, shines>>.

(7pr) <Believes, Mary, < [the x: (x is the brightest visible object in the morning sky and x=Venus)], shines>>.

More specifically, Pinillos (2015, 333) claims that if this is the case, belief report (7) will be true if and only if Mary has the following set of coordinated beliefs: {<Venus, shines>, < [the x: (x is the brightest visible object in the *morning* sky and *x*=Venus)], shines>}. But Mary does not have this coordinated set of beliefs because she does not know that Hesperus is Phosphorus. Presumably, Mary believes that the object in question is the brightest visible object in the night sky instead of the morning sky. Thus, on this view, belief report (7) is false.

To be sure, there could be cases in which one has no idea about the specific way that the ascribee is thinking of an object. Pinillos claims that in these cases, the ascriber has a non-specific presupposition. More specifically, according to Pinillos (2015: 335), in such a situation, the ascriber may still assume that the ascribee is thinking of an object in some way with a conception of the object. For instance, let us suppose that (7) is uttered by Carol, and that Carol has no idea about the specific way that Mary is thinking of Venus. In this case, there would be no reason to believe that a definite description, such as the brightest visible object in the morning sky, is involved in Carol's presupposition. However, according to Pinillos, even in this situation, it seems reasonable to say that Carol is presupposing that Mary is thinking of Venus in some way related to a conception of Phosphorus: otherwise, Carol would not have used the term "Phosphorus" in uttering (7). Pinillos (2015, 336) claims that if so, belief report (7) involves the following truth condition: Mary thinks that Venus shines, where Mary is thinking of Venus under the conception of Phosphorus. However, given that Mary does not know that Hesperus is Phosphorus, it is not the case that she is thinking of Venus under the conception of Phosphorus. Thus, in this case, belief report (7) is also false.

It is worth noting that Pinillos's view can address Soames's objection. This is because regardless of whether a speaker uttering (6) has a specific presupposition or not, there could be cases where the truth conditions of (4) and (6) differ, especially when Tom does not know that Hesperus is Venus. Under a case involving a specific presupposition, for (6) to be true, Tom must think of Venus in a way that associates it with a definite description of "Phosphorus," such as the brightest object in the morning sky. However, the truth condition of (4) may not require this. Similarly, under

a case involving a non-specific presupposition, the truth condition of (6) requires Tom to think of Venus under a conception of Phosphorus, whereas the truth condition of (4) does not. Thus, on Pinillos's view, belief reports (4) and (6) may be semantically different, which explains why ordinary people may judge them to be semantically different.

6. Problems with Pinillos's View

Although Pinillos's view might initially seem to respect ordinary people's judgement regarding belief reports, it faces several problems. One major problem is that it imposes overly strict truth conditions on belief reports, particularly when an ascriber has a specific presupposition about how the ascribee thinks of an object. To make this point clear, let me first compare Pinillos's view with Soames's.

As mentioned, Pinillos's view is partially motivated by Soames's, so their approaches to belief reports may seem similar. Indeed, Soames agrees that a sincere *de dicto* use of (7) may result in conveying a descriptively enriched proposition. However, there is a fundamental difference between their views.

The difference lies in the semantic contribution of a descriptively enriched proposition. On Soames's view, for example, what is asserted by (7) (i.e., (7pr)) does not affect the truth condition of (7). The asserted content remains at a pragmatic level. More specifically, Soames (2002) holds that belief report (7) is *true* even if Mary has not heard of the term "Phosphorus." According to Soames's view, Mary in fact believes that Phosphorus shines in one guise but is cognitively inaccessible to this fact because her belief was formed in another guise. Soames argues that the reason ordinary people judge (7) to be false is that they fail to distinguish between what is semantically expressed and what is pragmatically conveyed by a sentence. In contrast, according to Pinillos's view, what is asserted by (7), based on the relation of coordination, plays an important role in making (7) false. Pinillos (2015, 335) claims that this difference can be seen as an advantage of his approach over Soames's.

However, allowing the asserted content expressed by a belief report to contribute to its semantic value causes a similar problem to the one that

arises in non-specific presupposition cases. The problem is that this makes the truth condition of a belief report too strict. This is because, according to Pinillos's view, in a case involving a specific presupposition, a belief report is true if and only if the belief report *precisely* describes ascribee's way of thinking about the object that is being considered. More specifically, consider the following situation.

Fred and Sally are taking the same course about Greek history. In the course, Fred came to have a false belief about Aristotle because he fell asleep. As a result, he ended up mistakenly associating the name "Aristotle" with the definite description "the most famous teacher of Plato." Unlike Fred, Sally correctly learned that Aristotle is the most famous pupil of Plato's. One day, Sally utters that Aristotle is a Greek philosopher. After hearing this statement, Fred makes the following belief report:

(8) Sally believes that Aristotle is a Greek philosopher.

Belief report (8) seems intuitively true. The problem with Pinillos's view is that Fred may presuppose that Sally thinks of Aristotle in a specific way. Since Fred mistakenly believes that Aristotle is the most famous teacher of Plato, and Sally is taking the same course as he does, Fred might presuppose that Sally also thinks of Aristotle as the most famous teacher of Plato. And this prevents (8) from being true. Indeed, on Pinillos's view, a sincere *de dicto* use of (8) expresses (8p) and conveys (8pr) as follows:

(8p) <Believes, Sally, <Aristotle, being a Greek philosopher>>.
(8pr) <Believes, Sally, < [the x: (x is the most famous *teacher* of Plato's and x=Aristotle)], being a Greek philosopher>>.

So, (8) will be true if and only if Sally has the following set of coordinated beliefs: {<Aristotle, being a Greek philosopher>, < [the x: (x is the most famous teacher of Plato and x=Aristotle)], being a Greek philosopher>}. However, Sally does not have this coordinated set of beliefs since she correctly learned that Aristotle is the most famous pupil of Plato. Thus, Pinillos's view implies that (8) is false, which is counterintuitive.[10]

[10] Since Pinillos's view is partially based on Soames's, one might suspect that the same problem arises in Soames's view. This suspicion may stem from the fact that, on Soames's view, (8) is semantically true but may count as false at the assertive

Regarding this problem, one might argue that even though this kind of truth condition is strict, it makes perfect sense when a belief report is involved in a sincere *de dicto* use, not *de re* use. However, I disagree with this. Note that I have never argued that definite descriptions cannot be counted as a semantic factor, nor that only referents are semantic contents for names. Rather, my point is that the suggested truth condition for (8) requires us to investigate one's psychological states, which she personally associates with a singular term. And this is highly undesirable, given that the meaning of an expression is supposed to be public. Indeed, a semantic content should be communicative so that the hearer can easily grasp it. However, Pinillos's view conflicts with this idea: if the truth condition of a sentence depends on one's presupposition, this may make its content entirely inaccessible to the hearer.

Another major problem with Pinillos's view is that the truth condition of a belief report depends on what kind of presupposition the ascriber makes. More specifically, Pinillos's view requires that the truth condition of (8) depends on how specific Fred's presuppositions about Sally are. If Fred presupposes that Sally associates Aristotle with a particular definite description, then the truth condition of (8) includes the content of that definite description as a core element. On the other hand, if Fred believes that he is ignorant of the specific way Sally thinks of Aristotle, then the truth condition depends not on the content of a definite description but on

level. However, I do not think this is problematic, because what is asserted in (8), according to Soames, merely reflects what the speaker intends to convey; the fact that (8) is false at the assertive level, on Soames's account, simply shows that what the speaker presupposes is false.

Here, it is worth noting that this does not imply that ordinary people will necessarily take (8) to be false. This is because they may not grasp what the speaker intends to assert in uttering the sentence. Of course, there are many cases where ordinary people clearly grasp what is asserted or even confuse it with the semantic content, as Soames notes in his account of Frege's Puzzle. But the point is that the case involving (8), with the false belief about Plato, does not belong to such cases. The problem with Pinillos's view is that it cannot allow (8) to count as false merely in terms of the speaker's presupposition. In fact, according to his view, (8) is semantically false—not merely assertively false. I am grateful to the referee for giving me the opportunity to clarify this issue.

a particular conception Fred has in mind regarding Sally's belief. But it is difficult to understand why the truth condition would have to change in this way merely based on the reporter's presuppositional specificity.

These problems point to the fundamental issue with Pinillos's view. After all, the issue lies in the fact that, on his view, it is the psychological states of the reporter, not those of the ascribee, that affect the truth condition of a belief report. Intuitively, how Fred thinks of Sally's thought about Aristotle seems irrelevant when reporting Sally's belief about Aristotle. However, Pinillos's view fails to respect this point. To put the point differently, Pinillos's view is unpromising—again, given the idea that the meaning of an expression is supposed to be public. His view clearly rejects this idea by making the truth conditions of belief reports overly sensitive to the ascriber's psychological states, thereby rendering those truth conditions ones that are inaccessible to third parties.

7. Conclusion

In this paper, I have articulated Fine's semantic relationism and the related discussions with a focus on the logical options available to Fine. I then examined whether Pinillos's argument against Fine's view and his alternative view are convincing and concluded that neither is.

More specifically, I first argued that Pinillos's criticism of Fine's view fails to convincingly show that token propositions are problematic. In my view, this is because Pinillos overlooks the crucial fact that a subject can assent to a sentence without exactly grasping its content. In addition, I argued that Pinillos's alternative view is also unconvincing, as it strongly ties the psychological states of a reporter to the semantic content of a belief report. While it is true that we express our private thoughts through sentences, this does not have to mean that any personal thought may be conflated with semantic content, given our linguistic practices in communication.

Lastly, it should be noted that this paper did not provide any arguments against Fine's view. Investigating that issue is a task for another occasion. However, I believe that my criticism of Pinillos's attempts contributes to the discussion about semantic relationism by highlighting the need for further investigation of Fine's view. In fact, if someone believes that Fine's

view is unpromising, this paper may motivate them to provide a compelling argument against it and an alternative view.

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