

DISCONTINUISM, DICHOTOMISM, ANTI-REALISM

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Warning: With some exceptions, the majority of the theses concerning the preliminary issues and fuzziness are the exact opposite of what I consider sound judgements. But, in the last section, dealing with the sorites, I agree with some of the ideas included in this compilation, since they are criticisms of the positions there listed. For the sake of clarity, all these critical comments that I approve of are marked with a check (✓) on the left margin.

LANGUAGE

Idealism: language does not describe the world adequately (in Rescher 1958, p. 245)

MEANING

An item lies in a given category iff the subject would judge it to lie in there (Raffman 1994, p. 69)

We have to take judgements as part of meanings (Shapiro, Chapter 1, pp. 40-1)

In a large measure, it is up to me whether I say gray or blue (Graff 2002c, p. 56)

Peirce: a sign is related to an object only through an interpretation (Hookway 1991, p. 67)

Zemach: Full ontological disjointness is a precondition of all reference (in Van Kerkhove 1999, p. 129)

TRUTH

It is not a direct language - world correspondence. Even though there are no vague objects, sentences about them are true. Quantification over vague objects does not involve ontological commitment (Horgan 1998b, pp. 319-20; 327, n. 6)

An assertion may be correct without being required by the facts (Sainsbury 1992, p. 188)

Truth and falsehood are mutually exclusive (Andjelković and Williamson, p. 218)

CLASSICAL LOGIC (CL), BIVALENCE

Bivalence: T and F are jointly exhaustive and mutually exclusive (Andjelković and Williamson, 211)

✓ The principle of bivalence implies a sharp break (in Burns 1991, pp. 51-4)

✓ A patient gravely ill on Tuesday is definitely alive. By Friday he is dead. The principle of bivalence implies that death was instantaneous (Sanford 1976, p. 197)

Logic dictates a black and white reality, but it is not refuted by continuity (Sorensen 2001, pp. 78, 10)

✓ La logique classique ne permet pas d'utiliser le *modus ponens généralisé* ($a \text{ est } F \Rightarrow b \text{ est } G$; $a \text{ est } F' \vdash b \text{ est } G'$) puisque la prémisses mineure est différente de l'antécédent de la prémisses majeure (Bouchon-Meunier, pp. 127-8)

✓ The problem is that CL fails to capture logic properly. The realm of logic includes inconsistent situations (Tanaka, p. 32)

NEGATION

Rescher 1973: If both 'p' and '¬p' were true, one could scarcely maintain '¬' as a viable negation (in Routley and Meyer, p. 12)

✓ It is unfair to begin by assuming that all the features of the classical negation are features that a good negation should have (Brown 2002b, p. 639)

What is false is what is to be negated and rejected (Sainsbury 1997a, Sect. 4)

METAPHYSICS

It is not possible for us to inspect the world as it is in itself (Luntley, p. 207)

I doubt the world is a certain way before we find it. It is not independent of our concepts (Sain.94, p. 79)

Persistent conditions and essential properties we attribute to things are the product of our conceptions (Heller 1990, p. 69)

VAGUENESS

It has to do with the degree to which people categorize x (Hampton, 2000b, Section 3)

It is due to indeterminacy (Cooper, p. 247)

It is indetermined application. Uncertainty (Burns 1991: 3)

It is unclarity (Williamson 1994b, p. 2). It is intrinsic uncertainty (Chanell, p. 20)

Peirce: It is doubt about, or uncertainty of a sign interpretation with regard to questions of more or less (Brock, p. 46)

It is boundarylessness (Sainsbury 1991a, p. 6)

It is impossibility of applying F or not F (Black 1937: 30)

No definite answer as to whether the term applies. Source of indeterminacy (Alston 1964, pp. 84, 87)

'Vague object' means indeterminate w.r.t. the spatial properties or position (Aldrich, 89)

Tolerance and boundarylessness are its defining features (Graff 2002c, p. 54)

- ✓ Tolerance has nothing to do with the constitution of vagueness (Greenough, p. 272)

It occurs when the relation of the representing to the represented is one-many (Russell, pp. 66-67)

That vagueness generates the sorites is a muddled thought (Wri. 89, p. 195; later retracted in 03, p. 91)

Aristotle, *Cat.* 5b: *great, small* are terms of relation: as such, things are not great or small. They are so by comparison only (Moline, p. 406)

PRINCIPLE OF EXCLUDED MIDDLE

Aristotle's *Met.* 1011b23-4, and 1012a8-11: there cannot be any intermediate between contrary statements, but of one thing we must either assert or deny some thing. An intermediate between contraries is impossible (in Sadegh-Zadeh, pp. 4-5)

The PEM is not true with vague symbols (Russell, pp. 62-3)

The PEM is not clear (Burns 1991, p. 57)

BORDERLINE CASE (B.I.c.)

It generates truth value gaps (Varzi 2003c, Sect. [2] "Problems and Paradoxes")

Impossible to pronounce the sentence either T or F (Alston 1964: 96)

If sentence " p " is borderline, it is neither true nor false (Tye 1998, p. 565)

Both supposedly contrary classifications appear equally proper, and no objective basis for preferring the one over the other is found, and thus the sentence remains indeterminate (Verma, pp. 67-8)

It happens only when uncertainty cannot be removed (Needle, Chapter 1, section 1.1)

Its unclarity is not merely epistemic: there is no fact of the matter (Keefe 2000, p. 6)

- ✓ Do not confuse a no-status item with b.i.c. (Raffman 1996, p. 192, n. 16)

NO DEGREES

Aristotle, *Top.* 128a: essences do not admit of degrees (Moline, p. 405, n. 4)

Degree adjectives are examples of extreme variation of senses (Pinkal 1995, p. 62)

Gradable adjectives have the same semantic type as other predicates (in Kennedy 2003a, p. 6)

Neither degrees of a predicate F nor degrees of truth are necessarily distinctive of vagueness (Paoli 2003b, p. 381)

Assignments of numbers amount to denying vagueness (Keefe, 2003, p. 292)

Mismatch between imprecision of natural language & precision of degree semantics (in Cook, w.i.p.)

The degree theorist is committed to sharp semantic transitions, and arbitrary precisification (Horgan 1998b, p. 328, n. 12, and 1994a, pp. 161-2)

$/Fa_n/ \neq /Fa_{n+1}/ \Rightarrow$ sharp bound (Horgan 1994a, p. 174)

15000 grains are no more a heap than 10000. Both are equally a heap (Romerales 1999, p. 59)

- ✓ What explains the scarcity of metric proposals in semantics? One impediment is the view that a category is an indivisible group of objects, each equally a member of the category (Kempton, p. 154)

- ✓ Since two objects a and b can be indistinguishable, but red to different degrees, 'b is red' cannot be as true as 'a is red' (Peacocke, p. 140, n. 10)
- ✓ If rigidity were not gradual, there could not be any stiffening, losing or gaining rigidity (R. Engel, p. 28)

There is no entailment between the comparative and the positive forms of an adjective (Ken. 03a, p. 5)

SUPERVENIENCE OF DEGREES

Controversial: the more hair a person has, the less bald she is (Romerales 1999, pp. 53-4)

The number of hairs is irrelevant to the application of 'bald' (Read 1995, p. 183)

MAXIMALISM

Frege: If there cannot be complete truth, nothing at all would be true. What is only half true is untrue. Truth does not admit of more or less (Candlish, Sect. 1)

Nothing is more or less what it is, or to a certain extent possessed of a F (Russell, p. 62)

All discernible cases of F are definitely and absolutely F (Wright 1987, p. 255)

Leibniz (A, VI, 3, 538): «-Can the truth of some proposition increase or decrease... in the same way as water gets hotter or colder by degrees? -Certainly not. ...a proposition is either wholly true or wholly false» (Levey)

There is no truth without determinate truth (Keefe 2000, p. 27)

The only possible meaning we could give to "true" is "definitely true" (Dummett 1970, p. 256)

What more could it take for an utterance to be definitely true than for it to be true? (Wil. 94, pp. 194-5)

There is no way whereby a statement could be true without being definitely so (Wright 1987, p. 262)

Sufficient condition for truth of p: $/p/ = 1$ (Edgington 1996, p. 299)

{1} is the set of designated truth degrees (Gottwald 2001, p. 425)

In arguing, we are concerned with what follows from definitely true premisses (Burgess 1998, p. 247)

Believe a proposition if and only if its probability exceeds 0.99 (in Sorensen 1988b, p. 61)

- ✓ The idea that something is not flammable unless perfectly flammable may not even make good sense (R. Engel, p. 27)

NON CONTRADICTION

The incoherence results from: a) any 2 adjacent members of the soritical series have the same status; b) vague terms are discriminatory. Both requirements are not simultaneously satisfiable (Horg. 98b, p. 315)

Dialetheists have not made easier to see how a sentence obtains and does not (Armour-G & Beall 221)

'Short' and 'tall' denote functions with disjoint ranges (Kennedy 1999a, p. 76)

The apparent contradiction expresses indecision (Cooper, p. 260)

The standards of 'rich' and 'poor' must be constrained: nothing can meet both (Graff 2002c, p. 57)

Sharpening of predicates, like 'pink' and 'red', should never yield overlapping extensions (Coll. p. 5)

Both p and not p are true in a different context. Vagueness is context dependent (Burns 91, p. 61)

Katz and Fodor: anything over which speakers disagree is ipso facto no part of the linguistic data (in Sorensen 1991b, p. 90)

Falsehood of contradictions prevents their content from being useful (Sorensen 1989a, p. 177)

Contradictions lack content (Goldstein, unpublished, p.1)

When people assert p and not p, they do not mean them literally (Eklund 04, Priest's Dialetheism, p. 9)

Thought and language can be incoherent but not the world (Horgan 1994a, p. 179)

The set of designated and antidesignated truth degrees is disjoint (Gottwald 2001, p. 29)

“no attempt made to argue with those who think it acceptable to contradict oneself” (Wil. 94, p. 189)

“...many philosophers would soon discount the paraconsistent option... regardless of how successfully it treats vagueness, on the grounds of the... absurdity of p and $\neg p$ both being true...” (Keefe 00, p. 197)

To provide a contradictory formulation of the sorites is a failure (Cook, w.i.p.)

- ✓ The hypothesis of the consistency of the world is not empirically decidable, nor readily verifiable. It is highly theoretical (Routley and Meyer, pp. 18-20)

VAGUENESS NOT IN REALITY

Linguistic vagueness has not to rely on ontic vagueness. Vague language in a non vague world (Keefe 2000, p. 15)

Reality is not vague (Bittner & Smith, 4)

ABRUPT TRANSITIONS

Vagueness is not gradual transition from F to not- F (Horwich 2000a, p. 89)

Nature does allow sharp jumps (Shapiro, Chapter 1, p. 47)

Continuity is not necessary for vagueness (Pinkal 1995, p. 75)

- ✓ The most abrupt change may be somewhat gradual (R. Engel, p. 37)
- The transition is not sharp because it is indefinite (Tye 1994a, p. 289)

BOUNDARIES

Sharp boundary = $\exists a_i(Fa_i \wedge \sim Fa_{i+1})$ (Black 1963: 4)

There is no precise boundary between clear cases and indeterminate ones (Alston 1964, 95)

Classical logic is committed to sharp distinctions (McGee & McLaughlin, p. 236)

- ✓ If extents of a property F are preserved undiminished, if the $n+1$ of the series is always as F as the n^{th} one, F would be *unceasing* (R. Engel, p.37, n. 17)
- ✓ One thing is to assert the existence of a divide between F and $\sim F$, other thing is to prove it (Bar., p. 56)
- ✓ To establish that there is a cross-over between few and many is not yet to prove that it is abrupt rather than gradual (Burnyeat, p. 336)
- ✓ If there are sharp bounds, what determines where they lie? Explain how bounds get determined. Make its existence plausible (Burgess 1998, p. 239)

CATEGORIAL DIFFERENCES (among adjacent members)

Chrysippus: the last F lies next to the 1st non F , & it is hard to distinguish from it (Barnes 82: 49)

Differences are neglected if sufficiently small (Cooper, p. 264)

The speaker has a right and duty to ignore insignificant differences (Sorensen 2001, p. 108)

There are two objects, coincident except for one molecule, one a table, not the other (Quine, p. 94)

We sharply differentiate in the absence of a sharp differentiating fact (Sainsbury 1992, p. 182)

Subject shifts her judgement in a soritical series for no reason (Goldstein 2000, p. 173)

- ✓ How can x be F but y not- F , if both are indiscernible? (Cooper, p. 258)
- ✓ Why you give different answers to questions concerning indiscriminable lights? (Weatherson 02b, p. 4)
- ✓ Indiscernible objects cannot elicit opposite descriptions (Vieru, Sect. 2)
- ✓ Leibniz: No small increase in the input yields an abrupt boost in the output (Ausín & Peña 2001)
- ✓ Are we required to make distinctions without a difference? (McGee & McLaughlin, p. 219)
- ✓ Error of antigradual conceptions: gap between continuous input & discontinuous output (Peña 93, p. 402)

MAJOR PREMISS (Mj.Pr.)

It is plausible, but we abandon it as contextually untenable (Rescher 2001, p. 80)

We have to give up the similarity constraint, namely: anything saliently similar to something meeting the standard, itself meets the standard (Graff 2002c, p. 57)

In CL, the denial of Mj.Pr. entails a sharp bound (Keefe 2000, p. 21)

The aim is to reject Mj.Pr. without commitment to a sharp transition (Horgan 1994b, p. 112)

The negation of Mj.Pr. can be reconciled with vagueness. [Who says this?]

Distinctions: 1) Rejection of Mj.Pr. does not entail: $\sim\forall n(Fa_n \supset Fa_{n+1})$; 2) $\sim\forall n(Fa_n \supset Fa_{n+1}) \neq \exists n(Fa_n \& \sim Fa_{n+1})$; 3) $\exists n(Fa_n \& \sim Fa_{n+1})$ does not amount to a sharp cutoff (Schiffer 1998, p. 194)

There is no tension between vagueness and sharp bounds (Horwich 2000a, p. 84)

Sharp bounds do not preclude vagueness, for epistemicism (in Keefe 2000, p. 62)

Fallacy: if Mj.Pr. rejected, sharp partition (Hyde 1994, p. 255; McGee & McLaughlin, pp. 208-9)

- ✓ Show that denial of Mj.Pr. does not make the predicates precise (Cooper, p. 254)
- ✓ If Mj.Pr. is not true, why are we inclined to accept it? (Graff 2002c, p. 50)
- ✓ Galen: It is a contradiction to affirm: Fa_{50} & $\sim Fa_{49}$ (in Barnes, p. 24; also Vieru, sect. 2)
- Mj.Pr. is indefinite (Tye 1995, p. 20, n. 15)
- Neither Mj.Pr. nor its negation is T nor F (Horg. 94b, p. 113; Burges. 98, p. 243; Sai. 92, p. 179)
- In intuitionism, the conjunction of the premises is false without any conjunct being false (Rea, p. 31)

AGNOSTICISM

Having fuzzy bounds is characterized in terms of ignorance (Keefe & Smith, p. 17)

For Williamson, 'here' refers to a precise region of space, but nobody can know that it refers to any precise region (Schiffer 1997, pp. 942-3)

RADICAL INDETERMINISM

Concepts are like magnetic poles: they have degrees of influence. But some objects join no pole (Sainsbury 1991a, p. 14)

Vagueness is responsible for truth value gaps (Tye 1994a, p. 281)

Sentence p is indeterminate because both p and $\sim p$ are permitted (Dorr, pp. 111-12, n. 25)

There is no fact of the matter as to how the semantic status changes from F to not F (Horg. 94a, p. 163)

$\exists \sim$ fact of the matter singling out which specific candidate referent is the obj. in question (Bit. & S. 4)

- ✓ One hedges or circumlocutes to speak truly (Simons 1992, p. 169)
- ✓ Peña: Neither-p-nor-not-p entail p-&-not-p, by DeMorgan (in Sylvan & Hyde, pp. 16-7)
- ✓ The indeterminist has to reject Double Negation to avoid contradiction (Sanford 1995, p.)
- ✓ Indeterminacy amounts to contradiction, unless you give up DN (Black 1937, p. 36)
- ✓ Reasons to believe p, and to believe not-p are different from no reasons to believe either p or not p (Batens 2000, p. 53, n)
- ✓ By limiting the possibilities considered, the appearance of indeterminacy is increased (Sore. 92, p. 181)
- ✓ Inability to settle the application of a predicate to an object does not imply that the application is undetermined by reality (Vieru, Section 1)
- ✓ Do facts fail to determine a truth value, or do they establish a value different from 01? (Burns 91, p. 50)
- ✓ A borderline sentence is not illegitimate because it performs the same task as true or false sentences, namely representing the way matters stand with regard to some feature of the world. It performs this task less satisfactorily than clear true cases, but more satisfactorily than clear false cases. To suppose that they are illegitimate is false because performance at an intermediate level does not amount to no performance at all (King, p. 21)

SUPERVALUATIONISM (SpV)

There is no property of redness but a battery of sharp properties between which there is indecision (in Edgington, 2001, p. 377)

An object falls within the positive extension of a predicate on condition that it definitely possesses the relevant property (in Sainsbury 1988, p. 31)

- ✓ Price of precisification: truth-functionality is lost (Pinkal 1995, p. 155)

PRECISIFICATION

All admissible candidate referents are equally good (Bealer & Smith, 4)

- ✓ For certain expressions, a precise interpretation is impossible (Channell, p. 7)
- ✓ Introducing a quantitative limit does not get rid of all vagueness because of the problem of identifying the units to be counted (Alston 1964, p. 92)
- ✓ There are no boundary precisification facts (Horgan 1994a, p. 178)
- ✓ Precisification will destroy the point of our concepts (Dummett 1995, p. 209)
- ✓ van Bendegem: To assume that vagueness can be made precise eliminates it (in Van Kerk. 99, p. 66)
- ✓ To draw sharp limits changes the meaning (Burns 1991, p. 104-5)
- ✓ Sharpening a concept is the same as replacing it (Mills, p. 115)
- ✓ We don't use predicates as if sharply bounded (Keefe 2000, p. 79)
- ✓ There is no sharp cutoff in our practice (Sainsbury 1991a, p. 11)
- ✓ Linguistic norms do not sanction any precisification (Horgan 1994a, p. 162)
- ✓ The sharpening of a term is not natural (Termini, p. 212)
- ✓ The vagueness of an expression is superficial if it supervenes on sharp expressions (Peacocke, p. 133)

PRAGMATISM

In order for somebody to be tall, she must be significantly higher than what is typical (Graff 02c, p. 64)

NIHILISM

Since properties or objects are inconsistent, they don't exist (Ung. 79b, pp. 118, 147, Whe. 79, p. 165)

Impossible that a pin be and not be in Mt.X. Then, there are no mountains (Horg. 98b, pp. 317-18)

Dummett: Observational properties do not exist, because inconsistent (in Cooper, p. 250)

The objects of the standard ontology do not exist (Heller 1990, p. 107. Retracted in 1996, p. 185, n. 7)

Leibniz 1678: nobody is bald because of the contradiction revealed in the sorites (Levey)

If there are not vague properties, vague terms are not referential. There is no baldness. Because vagueness is incoherent, vague terms are empty (Horgan 1994a, p. 182; 1994b, p. 119)

The puzzle of ontological vagueness is just one of non-referring terms (Wheeler 1975, p. 379)

- ✓ Galen: If the sorites were valid, there would be nothing having a measure of extent (in Barnes, pp. 33-34)