

Scientific Report

Coordination and Disagreement across Perspectives, Networking workshop,

EuroUnderstanding EUROCORES programme.

Summary:

The workshop *Coordination and Disagreement across Perspectives* took place at the Faculty of Letters of the University of Lisbon on 10-12 September 2012. The speakers at the workshop were Peter Pagin, Daniel Cohnitz, Steffan Borge, Franck Escken, James Hampton, Beate Priewasser, Johannes Roessler, Francisco Santos and Teresa Marques. The workshop was locally organized by Teresa Marques, Luís Duarte D’Almeida, Andreas Stokke, with the collaboration of Fiora Salis, Sara Bizarro, Carla Simões, Bruno Jacinto and José Mestre. Eva Hoogland, from ESF, also attended the workshop.

The workshop integrated a graduate workshop, OFA8, as a dissemination activity. Graduates participating in the workshop funded their own travel to Lisbon, and the Philosophy Centre of the Faculty of Letters at Lisbon funded their accommodation. The graduate students only had their meals (coffee breaks, lunch and one dinner) covered by the funding for the workshop, as approved in the initial proposal. This integration was justified because often discussion and interaction continues during coffee breaks and meals. Graduate students were required to attend the EUROCORES event, and in general the participants in the EUROCORES event attended the graduate workshop, providing feedback on their work. The integration of the two events gave graduate students the opportunity to benefit from the presence of CRP’s researchers, as well as to attend the workshop. It also gave much greater visibility to the programme and the research carried out by the CRPs. The graduate workshop selected the papers after the submission and anonymous refereeing of the papers submitted. In general, the organizers of the EUROCORES networking event and the CRPs’ researchers at the workshop served as referees for the submitted papers. Graduate papers presented at the workshop were commented in general by local graduate students, some of them who also worked as co-organizers of the EUROCORES workshop. The participants were Gemma Celestinho, Bruno Jacinto, Lars Dänzer, José Mestre, Dan Zeman, Andreas Stokke, Mireia López, Klaus Gärtner, Robin McKenna, José Gusmão, Stefan Reining and Diogo Fernandes. All the participants at the workshop attended the EUROCORES networking event too. Their affiliations and email contact can be verified in the programme below. Other participants in the events included local lecturers and researchers in Portugal, for instance Adriana Silva Graça, João Branquinho, Pedro Galvão, Célia Teixeira (Philosophy Department, Faculty of Letters, Lisbon), José Frederico Marques (Faculty of Psychology, Lisbon), and from other institutions, like Pedro Santos (Linguistics, University of Algarve), Ricardo Santos (Philosophy, University of Évora) as well as high-school teachers (Fernando Janeiro, João Paulo Maia), among other students who attended some sessions:

1. Peter Pagin, speaker EUROCORES
2. Daniel Cohnitz, speaker EUROCORES
3. Steffan Borge, speaker EUROCORES
4. Franck Escken, speaker EUROCORES
5. James Hampton, speaker EUROCORES
6. Beate Priewasser, speaker EUROCORES

7. Johannes Roessler, speaker EUROCORES
8. Francisco Santos, speaker EUROCORES
9. Teresa Marques, speaker EUROCORES
10. Luís Duarte D'Almeida, organizer
11. Andreas Stokke, organizer
12. Fiora Salis, co-organizer
13. Sara Bizarro, co-organizer
14. Carla Simões, co-organizer
15. Bruno Jacinto, co-organizer and commentator at graduate workshop
16. José Mestre, co-organizer and commentator at graduate workshop.
17. Gemma Celestinho, speaker graduate workshop.
18. Lars Dänzer, speaker graduate workshop.
19. Dan Zeman, speaker graduate workshop.
20. Mireia López, speaker graduate workshop.
21. Klaus Gärtner, commentator graduate workshop.
22. Robin McKenna, speaker graduate workshop.
23. José Gusmão, commentator graduate workshop.
24. Stefan Reining speaker graduate workshop.
25. Diogo Fernandes, commentator graduate workshop.
26. Eva Hoogland, ESF senior science officer.
27. Adriana Silva Graça, attended
28. João Branquinho, attended
29. Pedro Galvão, attended
30. Célia Teixeira, attended
31. José Frederico Marques, attended
32. Ricardo Santos, attended
33. Pedro Santos, attended
34. Fernando Janeiro, attended
35. João Paulo Maia, attended.

Some local students attended some of the sessions (number undetermined).

Four people in the initial proposal had to cancel their participation: Josef Perner, Åsa Wikforss, Veronica Ramenzonni and Nivedita Gangopadhyay. Some of the participants have asked for travel refunds directly from ESF: Peter Pagin and Johannes Roessler. Daniel Cohnitz covered his expenses with own funds. Because of this, our expenses in Lisbon were significantly lower than expected when the first proposal was made.

Assessment of the results and impact of the event on the EUROCORES Programme

The problem of coordination across perspectives manifests itself in many guises. The different speakers in the workshop offered diverse approaches to the problem from various angles, providing an excellent opportunity to profit from each other's expertise. The main topics of discussion were: the processing of communication and sharing of information by interlocutors, required to form common views on what the world is like, and on what goals are to be pursued. Some of the issues discussed concerned the determination of communicated content. Some sessions focused on empirical data related to the adoption of stereotypical points of view of other groups in society. Still other sessions considered the particular stresses on cooperative communication that result from lying and misleading. Another central topic in the sessions concerned an understanding of what goes on between interlocutors when they agree or disagree.

Issues ranged from an explanation of practical conflicts, to an explanation of disagreement in science. A slightly distinct topic in the workshop concerned children's understanding of norm-guided behaviour (when norms are context-dependent) and also their understanding of competition (which seems to require understanding others' goals and intentions, and hence a capacity to represent different perspectives from one's own). A final topic concerned the application of game-theoretical tools to understand cooperative behaviour under the threat of climate change. The discussion focused on an evolutionary and social learning dynamics approach to a broad class of cooperation problems in which attempting to minimize future losses turns the risk of failure into a central issue in individual decisions. The integration of the graduate workshop in the event guaranteed a greater visibility and dissemination of the discussed research. Several of the selected papers presented by the graduate students were on related issues: communicative success and disagreement, for instance.

Final programme, including abstracts:

10 September

9:30 – 10:45 OFA8:

Lars Dänzer, University of Cologne, ldaenzer@uni-koeln.de

Semantics, pragmatics and the explanation of utterance understanding

This paper is concerned with the role that semantic and pragmatic theories play in explaining linguistic understanding. The goal of this paper is sketch an explanation of this role that shows how it is possible to steer between the horns of an uncomfortable dilemma: either these theories are supposed to contribute to an account of utterance interpretation, in which case they need to tell us something about the on-line computational questions in a way they traditionally haven't done; or they merely contribute to rational reconstructions of utterance interpretation, in which case they do not tell us anything about how we *in fact* understand.

Comments: José Mestre, LanCog, University of Lisbon, jose.m.mestre@gmail.com

coffee break

11:15-12:30 OFA8:

Gemma Celestino, LOGOS & University to Barcelona, & University of British Columbia, gemmacelestinof@gmail.com

It is not the case that the alleged golden mountain exists

In this paper I will discuss a recent proposal by Frederick Kroon (2004, 2009). It belongs to a broad family of views, according to which sentences containing empty names do not even semantically express any proposition, but we use them, and pretend them to be true, in participating in games of make-believe. This is in a nutshell the proposal of Gareth Evans (1982) and Kendall Walton (1990). I will first discuss Kroon's positive view and then I will turn to his criticism to what he calls 'the Ellipsis Strategy' to argue that his arguments are not successful.

Comments: Bruno Jacinto, University of St. Andrews and LanCog, University of Lisbon, jacinto.bruno@gmail.com

lunch

14:00 – 15:15 EuroUnderstanding:

Peter Pagin, University of Stockholm, peter.pagin@philosophy.su.se

Communicative success and similarity of content

An utterance of a speaker has a content and a force. In order for communication to succeed, the hearer needs to get the force right. Here I shall set the nature of the force recognition aside, and focus on content. I shall argue that in order for communication to succeed, it is not required that the content of the hearer's thought is not identical to the content of the speaker's thought, but that a less strict relation of similarity suffices. A main task is to characterize the relevant similarity relation. It must be an equivalence relation, and it should be possible to characterize it at least partly in terms of truth and falsity across varying possibilities. The question is how to achieve this, and how to achieve it uniformly for indexical and non-indexical sentences.

15:30 – 16:45 EuroUnderstanding:

Robert van Rooij, University of Amsterdam R.A.M.vanRooij@uva.nl

Deriving meaning from language use: From equilibria to (fuzzy?) meanings

More-valued logics are used a lot in philosophy to account for paradoxes related to vagueness, self-referential truth, etc. Though these analyses are appealing from a formal point of view, they typically give rise to conceptual problems: where do the values/meanings come from? Some proposals to solve this problem have been made, but none of them have been very convincing. Proponents of fuzzy logic, for instance, have proposed that the ordering between truth-values of sentences of the form 'x is tall' are in direct correspondance with people's lengths. But there are well-known problems with this approach. Others (e.g. Williamson) simply claims that use gives rise to fixed two-valued meanings, but how the meanings are supposed to be dependent on this use is left completely in the dark. In this talk I will propose to correlate meaning with use, or better, with use in equilibrium. First, I will use game theory, coupled with some ways of implementing bounded rationality, to determine equilibrium play. Second, I will propose various definitions of meaning that can be derived from the strategies used in the equilibrium. Finally, I will relate these different meanings with different theories of vagueness, and discuss the pro's and con's of the various theories in the light of these relations: from super/subvaluationism, via many-valued logics, to the epistemic analysis of vagueness.

coffee break

17:00 – 18:15 EuroUnderstanding:

Franck Esken, University of Salzburg, frankesken@mac.com

Ontogenetic Early Forms of Rule-Following and the Implicit-Explicit Distinction

Questions concerning my talk:

1. How can early forms of rule following be distinguished from mere dispositional behaviour like infants circular reactions (Piaget)?
2. What is constitutive for rule following? To distinguish (a) a response that conforms to a given standard ("You should not do A") and (b) a response that is actually guided by a given rule ("If there is A, then I should do B"). Both responses include norms, but of a very different kind. The distinction between conformity to norms and rule following will be spelled out in some detail and brought in connection with the implicit-explicit distinction in Philosophy of Mind and Cognitive Science.

18:15 -- 18:30

Eva Hoogland, ESF Senior Science Officer for the Humanities and Social Sciences

Introduction to the European Science Foundation and the EuroUnderstanding Programme

11 September

9:30 – 10:45 OFA8:

Dan Zeman, Institut Jean Nicod, Paris, & Filippo Ferrari, Northern Institute of Philosophy, University of Aberdeen dan_zeman@yahoo.com,

Radical Relativism and Retraction

This paper has two connected aims. One is to investigate the phenomenon of retraction as it has surfaced in the contemporary debate between relativism about various areas of discourse and its rivals. The other, broader aim of the paper is to study the possible senses of “being at fault” in which such a claim could be understood. We take our results to tentatively support two conclusions: i) that the tripartite model of assertion-evaluation needs to be supplemented with this new dimension; ii) radical relativism has a prima facie problem in integrating the double-faced character of circumstance-accuracy.

Comments: Andreas Stokke, LanCog, University of Lisbon andreas.stokke@gmail.com

coffee break

11:15-12:30 OFA8:

Mireia López, University of Girona and LOGOS mireialopez.amo@gmail.com

Cognitive Penetration and the Justificational Power of Experience

My aim in this paper is to provide reasons to believe that some cases of cognitive penetration of experiences, where the content of experience is causally influenced by our cognitive states, are problematic for Pryor's (2000) dogmatist anti-sceptical proposal. Although the existence of these cases does not constitute a conclusive argument against the dogmatist, they seem to compel him to carry out important and difficult amendments on his view. Dogmatism is committed to the thesis that whenever we have an experience we have justification to believe its content. However, I present some cases of cognitive penetration that intuitively threaten this assumption. Besides, Siegel (forthcoming) intends to ground the underlying intuitions for the Downgrade Thesis (DT). According to (DT), certain experiences lose all of their epistemic credentials to justify our beliefs in their contents, as a consequence of being cognitively penetrated. Finally, I criticize Siegel's argument in favour of (DT) but I offer further reasons to think that (DT) holds, thus concluding that dogmatist should be concerned about the existence of cognitive penetration.

Comments: Klaus Gärtner, IFL, New University of Lisbon klga@gmx.de

lunch

14:00 – 15:15 EuroUnderstanding:

Steffen Borge, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim steffen-borge@ntnu.no

Communication, Cooperation and Conflict

According to Steven Pinker and his associates the cooperative model of human communication fails, because evolutionary biology teaches us that most social relationships, including talk-exchange, involve combinations of cooperation and conflict. In particular, the phenomenon of the strategic speaker who uses indirect speech in order to be able to deny what he meant by a speech act (deniability of conversational implicatures) challenges the model. In reply I point out that interlocutors can aim at understanding each other (cooperation), while being in conflict. Furthermore, Pinker's strategic speaker relies on the Cooperative Principle when conveying a conversational implicature, and so non-cooperative behaviour (denial) only emerges as a response to a negative reaction from the audience. It also doubtful in the cases Pinker presents

whether a denial will successfully cancel the conversational implicature –change the audience’s interpretation of speaker’s meaning. I also argue that a strategic speaker might choose indirect speech due to the ignorability of conversational implicatures, in which case the strategic speaker can be highly cooperative.

14:00 – 15:15 EuroUnderstanding:

Beate Priewasser, Josef Perner, University of Salzburg, & Johannes Roessler, University of Warwick Beate.Priewasser@sbg.ac.at, Josef.Perner@sbg.ac.at, j.roessler@warwick.ac.uk

Children Understanding of Competition as Intentional Action

Our research focuses on competition as rational action in 3 to 5 year old children and addresses the issue whether perspective taking is crucial for understanding competition as rational action. For engaging in competitive situations it is essential that the competitors are aware of the subjectivity of desires (a different perspective on what is desirable or good). Similarly understanding how a mistaken agent (with a false belief) will act requires understanding of the subjectivity of instrumental actions (a different perspective on what action to take to be successful). Therefore competitive game playing and understanding mistaken actions should develop at the same time if understanding of perspective is a developmentally identifiable step. The results of our study show a clear correlation between the amount of competitive behaviour in a game and to understand mistaken actions in the false belief task.

coffee break

17:00 – 18:15 EuroUnderstanding:

James Hampton, City University London Hampton@city.ac.uk

Adopting Stereotypical Points of View About Gender-based Social Categories

People not only have their own views of the social world, but can also be asked to take on stereotypical points of view of other groups in society. This ability was discovered by Barsalou and Sewell, but has been little researched since. In the study to be reported, we looked at how taking on the point of view of a gender-biased social category (e.g. rugby players) affects the way in which people perceive social misfits - members of two groups that are socially antagonistic.

social dinner

12 September

9:30 – 10:45 OFA8:

Robin McKenna, University of Edinburgh rbnmckenna@gmail.com

Shifting Targets and Disagreement

A common objection to contextualism about ‘might’, ‘knows’ and a host of other expressions is that these expressions behave differently to paradigm context-sensitive expressions (such as indexicals) in certain situations. A version of this objection that has received a lot of attention in the recent literature focuses on how expressions such as ‘might’ and ‘knows’ are used in certain cases in which speakers, intuitively, disagree with each other about the correct application of these expressions. On the one hand, the objection has been taken to motivate adopting a revisionary relativist semantics for the relevant expression (cf. MacFarlane, ‘The Assessment-Sensitivity of Knowledge Ascriptions’) and, on the other, the objection has been taken to motivate a more traditional context-insensitive semantics for the relevant expression (cf. Hawthorne, Knowledge and Lotteries). (Of course, which option is more attractive will depend upon

the expression in question). In this paper I argue that epistemic contextualists (that is, the contextualist about ‘knows’) can deal with the problem of disagreement. In doing so contextualists undercut a potential argument for relativism, and also an argument for an invariantist semantics for ‘knows’.

Comments: José Gusmão, University of Lisbon JGusmao_@hotmail.com

coffee break

11:15 – 12:30 OFA8 Stefan Reining, LOGOS and University of Barcelona,
stefan.reining@googlemail.com

Much More Trouble for the Conciliatory View than Elga Expects

Elga 2010 argues that the Conciliatory View (CV) on peer disagreement is self-undermining, because it offers incoherent advice in those cases in which the disagreement is about the truth or falsity of CV itself. As a consequence, Elga endorses a modified version of the view, which is restricted to those cases of apparent peer disagreement that do not concern the view itself. I argue that Elga’s attack on CV fails, but that this attack can be modified so as to reveal that CV faces a much more general problem than Elga expects -- one that cannot be solved by the kind of restriction to CV that he proposes.

Comments: Diogo Fernandes, LanCog, University of Lisbon,
diogo.andrade.fernandes@gmail.com
lunch

14:00 – 15:15 EuroUnderstanding:

Daniel Cohnitz, University of Tartu cohnitz@ut.ee

Disagreements across scientific perspectives

In my talk I will discuss the role of theories of reference in accounting for disagreements and agreements of various sorts in the history of science. I will focus on theories of partial reference (as developed by Hartry Field and Christina McLeish), and discuss their potential as general theories of reference.

15:30 – 16:45 EuroUnderstanding:

Teresa Marques, LanCog, University of Lisbon mariateresamarques@campus.ul.pt

Disagreement in context and coordination

The possibility of faultless disagreement has been the focus of a lively debate. The two main positions in this debate, contextualists and relativists, have offered semantic theories where the faultlessness of disagreeing parties is guaranteed. It is not clear whether either side preserves disagreement. Contextualists have a problem in accounting for doxastic disagreements. But, it has been argued, relativists have the same problem. Recently, several authors (see Huvenes (2012), Sundell (2011), MacFarlane (forthcoming), Egan (2010), etc.) have drawn attention to another aspect of disagreements, the conflict of non-doxastic attitudes. But there is a simple puzzle about conflicting attitudes that has gone unnoticed. This paper presents the puzzle and suggests a possible solution.

coffee break

17:00 – 18:15 EuroUnderstanding:

Francisco Santos, DEI & INESC-ID, Instituto Superior Técnico (UTL) & ATP-group,
Instituto para a Investigação Interdisciplinar, University of Lisbon,

franciscocsantos@ist.utl.pt

Behavioral dynamics under climate change dilemmas

In this talk, I will first address several evolutionary mechanisms that are able to efficiently promote cooperation at different levels of complexity. Next, by taking global warming as an example, I will discuss an evolutionary and social learning dynamics approach to a broad class of cooperation problems in which attempting to minimize future losses turns the risk of failure into a central issue in individual decisions.

Resorting to the tools of game theory, we find that decisions within small groups under high risk and stringent requirements to success significantly raise the chances of coordinating actions and escaping the tragedy of the commons. We also offer insights on the scale at which public goods problems of cooperation are best solved. Instead of large-scale endeavors involving most of the population, which as we argue, may be counterproductive to achieve cooperation, the joint combination of local agreements within groups that are smaller than the population at risk is prone to significantly raise the probability of success. In addition, our model predicts that, if one takes into consideration that groups of different sizes are interwoven in complex networks of contacts, the chances for global coordination in an overall cooperating state are further enhanced.