## *Truth and Agreement* – *Paul Dekker*

Dekker (2021) wants to offer a new perspective on what has been traditionally referred as proposition. Traditionally, propositions are taken to be something objectively true or false. Dekker challenges this view by considering the case of self-reference declarations ('The length on this bar is one meter') and statements of opinion ('This cake is tasty'). In the former case, the same propositional content that gets declared true is defined itself by the same declaration. In the latter case, there is no sensible way to define 'tasty' as objectively true or false and some sort of relativism is needed.

Dekker proposes that a proposition is, as the name suggests, a proposal upon which speakers can *agree/disagree*.

Some terminology:

- `proposition`: concrete realization of an utterance (e.g. the sequence of characters in a sentence or the sequence of sounds in an utterance)
- PROPOSITION: `proposition` which can be evaluated as true/false
- *proposition:* `proposition` which is staged/proposed by a speaker
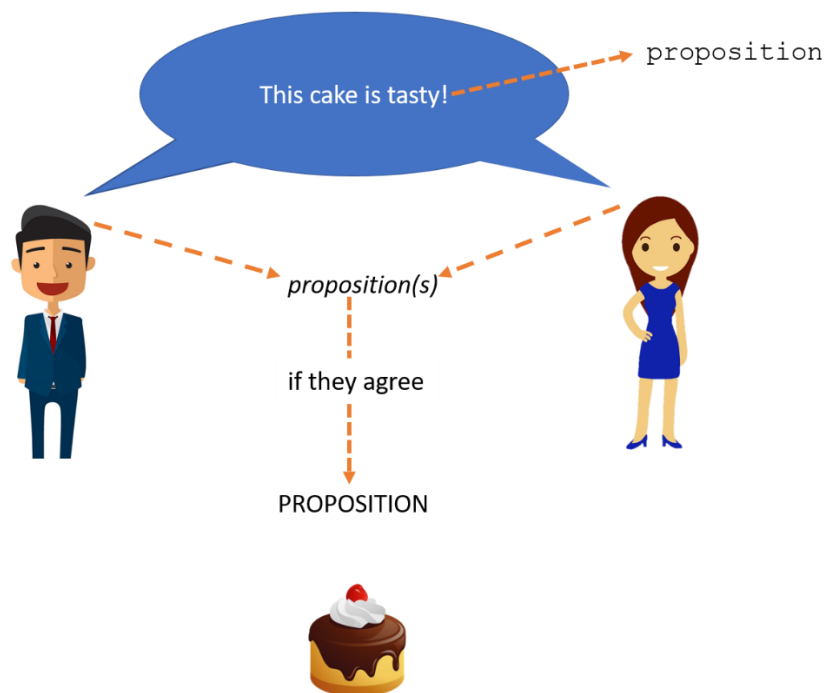
Some relevant questions and comments were discussed.

First, the importance of linguistic relevance was mentioned. In this regard two remarks were made, the first one by Maria. In Coppock (2018), a difference between objective ('this proof is valid') and discretionary statements ('this cake is tasty') is put forward. One of the reasons was to explain ungrammaticality judgments like `I find that this proof is valid' or 'I find that this is a table'. Paul claims that, to a certain extent, everything can be questioned and if two individuals start to disagree about what a table is, then the sentence `I find that this is a table' should be fine after all. But then, one might say that what matters here is that the predicate *find* is indeed sensitive to discretionary statements, whether it is being tasty or being a table. It might be so, but Paul observes that is simply of linguistic relevance, as much as gender is explicitly encoded in language (e.g. languages in which male/female speakers use a different vowel system).

There was also some discussion on the actual characterization of what has been called *proposition.* Maria wondered if it can be characterized as a speaker-dependent 'extension' of e.g. 'being tasty'. This might resemble a contextualist approach. Paul reluctantly replied that it might be something of that kind, even though the notion of *proposition* might encompass elements which cannot be captured by the notion of extension alone.

A follow up on the first point: if it is true that ungrammaticality might be redeemed (on this see, Paul related work in *Live Meanings)* by evaluating a sentence in a more subjective or different way, how to deal with ungrammaticality caused by e.g. NPIs? Traditionally, standard approaches (e.g. Chierchia) assume a clash at a *truth-conditional* level of analysis.

The relevance of other frameworks (Incurvati's Expressivist Semantics and Farkas & Bruce (2010)) was also discussed. The latter try to provide formal models of conversation, where agreement and disagreement takes place. A possible issue was that such frameworks were compatible with the 'performative' aspect of a *proposition*, which then indeed leads to agreement or disagreement. But they might not be able to fully characterize the notion of *proposition* itself. For instance, take two speakers which fully disagree on the extension of 'being tasty'. We might still say that they agree on how to determine if something is tasty or not. And we might say that this procedural component is indeed part of what counts as the *proposition 'being tasty '*. It seems thus the notion of *proposition* encompasses a variety of layers which have a cognitive component hardly capturable by formal means.

We concluded that, even if that is the case, the accomplished purpose of the paper was indeed to show that starting from the notion of proposition as something objectively true or false and from there extending one's analysis to e.g. questions, statements of opinion and so on, might be misleading. And even in the absence of a formal system which captures all the dimensions which characterize a *proposition*, the standard reliance of truth-conditional semantics should not go unchallenged.