Superextension, modal assertability, and hypothetical discernibility: Bertrand Russell's theory of the content of speculative strategies and his compatibility with a coherentist solution

Superextensão, assertabilidade modal e discernibilidade hipotética: a teoria de Bertrand Russell sobre o conteúdo de estratégias especulativas e sua compatibilidade com uma solução coerentista

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Abstract: We argue that Russell's treatment of propositions containing non-existent denotations is the prelude of a strategy for discerning the predictive content of any proposition with descriptions (and incomplete symbols), insofar as its indeterminacy is classifiable as a *possible extension*. We argue, further, that Russell's theory of propositional functions is dedicated to explaining the discernibility of hypothetical propositions, through representing (what we call) the superextension of assertoric modal propositions. The indeterminacy of the truth of hypothetical propositions is thus paired with a second-order classification condition, expressing its conjectural content as the projected scope of instantiation of a propositional function; which in turn is the superextension of a modal predicate. Russell's theory is his non-pragmatic answer to the problem of assertability in unstable and uncertain conditions. It involves a sophisticated thesis about the *discernibility* of complex contents, such as those represented by analogical and approximate denotations (descriptions, fictions, etc.), which classify more than one possibility of instantiation in different modal and intensional contexts. We will conclude this article by testing the assumption that Russell's theory favors a coherentist theory, seeing that as it admits assertability conditions that are super-mapped in a system, or that derive from different orders of referential layers.

Keywords: Bertrand Russell. Coherentism. Extensionality. Hypothetical discernibility. Modal assertion.

Resumo: *Argumentamos que o tratamento de Russell de proposições contendo denotações inexistentes é o prelúdio de uma estratégia para discernir o conteúdo preditivo de qualquer proposição com descrições (e símbolos incompletos), na medida em que sua indeterminação é classificável como uma extensão possível. Argumentamos, ainda, que a teoria das funções proposicionais de Russell se dedica a explicar a discernibilidade de proposições hipotéticas, por meio da representação (o que chamamos) da superextensão de proposições modais assertóricas. A indeterminação da verdade de proposições hipotéticas é, assim, emparelhada com uma condição de classificação de segunda ordem, expressando seu conteúdo conjectural como o escopo projetado de instanciação de uma função proposicional; que por sua vez é a superextensão de um predicado modal. A teoria de Russell é sua resposta não pragmática ao problema da assertabilidade em condições instáveis e incertas. Trata-se de uma tese sofisticada sobre a discernibilidade de conteúdos complexos, como aqueles representados por denotações analógicas e aproximadas (descrições, ficções etc.), que classificam mais de uma possibilidade de instanciação em diferentes contextos modais e intensionais. Concluiremos este artigo testando o pressuposto de que a teoria de Russell favorece uma teoria coerentista, visto que admite condições de assertibilidade que são supermapeadas em um sistema, ou que derivam de diferentes ordens de camadas referenciais.*

Palavras-chave: *Asserção modal. Bertrand Russell. Coerentismo. Discernibilidade hipotética. Extensionalidade.*

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1 The problem of determining a super-extension as the conversion of Hypothetical content to Modal assertability

The set of problems sometimes referred to as Frege-Russell's puzzles include the negative existential problem, the problem of informativeness, and the problems with beliefs and other statements of propositional attitude. As Frederick Kroon described in his article (2004), *Descriptivism, Pretense and Frege-Russell Problems*, "most of us think that the contribution made by the names involved in these locutions to what the locutions are used to communicate is in many cases not exhausted by the objects denoted by the names" (KROON, 2004, p. 3). This impression assumes Russell from the outset as involved in a rephrasing program capable of identifying expressions of ordinary language that encode a meaningful relationship only contextually, as certain technical codes are used to provide a *super map*, which describes a location through a map of the map. This impression is not contradicted by the bulk of the assumptions shared by the first analytic philosophers, namely, the assumption that a symbology capable of reporting the extensional mapping between concepts would allow a more mathematically mature theory of identity and quantification, useful even to identify possible references (such as the King of France). But if the mathematical ability to lock a constant identity value to terms has rarely been doubted, this school has remained in doubt about the character of this cognition. If on the one hand it could be seen as the cognition of a Platonic object, on the other it could simply be a bundle of empirical associations grouped by a provisional name. The philosophical discussion about the nature of this knowledge remained fierce.

Observing the nature of denotative terms, Bertrand Russell (1905) argued that mapping extensions to our propositions may result in some typical difficulties, such as, for example, the difficulty linked with knowing the denotation of non-existents, such as "The King of France". The question goes on to ask how that supposed denoting expression can contribute to the cognition of propositions that include them as a subject: (c) "The King of France is bald". Assuming, like Russell, the incompleteness of descriptive symbols helps explain why propositions like (c) can retain a truth value rather than, as Strawson (1905) believed, lack one. In Russell's version of the solution, King of France is not a real subject of propositions: "denoting phrases never have any meaning in themselves, [...] every proposition in whose verbal expression they occur has a meaning" (1905, p. 480). King of France is only a description that assigns a property to possible instances, which we may express by saying: "It is not always false of x that 'if y is the King of France, y is identical with x' is always true of y" (1905, p. 482).

This semantic solution must be understood in parallel with epistemological and reductionist ambitions. As the author later made clear in *An Inquiry Into Meaning and Truth*: "this meets the difficulty that would otherwise arise whenever we speak of something which is in fact complex, but which we do not know to be so" (RUSSELL , 1940, p. 267). Indeterminacy is thus determined by, first, finding the hypothetical assumption contained in the hidden complexity of the incomplete symbol and, second, encoding it in a second-order rule that classifies that connection as true or false:

> For Russell, this means that it involves the attribution of a higher-order property to a lower-level property. Here, one may think of propositional functions as playing the role of properties, and of "sometimes true" and "always true" as expressing the properties of being instantiated and universally instantiated, respectively. (SOAMES, 2005, p. 11).

The higher-order predicates are "... is possible", "is necessary", "exists", "is true", and others of the same nature (that we cannot yet determine). For Russell, "existence" is the predicate of a propositional function. In P*hilosophy of Logical Atomism*, he says: "As regards the actual things there are in the world, there is nothing at all that you can say about them that in any way corresponds to this notion of existence" (RUSSELL, 1988, p. 211). The non-existence of the King of France, thus, is nothing more than the non-instantiation of a second-order rule that classifies the extension in which "The King of

Lucas Ribeiro Vollet
Superextension, modal assertability, and hypothetical discernibility: Bertrand Russell's theory of the content of speculative strategies and his compatibility with a coherentist solution

3/9

France exists" is false. We may call the instances of a second-order rule a superextension since it maps another map.

Russell's theory is founded, at its lowest level of presuppositions, on the premise that extensionally indeterminate propositions are loaded with a predictive or inferential content, which needs to be clarified and classified into a unitary assertion condition:

> Consider next the proposition "all men are mortal". This proposition is really hypothetical and states that if anything is a man, it is mortal. That is, it states that if x is a, man, x is mortal, whatever x may be. Hence, substituting "x is human" for "x is a man", we find: "All men are mortal" means "'If x is human, x is mortal' is always true". (RUSSELL, 1905, p. 481).

This means that if The King of France is bald is false, it will not turn into truth, even if there is a set of possible worlds where the King of France exists and is bald. Because that possibility will be expressed as a second-order truth, which is only the (super) instantiation of the propositional function compatible with "It is true that '(c)' is possible", which is true in the same models where (c) is false. The second-order level of encoding guarantees that proposition (c) enters truth-functional relations, shielding it from probabilistic and non-logical speculations: "It seems to me that 'p is probable' is strictly equivalent to 'is true' that p is probable" (RUSSELL, 1940, p. 318).

Conversion of hypothetical content to *assertable* modal content is not trivial. Because, at face value, hypothetical propositions are not modal propositions. The first is problematic in a way the second is not: "there is an important difference between the cases where the chances of subsequent correction are either nil or else genuinely inconsiderable and those where they are, however slight, still considerable" (RYLE, 2009, p. 139). If there is any knowledge of modal interactions that equals knowledge of hypothetical interactions, that is not, therefore, achievable by programming a search for instances of those different units of knowledge.

In the picture of the challenge we need to face, we are engaged in the attempt to restore the bipolarity of any hypothetical content, by representing it by a material conditional, and the fallibility of any modal utterance, by representing it by ma superextensional classification. The different strategies for deciding theoretical disputes with high speculative content, therefore, are precluded by the ability to protect safe points of assertability, even for unstable situations of representation of the possible and the impossible. Russell thus, without an explicit modal theory, reveals an account of modal predicates as properties used to classify hypothetical differences, that is, to speak *assertively* of mere inferential connections.

However, this does not mean that we can improvise fictional extensions to substitute modal predicates and solve complicated problems of discernibility between hypotheses and probabilities; the superextensional problem – the problem of mapping the map – is just as complicated as the problem of finding that discernibility.

Here we are trying to determine the point of possible assertability where the sentence maximizes its immunity to time and modal alterations: "affirming S at t2 should have the same truth value as affirming 'What S expresses at T2 is true at T2'" (WRIGHT, 1993, p. 202). The proposition that is expressed at this point is a second-order rule that classifies super-instances, giving an *absolute value* to an unknown condition. All these problems can be tackled in different ways, and arguably, the progress of science has not always opted for similar strategies. But one thing we do know, and that is that the consistency of our hypothesis about *truth* is part of the presuppositions that stabilize the possible decision of our conditional assertions. Therefore, these problems are not generated separately:

> At the present, we do not know whether there is life elsewhere in the universe, but we are right to feel sure that there either is or is not. Thus we need 'truth' as well as 'knowledge', because the boundaries of knowledge are uncertain and because,

without the law of excluded middle, we could not ask the questions that give rise to discoveries. (RUSSELL, 1940, p. 288).

2   Superextensional coherence and the different mentalities of referentialism and coherentism

Fixed-point revision theories for applying the predicate "is true" show that often saying "This sentence is true" is not incoherent.

> we can easily write down conditions that forbid any completely unsafe sentence from being either true or false […] These conditions imply that the Truthteller is neither true nor false since none of its semantic constituents is a boundary sentence. (MAUDLIN, 2004, p. 81).

It is not incoherent if, for example, we give it an "n" value, instead of a regular extension. The "n" value is not yet intentional, nor a hypothetical value, but it represents a state of neutrality. It shows the semantic condition of the sentence in a strategy of communicating a message. To know if that strategy is successful or defeatist, we need to place the "n" sentence in a place on the scale of the Tarskian hierarchy where its assertion is safe enough not to provoke paradoxes or explosions, that is, not to trigger the vertiginous growth of true sentences derived from contradictions.

This means that, although the sentence is not safely (free of paradox) reducible to a Tarskian biconditional at first glance, it is possible to improvise a Tarskian biconditional for it, as we make adjustments to the language as a whole. The sentence, at first foreign to the system, is adjusted to it and can be retrieved as an objective message by all competent speakers, as is the case with the liar sentence, which has never been a big headache except for philosophers and inveterate formalists. This is in agreement, too, with a coherentist solution. The result is that we can say exactly what we wanted, even with sentences that would receive no truth-value in regular extensional conditions, that is, even using circular sentences that draw support from the second-order – or some superstructural – coherence of the rules. We will say that those conditions of coherence are the coherence of a superextension, or the alignment of the layers that involves mapping of other maps.

Those safe spots for assertions are guaranteed not by some extensional assignment, but by the coherence of the rules that predict that the sentence cannot be true in the same conditions in which *it would* be false. It makes "possible truth" and "would be false" predictable or modeled by mapping it to possible extensions. This is the superextensional coherence of the interpretation. It doesn't need a reference; it just needs the consistent use of the truth-predicate in possible or counterfactual conditions. Different scientific systems project different super-extensions. For example, the extension of frog and amphibious coincide in the superextension projected by Biological classification. Instantiation in specific circumstances, i.e., as an instantiation of a genre, is superextensional.

Given these advances in semantics, why does it still seem reasonable to say that there is no semantic representation of sentences that are not completely defined by a unified extension? Perhaps here we are in the face of a conflict between philosophical mentalities. The reference theorists, more prone to austerity, do not deny the possibility of rescuing the liar's sentence within a structure of coherence. However, as this involves the inflation of rules or the arbitrary enrichment of the system, this does not seem to be a sustainable solution. Another philosophical mind, more inclined towards coherentism, believes that the sustainability of the system depends on independent theoretical considerations and the chosen assertion strategy, and therefore we can anchor our assertive projections – even the riskiest ones – without relying on a single, primary extension. We can construct several possible extensions and unify them according to second-order considerations. Then we can assign an extension to possible values.

Lucas Ribeiro Vollet
Superextension, modal assertability, and hypothetical discernibility: Bertrand Russell's theory of the content of speculative strategies and his compatibility with a coherentist solution

5/9

This solution involves the unspoken premise that: "some element of idealization is involved in the relevant notion of possibility, though not so much that it deteriorates into mere logical possibility" (WRIGHT, 1993, p. 412). As Russell, in 1905, no longer indulged the "idealistic aberration" attributed to his alleged Cambridge indoctrination, this idealization was exchanged by the resource for *logical analysis*. The analytical procedure, nonetheless, operates a *stabilization of the grounds of the assertion* that works as the ideal representation of the conditions for the "possibly true" proposition to be (absolutely) true. The stable point for an assertive idealization is a generalization of the second-order rule that sets the point at which its semantic value cannot be inverted from true to false and vice versa. Now we know *an absolute or timeless contribution* of the merely possible, that is, we can *assert* a merely conjectural condition and expect this assertion to behave in a harmless truth-functional mode. Russell's solution is similar to Crispin Wright's:

> Super-assertability – the generalization of mathematical provability which we seek – would be […] that [property] which a statement possesses when it is both possible, under favorable circumstances, to achieve a body of knowledge that warrants its assertion, and impossible, […] to enlarge on that body of knowledge in such a way that the statement ceases to be warrantedly assertible. (WRIGHT, 1993, p. 415).

3   The radical extensionalist reaction and a response to it

In this article, one of the premises is that Russell was far less extensionalist than other philosophers who came after him. When Davidson generalizes Tarski's thesis to determine that a theory of meaning coincides with an extensional interpretation, he is already at a stage of extensionalism that Russell, by our reckoning, would find too radical. We will now look at the case of Davidson and radical extensionalism in order to improve the case for determining Russell's place.

Donald Davidson thinks that interpretations in which a unified and primary extension is not sufficient to guarantee a unified prediction of a sentence cannot give a semantic prediction of the sentence either. This is so because he assumes one wants testable theories of meaning, and theories of meaning can only be tested if there is a trivial uniformity in the mapped correlation between the sign and its meaning. This is not achievable in circumstances of higher complexity as in second-order mappings or translation (*Truth and Meaning*): "It must be possible, of course, for the speaker of one language to construct a theory of meaning for the speaker of another, though in this case the theory will no longer be trivial" (DAVIDSON, 2001, p. 27). The author admits that there is a margin of error for losses of translation: "the residue of sentences held true translated by sentences held false […] is the margin of error" (DAVIDSON, 2001, p. 27). The real problem comes when no margin can predict tolerable losses, for example, if exceptions and rules are confused. If we cannot use the Tarskian pattern, the T scheme ("p" is true if p), to determine the uniformity of the sentence interpretation rule, there will not be enough structural homogeneity between the models used to predict the truth of a sentence to the point that determines its semantic behavior as a "meaning", that is, a shareable and repeatable entity in the market of information exchanges and translations. This is a problem not only for translation but for scientific reasoning as well. If one needs to know how, for instance, a frog performs under a different biological thesis about its evolutionary development, he simply needs to know more than what is semantically needed for the interpretation. The instantiation of "is an amphibian" by "frog" is a *specification* of a theoretical genus and not an *extension* in the semantic sense. If we do not want to quantify over species or natural kinds, we must exclude that interpretation from semantics. One cannot learn what conditions the sentence puts to test using the rules of language grammar, and therefore, as the recipe goes, "frog is an amphibian" is not understood solely due to its meaning. To understand it, one needs to be educated in Biology. For extreme semantic extensionalists, it is an abuse of philosophical energy to say that it is an intentional condition

for all frogs to be amphibians, that it is "impossible" for frogs to not be amphibians, or that there is an *incapability* for frogs to fail at being amphibians, or that it is analytical that (...), etc. If they ever meet the superextensional solution, they would probably say that this is a fictional classification of the same kind of Meinongian objects.

But that would be to force the problem to preserve the dogmatic presupposition that the semantic value coincides with the extension, i.e., it assumes as given the supposition (that we are questioning) that there is no *ingredient, sub, or super-referential* contributions to meaning. We may devise a reaction and a response from the coherentist field.

If the rule used to interpret the sentence "frog is an amphibian", be it normative, ethical, or institutional, gives the elements for the consistent exclusion of possibilities to be incompatible with its interpretation, this projection will adjust that sentence within the language with coherent and expressive potential. There will be as much "meaning" in the market of interpretation exchange as any other extensional correlation. Why does it matter that the material knowledge that allows the connection between frogs and amphibious are in need to project a "biological extension", i.e., a superinstantiation of some law of Biology? For a coherentist, the complex of laws that sets the relations between genus and species is enough for that sentence to fix a correlation pattern in the chain of signs and meaning. If this is not a semantic content, then neither is the *pure* extensional value, since the latter does nothing differently – it just fixes the pattern that allows to disquote the sentence using a Tarskian biconditional: "'p' is true if and only if p".

In other words, for a coherentist, biological classification is in *the same busines*s as semantic classification: it does not aim at representing the "world of biology" but the "world" period. There is no conflict between biological instances and *worldly instances*. They aim at the same extension, but by using different rules. If we are right, the radical extensionalist does not have a compelling argument against the coherentist. The reason is that they face the same challenge: avoiding paradox, antinomy, rule conflict, etc. That is the only challenge they can face. Extensionalists are not better off than super-extensionalists, not referentialists better off than coherentists, to face that challenge. They both are in the same business of maximizing the consistency of laws. Once maximum consistency is achieved, extension and super-extension will coincide. The only stance in which the coherentist deviates from the extensionalist is in his formulation of the challenge. For a coherentist, the challenge is of another nature: that of fixing good enough categorial conditions for the fine-grained prediction of the meaning.

The unity of the semantic rule that predicts the extensional relationships represented by a truth table is just the simplest representation of a point in the assertion strategy where the mapping to truth is the most economical. If a biologist can find the point where the frog classification is most organically consistent with the rules of his evolutionary system, he will see that the superextension that instantiates his sentences is identical to a unified "extension" (a single rule will apply to all instances). In that ideal case, the relationship between the sentences will behave in a truth-functional manner. Then the Biological instance will not be different than the semantic instance: they will both coincide with the broad extension: the universe. In the ideal limit, semantics and biology will coincide. This coincidence between science and semantics can be problematic most of the time, for obvious reasons: first, idealizations *are not* immune to critiques, second, our scientific theories aim at enriching our set of truths, while semantics operate in a state of stability where truth and proof coincide trivially (by Tarskian patterns). This is just a consequence of the fact that these two spheres of knowledge serve different purposes: semantics is used to establish a field of stable presuppositions, from which theories (such as biology) can depart to investigate new truths. But that does not change the fact that what is sought is the ideal case: the case in which the Biologist is in tune with the identity mapping system of culture and available languages. No scientist wants to be so innovative that he cannot express himself in the public language available to his peers, and most of them do not want to deviate too much from the ordinary language of common sense. The *sweet spot* is therefore the horizon in which to say that frogs are amphibians is not a mysterious

Lucas Ribeiro Vollet
Superextension, modal assertability, and hypothetical discernibility: Bertrand Russell's theory of the content of speculative strategies and his compatibility with a coherentist solution

7/9

assertive position nor a normative overinterpretation, but a simple assertion that can be expressed by the Tarskian bi-conditional.

4 The ideal and the non-ideal

Now we can better narrow down the nature of the challenge that we configure as the ideality of the coincidence between extension and superextension. If the *normal* semantic case is the closest to the extensional one, there must be some point in the chain of production of correlations between signs and meaning that is not tenable. However, this is not a pressure on the bounds of the Sense, as Wittgenstein assumed. The "non-normal" sentences are speakable, but not yet as full grounded assertions. Nor should one conclude that, when we cannot assert a sentence in the fixed point where it can receive a "healthy" truth value, we fail to give these sentences an organic semantic value and, in their place, something lesser is given – such as rhetorical, pragmatic, analogical value, etc. The arbitrary production of rules about rules, mapping of maps, or the projection of intensional objects, classes of classes, offers an unstable semantic state. The same can be said of analogies and metaphors. That does not mean that sentences that use those super-referential devices are outside the region of the speakable. They are to be included in a strategy of meaning production. To achieve a certain state of artificial normality, where exclusion of possible exceptions is done, we may operate at a not completely rewarding cost. When one uses predatory strategies of meaning or artificial referential mappings, this may have a cost. When creating assertive superstructures (to guide a signification strategy), the challenge to test these sentences is to assess whether they are predatory or non-predatory strategies. They will be predatory if they want the best of both worlds (confirmation from their instances and, at the same time, not counter-confirmation from counterexamples). We must say, following Tim Maudlin, that a theory with "norms of assertion and denial which recommends asserting false sentences and denying true ones would face considerable burden of explanation" (MAUDLIN, 2004, p. 95). Assertion strategies that produce artificial rewards, promoting dogmatic super-assertive conditions (protected from falsification), are *ad hoc* and create the conditions for paradox and proliferation of equally (extensionally) grounded contradictions (antinomies).

If there is a typical case where using predatory resources of the linguistic system to construct the message which can be done without irreversible damage, this is the strategy of scientific theories to compensate and adjust to new data. But it's hard to say, in economics and semantics, what is the point of collapse at which an *unrewarding* but still strategic interpretation becomes downright defeatist and unfeasible. Sometimes what is rewardable for one sentence (or one social class) is non-rewardable in the long run or for the whole language (or the community). The point at which the rule and the exception become indistinguishable is just the caricatured state of that broad crisis in meaning exchange.

5 The coherentist consequence of the super-referential conditions

The appeal of radical (Davidsonian) extensionalism is based on a premise: that the normal case of semantic intelligibility is one in which there is a theoretical unification of the prediction of true sentences. This is translated by Davidson's famous interpretation of the Tarskian bi-conditional as the pattern known to someone who has technical mastery of a language. What he knows is how to construct sentences under conditions of semantic normality, that is, sentences whose particular extension can be included in the total extension of the "truth" predicate as used consistently in that language. That normal case is one in which truth and "provable" coincide, that is, where extension is all that is needed to discern a true sentence from a false one. At the same time, it is rash to say that the only form of semantic value is extensional, or that the coincidence between the projection of the sentence and its extension is the only way to identify a reliable, predictable, and uniform aspect of the interpretation of a sentence. If that

were the case, sentences that project a superextension, like sentences from regional scientific paradigms, would be unintelligible semantically. We would be stuck in this strange condition where the truth of scientific propositions would have a superstructural richness that would prohibit them from being proved by ordinary semantic techniques. Empirical scientists would be speaking "hermetic" or "incognoscible" languages. Therefore their propositions would also be prohibited from being expressed *safely* (free of paradox) by Tarski's biconditional. If that were the case, we would not be able to semantically express sentences that are derived from new scientific paradigms – and not even those of some old ones, since, for example, the biological classification of a frog as amphibian does not coincide with the *semantic extension* of a frog.

A way out of this impasse is to say that there is an ideal case, in which all the science of an epoch can be expressed semantically since superextension and extension will coincide in the same comprehensive predicate "it is true". The ambitions of physicalist reductionism, to take one example, aim at this ideal state. The normal, or ideal case, is the case where the superextensional interpretation coincides with a unified extension, and that is the case where we have a uniform ontology, for example, a physicalist ontology. However, this is nothing but an ideal, an artificial and negative way of achieving referential stability.

6   Conclusion: Russell and coherentism

In his chapter on *warranted assertibility* (1940), Russell's critique of pragmatism takes the form of a statement of his preference for assertions about matters of fact rather than hypotheses and theories: "Dr. Dewey is mainly concerned with theories and hypotheses, whereas I am mainly concerned with assertions about particular matters of fact" (RUSSELL, 1940, p. 324). This preference suggests a conception of conjectural problems as a problem about superextension. When we determine the superextensional problem, we are expressing what it would take for our strategies of assertion to be successful in unstable conditions. We are representing the question: what would it take – what are the ideal conditions – to retain the assertive success of a proposition that is sensitive to time-modal conditions? This idealization converts the possibility of truth (of a hypothesis) into a class of possible instances of an *assertable* propositional function – or a proposition that is falsifiable in conditions of super-instantiation (possible instances). Here, however, Russell's theory ends up very close to the pragmatism and coherentism he wanted to reject. For this conversion to be successful, the idealizing strategy needs to be *non-dogmatically rewarding*. If the sentences cash out truth assignments even from counter-instances, there is some predatory aspect in its assertive strategy that will be converted into higher costs in the long run (the mathematician will see it as a paradox, the mystic-philosopher as an unspeakably, the skeptic as an indetermination or incommensurability). To avoid that crisis in meaning exchange, the assertion cannot cash out *less* truth than *non-falseness* from a class of instances. There must be a perfect balance between each instance that denies the counter-assertion and confirms the assertion. This balance is what guarantees that our knowledge of the truth generates a predicate (... is true) that *enriches* in a cumulative direction. The *coherence* of the enrichment must be achieved. The issue involves the attempt to logically control rampant speculation by developing second-order rules, which problematize not only the possible solutions of a propositional dispute but the possible solutions of a super-propositional dispute, where the extension and anti-extension of the propositional rule do not always grow and *get richer* in inverse proportion. That solution is achieved when we reach an ideal coincidence between all our extensional mappings and super-mappings.

Even if the ideal case is achieved, this does not imply that the semantic value *is* the reference. This just means that the cases in which the semantic value (even if it is "n" or a "superextension") coincides with the extension are the safest and most economical cases of interpretation, the ones that require the least of the system, and that derive the sentences from that system as its theorems. It is not

Lucas Ribeiro Vollet
Superextension, modal assertability, and hypothetical discernibility: Bertrand Russell's theory of the content of speculative strategies and his compatibility with a coherentist solution

9/9

devoid of mystery that those are also the cases where we can share an ontology or a list of common references. But this ontology is not rigidly fixed, nor is a theoretician defenseless to produce meaning without reference. Russell's paraphrases tried to show precisely this state of our assertions in which we can expand the possibilities of mapping truth – super-mapping it using a propositional function – by supposing an incomplete referent or improvised by an incomplete symbol. We do not always manage to use sentences in ideal conditions of extensional uniformity, and if that triggers the impression that we are operating in divided ontologwical conditions, or that we are lacking reference, maybe the onus should be on the referentialist prejudice. On our account, Russell cannot be counted among the adherents of this referentialist bias.

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