Graz Young Epistemology and Philosophy of Logic Workshop

Topic: Communication and Inference
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Venue: University of Graz, Hauptgebäude, Universitätsplatz 3, Room
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Laura Celani   "Logical Norms and the Epistemic Paradoxes"

Abstract. Some of the current attempts to account for the normativity of logic try to formulate epistemic norms in a conditional form, such as the principles discussed in MacFarlane's 'In What Sense (If Any) Is Logic Normative For Thought?' (2004) and Restall's 'Multiple Conclusions' (2005). The main desideratum for these principles is that they provide a plausible way to explain the connection between valid arguments and informal reasoning, i.e., reasoning that could be attributed to a rational agent.
In my paper, I draw a distinction between logical laws and logical norms, then I show that none of the logical norms discussed is able to both (i) satisfy the desideratum and (ii) provide requirements for rational belief.The norms I take into consideration are the normative requirements discussed by Broome in his article 'Normative Requirements' (1999), the bridge principles presented by MacFarlane, and the principle discussed by Restall.
I make my assumptions explicit, then I proceed to considering the Preface and the Lottery Paradox and test the logical norms against them, showing that the norms formulated as requirements for belief don't provide rationally plausible principles.The logical norms formulated as reasons for belief fare better with the epistemic paradoxes than their strictly prescriptive counterparts. However, it can be argued that they don't have sufficient constraining power on our beliefs.
Therefore, none of the bridge principles is able to both (i) provide a plausible way to connect valid arguments and informal reasoning, and (ii) provide requirements for rational belief.In the last section of the paper, I present a classification of norms and argue that the kind of normativity logical norms belong to is much weaker than the normative requirements and the analogous principles would suggest.

Christoph Kelp   "The Generating Knowledge Account of Assertion"

Abstract. Standard accounts of the normativity of assertion maintain (i) that

assertion is governed by an epistemic speaker rule, such as the knowledge rule or the justification rule, and (ii) that assertions are epistemically non-defective if and only if they satisfy the speaker rule. One aim of this paper is to show that standard accounts are false as the knowledge rule is true but there are epistemically non-defective assertions that do not satisfy the knowledge rule. The second and primary aim of this is to develop a novel account of the normativity of assertion. At the heart of this account is the thesis that assertion has an epistemic etiological epistemic function, viz. to generate knowledge in hearers. In conjunction with a general account of etiological functions and their normative import, it is argued that assertions are epistemically non-defective if and only if they have the disposition to generate knowledge in hearers. It is also shown that the knowledge rule fits neatly into this account. In the case of assertions function of generating knowledge in hearers, it matters that assertion fulfils this function reliably. Reason is provided to believe that, as a result, it makes sense to regulate assertion by the knowledge rule, as this contributes to ensuring that assertion generates knowledge in hearers reliably. In this way, the knowledge rule of assertion is rationalised.

Robin McKenna   "Recommending"

Abstract In this paper I develop a speech act-theoretic account of recommending. Speech acts are often individuated via the norms that govern them, so in the first section I sketch a preliminary normative account of recommending, on which recommending is governed by a norm to the effect that one should recommend someone f (where "f" is some action) only if one has reason to believe that f-ing is in their best interests. However, in the second section I argue that this account conflicts with how we assess recommendations. In the third section I propose an alternative account on which recommending is governed by a norm to the effect that one should recommend someone f only if one knows f-ing is in their best interests. I call this the 'knowledge account' of recommending. The knowledge account seems to conflict with how we issue recommendations. But I argue that the defender of the knowledge account has the resources to deal with this problem. Finally, I explore possible applications of the knowledge account in meta-ethics.

Gil Sagi   "What is a Fixed Term?"

Abstract. In standard model-theoretic semantics, logical terms are said to be fixed in the system while nonlogical terms remain variable. Much effort has been devoted to characterizing logical terms, those terms that should be fixed, but little has been said on their role in logical systems: on what fixing them precisely amounts to. My proposal is that when a term is considered logical in a system, what gets fixed is its intension rather than its extension. I provide a rigorous way of spelling out this idea. Further, I show that under certain natural assumptions, some paradigmatic examples of nonlogical terms cannot be fixed in a standard system: they require more structure than such a system affords. We thus obtain a

precondition for logical terms. I then propose a graded account of logicality: the less structure a term requires, the more logical it is. Finally, I relate this idea to invariance criteria for logical terms. Invariance criteria can be used as a tool in determining how much structure a term needs in order to be fixed. Thus, rather than settling on one criterion for logicality, I use invariance conditions as a measure for logicality.

Mona Simionescu   "Assertion, Contextualism, and Epistemic Goals"

Abstract. A very popular position about the normativity of assertion claims that epistemic standards for epistemically proper assertion vary with context. This paper questions this claim and puts forth a strict invariantist knowledge norm for assertion (SI-KNA). It is argued that knowledge is both necessary and sufficient for epistemically proper assertion, and that SI-KNA deals better with cases of assertion's sensitivity to context than its main competitors on the market–contextualism about the norm for assertion, contextualism about knowledge attribution and subject sensitive invariantism.