ABSTRACTS

A2.1 Philosophical Logic

Deflationism and the meaning of Gödel’s sentence
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Difficulty with which the deflationary theory of truth meets in the case of nonconservativity of theory’s extension (for example, PA), arising in case of addition to the initial theory of the truth-predicate, is the strongest argument against the deflationary theory of truth. S. Shapiro shows possibility to deduce in the case of addition of the truth-predicate to PA, for example, Gödel’s sentence, that is impossible without it. This fact is interpreted as the certificate in favor of substantiality of the truth concept.

Without insisting on correctness of deflationary theory, it seems to us, that the argument of nonconservativity on the basis of getting Gödel’s sentences with adding a truth-predicate needs essential addition. The Gödel’s sentence is of a very specific nature. Therefore before directly claiming about an inaccuracy of the deflationary theory, we must consider a question of meaning of the Gödel’s sentence and a question about how we understand its validity. For example, M. Dammit interprets Gödel’s sentence not as universal sentence of metamathematics, but as usual universal sentence of arithmetic. Similar approach was used by N. Tennant for ‘show that the deflationist has at his disposal’ methods to prove Gödel’s sentence (in some extended theory) of without making use of a truth-predicate. This approach assumes a priority of our knowledge of the truth of the totality of its numerical instances before the truth of the sentence itself, that can be challenged. The meaning of Gödel’s sentences directly depends on a way of its constructing. Only by tightly constraining the means of construction can one obtain Gödel’s sentences of which it is correct, without further ado, to say that they say of themselves that they are unprovable and that they are true. It means that we can't approve an inaccuracy of deflationism on the basis of nonconservative extension of the theory (getting Gödel’s sentence in PA with truth-predicate) without analysis of a way of Gödel’s sentence’s constructing. Different way of its constructing may involves concept of truth in different sense, for example, without appealing to semantic interpretation of truth, and that will be compatible with deflationist’s position.

On the simplicity of truth
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In the literature it has sometimes been claimed that truth is a simple notion. Since our formal theories of truth are purportedly designed to capture our pre-theoretic conception of truth, it would seem to follow that they also ought to specifically capture this very fact. Surprisingly little has been done to understand the notion of simplicity more precisely on either a philosophical or a formal level, however. And yet the questions of (i) whether truth is simple, and (ii) what this implies for one's truth theory, are arguably important ones. This paper aims to make some initial progress towards answering them.
Accordingly, we begin by examining the (scarce) extant attempts to address (i) and (ii) above, ultimately concluding that none of these does justice to the simplicity claim.

In its main part, the paper moves to examine a different proposal for how to interpret the simplicity of truth. The suggestion is to look to a different area of philosophy where the notion of simplicity is known to play an important normative role: the debate on theoretical virtues in philosophy of science. While there is still disagreement about exactly how the simplicity of a scientific theory ought to be measured, much more progress has been made in this than in the truth-theoretic context. Discussions of simplicity in philosophy of science can be seen to revolve around three key questions:

1. How should simplicity be measured?
2. What is the justification for regarding simplicity to be a virtue?
3. How is simplicity to be traded-off?

In the remaining part of the paper we apply each of these questions, in turn, to the truth-theoretic case, and discuss some of the (seemingly) more plausible answers to the same. Finally, we draw some reasonably optimistic conclusions from this exercise.