Deflated truth pluralism

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In this paper I present what I call *deflated truth pluralism*. My aim is not to argue for a particular version of deflated truth pluralism, but rather only to illustrate the sort of view involved. This sort of truth pluralism is deflated in at least two senses: it essentially revolves around 'deflationary' truth; and it acknowledges only deflationistically kosher truth predicates in the plurality. After presenting the view and motivation for it, I close by briefly responding to a few objections and/or questions about deflated truth pluralism.

1 Background terminology

Let me fix terminology. Throughout, L is any language, where, for present purposes, a *language* may be thought of as any set of interpreted or meaningful sentences; and $\ulcorner\ \urcorner$ is an operation that takes sentences of L to names of those sentences.

1.1 Capture and Release

A unary predicate $H(x)$ is said to *capture for* L (or *play* capture for L) just if A entails $H(\ulcorner A \urcorner)$ for all sentences A in L.

Similarly, we say that a unary (sentential) operator H plays capture for L just if A entails HA for all sentences A in L. A familiar example from English is *it is possible that*. This is an operator *in* English that plays capture *for* English.

A unary predicate $H(x)$ is said to *release for* L (or *play* release for L) just if $H(\ulcorner A \urcorner)$ entails A for all A in L. And similarly for a unary operator. A familiar example from English is *it is known that*.

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1.2 Capture-release predicates

A unary predicate $H(x)$ is said to be a *capture-release* predicate for L just if it plays captures and release for L. And similarly for a unary operator.

2 Truth predicates

On my terminology—and, I think, the terminology prominent in logical studies—a predicate $H(x)$ is said to be a *truth predicate for* L just if it is a capture-release predicate for L. Tighter constraints on being 'the fundamental truth predicate' or 'the real truth predicate' or enjoying some such privileged status may be—and, in discussion of truth pluralism(s), often are—imposed. The capture-release condition is advanced as a simple necessary and sufficient for counting as a truth predicate.

3 Truth pluralisms

Now that the notion of *truth predicate for* L is in place, a variety of truth pluralisms jump out. My focus is on what I shall call *language-wide truth pluralism*—what I shall call *truth pluralism*. The distinction is as follows.

3.1 Language-relative truth pluralism

Here is one easy way to get truth pluralism: begin with a truth predicate T for L, and consider each restricted predicate $T_i(x)$ defined as follows for each (proper) fragment L_i of L:

$$T_i(x) \ := \ T(x) \wedge x \in L_i$$

Then we have a plurality of truth predicates, one for each given fragment of L. No such restricted predicate plays capture and release for L itself (i.e, none are truth predicates for L); however, each plays capture and release over its appropriate fragment L_i.

This sort of truth pluralism arises from changing the language (or, strictly, fragment) for which the truth predicate plays capture and release. In a slogan: truth pluralism via language (or fragment) pluralism.

This sort of language-relative pluralism need not be philosophically uninteresting. Indeed, if one thinks of philosophically interesting proper fragments of English—for example, 'moral discourse', 'scientific discourse', or the like—one might find motivation for versions of language-relative truth pluralisms. But my interest is not in language-relative truth pluralism; my interest is in language-wide truth pluralism.

3.2 Language-wide truth pluralism: *truth pluralism*

In contrast with language-relative truth pluralism (understood per above), language-wide truth pluralism requires a plurality of truth predicates for L itself—for one and the same language. This is what, for present purposes, I shall call *truth pluralism*.

One might think that truth pluralism, so understood, is at least hard to motivate. After all, suppose that T_1 and T_2 are both truth predicates for L, in which case both play capture and release for L, and so—assuming a transitive consequence relation—we have the equivalence of these predicates in at least the following bi-implication (or bi-entailment) form:

$$T_1(\ulcorner A \urcorner) \dashv\vdash T_2(\ulcorner A \urcorner)$$

That A is true-1 (so to speak) implies that it's true-2, and that A is true-2 implies that A is true-1. But, then, what work might one predicate do that can't be done by the other?

Rather than answer such questions in the abstract, I turn to a particular sort of truth pluralism for illustration: deflated truth pluralism.

4 Transparent truth

A unary operator H is said to be *transparent* (in L) just if HA and A are intersubstitutable in all (non-opaque) contexts, for any sentence A (of the given language). Such an operator is formally modeled via identity of semantic values: namely, HA and A have the same (i.e., identical) semantic value.

A truth *predicate*, versus operator, is especially important on the 'transparency' conception of truth [5, 9, 14, 23] and similar 'merely logical' conceptions of truth [11].[1] The idea here is a familiar 'deflationary' one. In short, our *fundamental truth predicate* is (only) a logical device that exists only for its logical, expressive work: it affords valuable generalizations (e.g., 'Everything in such and so infinite theory is true', etc.) that, for practical reasons (viz., our finitude, so to speak), we could not otherwise express. (I assume familiarity with this 'deflationary' idea. See any of the works cited above for elaboration.)

A *see-through* or *transparent* predicate H is one such that $H(\ulcorner A \urcorner)$ and A are intersubstitutable in all non-opaque contexts: the result of substituting an occurrence of one for the other in any (non-opaque) context is logically equivalent to the original unsubstituted form. The transparency conception of truth maintains that our fundamental truth predicate is nothing more than such a device: a see-through truth predicate.

[1] I note, in passing, that with a truth predicate (or, at least, a 'transparent' one, discussed below), one can define an appropriate predicate H corresponding to any (sentential) operator H. Example: where T is the given truth predicate, define predicate $H(x)$ via H and T thus: $\mathsf{H}T(x)$. Going in the other direction (e.g., beginning with only a truth *operator* and trying to define appropriate predicates) doesn't work. (If this is not clear, Tarski's theorem makes it clear. The theorem rules out any truth *predicate* in classical languages, but there are truth *operators*, as §5 briefly notes.)

4.1 Transparent truth and deflationism

A see-through truth predicate can be, and often is, used to voice many important claims about the world—normative, epistemic, moral, ontological, religious, political, whathaveyou—but it is only a logical device used in voicing such claims; it doesn't name a property that figures in *explanations* of such phenomena.

If for nothing more than fixing terminology (if only for the present paper), let us say that a *deflationist* about truth—specifically, a transparent truth theorist—is one who holds that the see-through device is our *fundamental* truth predicate, and other truth predicates, if any there be, are logical derivatives: they're built from the fundamental truth predicate and other logical resources. (This rather strict criterion for deflationism might be too strict by some lights, but I use it only to illustrate 'deflated truth pluralism' in a simple from.)

A *deflated truth pluralist* is a deflationist who recognizes at least two (logically distinguishable) truth predicates.

4.2 Transparent truth and inflationism

Recognizing the existence of a see-through device is insufficient for a deflationary philosophy of truth. One might acknowledge a transparent truth predicate (a see-through device) but also other truth predicates that are not definable out of (only) the see-through device and other logical resources: *extra-logical* truth predicates, ones that express extra-logical properties—perhaps something along the lines of a *correspondence* property that essentially involves extra-logical notions of *representation* or the like. One candidate for this sort of truth pluralism might be Vann McGee [18, 19], whose truth theory involves both a see-through truth predicate and something closer to 'correspondence' that does the work that truth-conditional semantics seems to require (e.g., at the very least, an *explanatory* notion of truth that illuminates meaning).

My aim is not to evaluate theories of truth that involve 'inflated' notions of truth in addition to a logical, see-through notion. I note such theories only as sample options of *non-deflated truth pluralisms* in the running sense.

My main question, to which we now turn, concerns the motivation for a *deflated* truth pluralism.

5 From paradoxes to non-classical logic

How do we get truth *pluralism* from the transparency conception of truth? What motivates it? While a variety of answers are available, each pointing to different features of (fragments of) discourse, I shall focus on a very simple—though important—one: paradoxes.

At least on the transparency conception, our language enjoys its own (transparent) truth predicate—a capture-release predicate in the language and for the language. What Tarski [26] showed is that such a language cannot be a classical language; its logic is non-classical.[2] The problem, in short, is paradox.

5.1 Basic paradox

The liar paradox arises from a sentence L equivalent to its own negation $\neg L$. By way of concrete example, think about a name b that denotes the sentence $\neg T(b)$, so that we have the true identity

$$b = \ulcorner \neg T(b) \urcorner$$

as a premise—and we assume standard *substitution* principles governing identity. In addition, we assume various classically valid principles or rules, including *excluded middle* and *explosion*, respectively, where $\perp$ amounts to absurdity:

- LEM: $\vdash A \vee \neg A$
- EFQ: $A \wedge \neg A \vdash \perp$

Additionally, we assume a *conjunction principle* (viz., *adjunction*), namely,

- CP: A and B jointly imply $A \wedge B$.

and the following *disjunction principle* (viz., *reasoning by cases*):

- DP: if each of A and B individually implies C, then $A \vee B$ implies C.

With all of this in hand, we can think of the following form of the liar paradox. From LEM, we have

$$T(b) \vee \neg T(b)$$

This gives us two cases:

1. Case one:
   (a) $T(b)$
   (b) Substitution yields: $T(\ulcorner \neg T(b) \urcorner)$
   (c) Release yields: $\neg T(b)$
   (d) CP yields: $T(b) \wedge \neg T(b)$
2. Case two:
   (a) $\neg T(b)$
   (b) Capture yields: $T(\ulcorner \neg T(b) \urcorner)$
   (c) Substitution yields: $T(b)$

[2] Of course, classical languages enjoy a truth *operator*. For example, letting $\top$ be any logical truth (e.g., any classical tautology), the operator $\mathbb{T}$, defined $\mathbb{T}A := A \wedge \top$, is a truth operator (or, on a dual spelling, $A \vee \perp$, where $\perp$ is unsatisfiable); it plays capture and release for any classical language. But such operators do not play the generalizing role that a see-through *predicate* affords.

(d) CP yields: $T(b) \wedge \neg T(b)$

DP, in turn, delivers $Tr(b) \wedge \neg Tr(b)$ from $Tr(b) \vee \neg Tr(b)$. But, now, EFQ delivers $\perp$ from $Tr(b) \wedge \neg Tr(b)$. Outright absurdity.

Enjoying a truth predicate in and for our language requires a non-classical logic. While the non-classical options are legion, a few different paths are prominent. In what follows, I simply gloss two familiar non-classical logics that underwrite two standard responses to paradox. I avoid details, which may be found in cited work.[3]

5.2 Paracomplete

A *paracomplete* theorist—so-called because she advocates a truth theory that is *beyond (negation-) completeness*—rejects LEM. While many statements of the form $A \vee \neg A$ may be true, they're not *logically* true—not true just in virtue of logic. Indeed, it may be that many—most—instances of excluded middle are true; a paracomplete theorist rejects that they're *all* true. And liar-like phenomena are a good example of abnormal phenomena where the relevant instance of excluded middle 'fails'.

5.2.1 Sample framework: K3

A simple model of a basic paracomplete language goes as follows [12].[4] We expand our set of semantic values, used in classical semantics, from $\{1, 0\}$ to $\{1, .5, 0\}$, with the middle value thought of as the 'abnormal' cases.[5] In turn—and, for simplicity, focusing on the propositional level—we assign semantic values to all sentences via (total) valuations $v : L \longrightarrow \{1, .5, 0\}$ that obey the following familiar (indeed, classical) clauses:

- Negation: $v(\neg A) = 1 - v(\neg A)$.
- Conjunction: $v(A \wedge B) = \min\{v(A), v(B)\}$.
- Disjunction: $v(A \vee B) = \max\{v(A), v(B)\}$.

We say that a valuation v *satisfies* A just if $v(A) = 1$. We say that v is a *counterexample to the argument* $\langle\{A_1, \ldots, A_n\}, B\rangle$ just if v satisfies each of the A_i but fails to satisfy B. With all this in hand, the logic—that is, the K3 consequence relation—may be defined in the familiar way:

[3] I should also emphasize that I am sliding over many subtleties throughout. For example, the non-transparent-truth theory of Gupta–Belnap [10] is more or less classical (subject to caveats concerning so-called meta-rules such as our DP). Field [9] provides a good discussion of the details of Gupta–Belnap truth theory. And for a more leisurely discussion of the following logical frameworks, see any of these works: [6, 7, 22, 25].

[4] For a model of how exactly truth might work in this setting, see Kripke's well-known 'outline' [13].

[5] NB: I'm concentrating on the paradoxical cases because they're the simplest to see. Clearly, other phenomena might be thought of as 'abnormal', from vague discourse to moral discourse to religious discourse to philosophical discourse to more.

- $A_1, \ldots, A_n \vdash B$ iff there's no counterexample to $\langle \{A_1, \ldots, A_n\}, B \rangle$.

That LEM fails in this framework is clear: a counterexample is found by setting $v(A) = .5$, in which case $v(\neg A) = .5$, and so $v(A \vee \neg A) = .5$, and so $A \vee \neg A$ unsatisfied; hence, $\nvdash A \vee \neg A$.

Without LEM, one requires an extra-logical argument for the initial liar premise $Tr(b) \vee \neg Tr(b)$. Paracomplete theorists maintain that no good such argument is forthcoming. Paradox-driven absurdity is avoided, and the coherence of transparent truth preserved.

5.3 Paraconsistent

By contrast, a *paraconsistent* theorist—so-called because she advocates a truth theory that is *beyond (negation-) consistency*—rejects EFQ. Such theorists maintain that some statements of the form $A \wedge \neg A$ may be true, but they reject that all statements are true. A good example of the abnormal statements is the liar: it is a true falsehood—a truth with a true negation.

5.3.1 Sample framework: LP

A simple model of a paraconsistent language is as follows [2, 20]. In short, leave everything as per the K3 framework (above) except 'designate' the middle semantic value by defining satisfaction thus: a valuation v satisfies A just if $v(A) \in \{1, .5\}$.

That EFQ fails in this framework is clear: a counterexample is found by setting $v(A) = .5$, in which case $v(\neg A) = .5$, and so $v(A \wedge \neg A) = .5$, and set $v(\perp) = 0$. This is a case in which $A \wedge \neg A$ is satisfied while $\perp$ is not satisfied, and so $A \wedge \neg A \nvdash \perp$. Unlike the paracomplete K3 framework, LEM stands firm: $\vdash A \vee \neg A$. (Proof: for an instance of $A \vee \neg A$ to be unsatisfied, both disjuncts would need to have value 0, but this is impossible given clauses for negation.)

The liar derivation, in this setting, goes up to—but stops short of—absurdity. We get the contradiction $T(b) \wedge \neg T(b)$, but this does no further damage, since EFQ is invalid. Hence, paradox-driven absurdity is avoided, and the coherence of transparent truth preserved.

6 And truth pluralism?

What we have so far is that the transparency conception of truth motivates a capture-release predicate—that is, a truth predicate—in and for our language. But standard paradoxes have long taught that languages containing their own truth predicates are not classical languages: they're non-classical, languages whose logics are non-classical. While there are many (many) non-classical options, two standard routes are paracomplete and paraconsistent. For concreteness, I have focused on the two most familiar such frameworks: K3 and LP.

But what does any of this have to do with truth pluralism? We've gone non-classical to keep our truth predicate from incoherence. But how does this motivate truth pluralism—and, in particular, deflated truth pluralism?

A detailed answer requires details of particular theories, and this paper is not the venue for that. A general idea, however, can be sketched. The motivation arises from abnormal (e.g., paradoxical) discourse; the resources for pluralism are logical.

6.1 Talk about abnormal

Consider the paracomplete theorist. There are some sentences that are 'gappy' in the sense that their instance of LEM is 'not true' (in some sense), that is, some sentence A is such that neither A nor $\neg A$ is true. But how does the paracomplete theorist truly say *that*? The obvious thought is that her claim amounts to this:

$$\neg T(\ulcorner A \urcorner) \wedge \neg T(\ulcorner \neg A \urcorner)$$

But given the transparency of T, this claim is equivalent to

$$\neg A \wedge \neg\neg A$$

which, in the K3 framework, implies absurdity via EFQ.[6]

What, then, does the paracomplete theorist's claim amount to? The *truth-pluralist* idea is that her claim involves a different truth predicate, something at least less see-through than transparent truth; she is using some different truth predicate Tr when she (truly) says of some appropriate A that $\neg(A \vee \neg A)$ is not true:

$$\neg Tr(\ulcorner A \urcorner) \wedge \neg Tr(\ulcorner \neg A \urcorner)$$

And because—we're supposing—this is not equivalent to $\neg A \wedge \neg\neg A$, absurdity is avoided.

But where does this other truth predicate come from? How does it work? Here is where theories will differ; and precise details are not the aim of this discussion. For present purposes, I sketch one route towards enjoying such a predicate Tr, and mention a different one—much more sophisticated (but beyond the scope here).

One route [3] finds the additional truth predicate via additional logical—in particular, negation-like—resources.[7] Suppose that, in addition to the K3 resources, we also have what is sometimes called an 'exhaustive' or 'external'

[6] This is not peculiar to K3. The same applies to logics that have been thought to be natural candidates for paracomplete truth theories.

[7] Note well: for the usual paradox-driven reasons, the following ultimately requires moving into a paraconsistent framework (though it can remain paracomplete in some sense). I discuss details elsewhere [4], where the semantic values are expanded to four values and † is fixed at one of them, and for more recent discussion [5, Ch. 5]. I ignore all of these complexities here, concentrating instead only on the general picture of additional truth predicates in a deflated pluralist picture.

negation-like connective modeled thus:

$$v(\dagger A) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } v(A) \in \{.5, 0\}, \\ 0 & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

What is important to see is that in such a language, we automatically have a non-transparent truth operator:[8] namely, let $\mathbb{T}A$ be defined as $\neg\dagger A$.

- $\mathbb{T}$ is a truth operator:
  - Capture: let $v(A) = 1$, and so $v(\dagger A) = 0$, and so $v(\neg\dagger A) = 1$.
  - Release: let $v(\neg\dagger A) = 1$, and so $v(\dagger A) = 0$, and so $v(A) = 1$.
- $\mathbb{T}$ is not transparent: $\neg\mathbb{T}A$ is *not* equivalent to $\neg A$, whereas $v(HA) = v(A)$ for any transparent operator H. (See §4 for terminology.)

Finally, letting Tr be the corresponding predicate for $\mathbb{T}$, where Tr is true of A just if $\mathbb{T}A$ is true, we have a predicate that plays the target role for the paracomplete theorist. In particular, the sense in which A is 'gappy' or 'neither true nor false' may be understood as invoking the non-transparent truth predicate; the sentence

$$\neg Tr(\ulcorner A \urcorner) \wedge \neg Tr(\ulcorner \neg A \urcorner)$$

is true when A is a 'gap' (e.g., the sample liar sentence above).[9]

Having the additional 'exhaustive' negation-like connective † is only one simple example of how additional logical truth predicates may emerge. A much more sophisticated approach is the paracomplete truth theory advanced by Hartry Field [9]. Field's theory admits a great plurality of additional logical truth predicates, all defined from logical resources, notably, from a non-classical, non-material conditional $\rightarrow$, and from $\top$, where $\top$ is any logical truth:

$$\mathbb{T}A := A \wedge (\top \rightarrow A)$$

That $\mathbb{T}$, so understood, is a capture-release (i.e., truth) operator falls out immediately from the logic involved [9], but I skip details here. Moreover, that a plurality—indeed, a vast plurality—of distinct truth operators (and, in turn, predicates) emerges from this approach arises from features peculiar to the given conditional: for example, $A \rightarrow (A \rightarrow A)$ is not equivalent to $A \rightarrow A$, and generally such embedded contexts resist the given sort of 'collapse' or 'contraction', thereby affording many non-equivalent operators via embedding.

My aim is (obviously) not to cover details of Field's or any other theory, but simply flag it as an important example of how a variety of truth predicates may emerge in the context of a transparent truth theory.

[8] A corresponding truth *predicate* can be defined as usual using the see-through predicate. See footnote above or discussion below.

[9] Again, I am ignoring complexities involving paradoxes arising from the additional machinery—paradoxes that may be avoided in this context by allowing gluts in addition to gaps. But I omit further discussion here, since my discussion aims only to illustrate not uncommon avenues towards forms of 'deflated truth pluralism'.

What we have in the foregoing examples are transparent truth theories that are also truth-pluralist theories in the target *deflated* fashion. We have transparent truth but also non-transparent truth; this is the pluralism. All such truth predicates are either mere logical tools (e.g., the see-through predicate) or built from purely logical tools; and this is the deflationism.

6.2 Talk about normal

Perhaps not surprisingly, the (dual) paraconsistent theorist has motivation for pluralism from a dual problem. Because the issues are so similar, I merely note the point here, leaving details to cited work.

Unlike the paracomplete theorist, the paraconsistent theorist may easily talk about the abnormal sentences; she can simply use her transparent truth predicate and say of such A that they're gluts: $T(\ulcorner A \urcorner) \wedge T(\ulcorner \neg A \urcorner)$ or, more simply (and equivalently, given see-through-ness), $A \wedge \neg A$. No problem.

What about the *normal* sentences? Well, these sentences are not gluts: $\neg(T(\ulcorner A \urcorner) \wedge T(\ulcorner \neg A \urcorner))$. But given transparency, this is equivalent to $\neg(A \wedge \neg A)$, which, in LP (or similar target logics), is simply equivalent to $A \vee \neg A$, which is logically true—and, hence, true of *all* sentences. So, if the idea of being a *non-glut* is to be more than vacuous, some other notion of truth must be in play when the paraconsistent theorist (truly) says of A that it is not both true and not true.

The issues here are delicate, and different responses to the problem(s) have been offered [5, 8, 9, 21]. For present purposes, I simply note a route [5, Ch. 3 Appendix] similar to one mentioned above. In particular, suppose that we have some sentence τ that is 'true and normal', that is, a 'non-glutty truth' in the target sense (assuming that there is coherent sense in our sights). As with the proposal above in a paracomplete setting, if we have a conditional with the right features then a non-transparent truth operator will do the trick here:

$$\mathbb{T}A := \tau \rightarrow A$$

Whether this does the trick depends, of course, on the details of the logic in question, and I skip details here.[10] The important point is that, once again, there is motivation for more than a transparent truth predicate (and so motivation for pluralism), but the more may be achievable via merely logical resources (and, so, deflated pluralism).

6.3 Deflated truth pluralism

I've given examples (though not exact details) of deflated truth pluralism. Beginning with a transparent truth predicate, which we enjoy via a non-classical-logic setting, at least the standard paradoxes—if not other phenomena—motivate different (non-transparent) truth predicates. Truth pluralism, on my

[10] I note that, while exact details matter (e.g., if there's extra machinery going on), this sort of approach does work in the general logical frameworks advanced by Priest [21], Beall [5], and, I think, Brady [8], as well as in Field's framework [9].

usage, requires at least two such truth predicates for a language. Deflated truth pluralism, on my (perhaps somewhat strict) usage, requires that any such predicates reduce to logical resources. The examples above, notwithstanding details, count: paradox pushes pluralism, and the box of logical tools keeps the pluralism suitably deflated.

7 Objections, questions, and replies

In this paper I have tried only to highlight one sort of truth pluralism that, I think, is both natural and perhaps not uncommon (at least when paradoxical discourse is taken into account). This section is offered by way of answering a few questions or objections that may remain, and also, perhaps, flagging other avenues of exploration.

7.1 Questions

Question. How does this compare with prominent versions of truth pluralism—for example, Lynch [15, 16] or Wright [28]?

Reply. This volume gives an excellent taste of the prominent versions of truth pluralism, and I largely leave the reader to compare deflated truth pluralism with those versions. (An aside: I should note, on the word 'prominent', that deflated truth pluralism is likely prominent in its own right, though probably more in logical studies in which it is less controversial than in metaphysics.) But one comment, perhaps on the most salient issue, may be useful.

As I understand them, such prominent truth pluralisms disagree with me on what it takes to be a *truth predicate.* They think that more than capture-release features is required. I remain unconvinced. What do we lose by accepting that whatever is expressed by a capture-release predicate is a truth property? Prominent truth pluralists might say that we lose the essential normativity of truth or the like. But why think that that's essential to all truth properties—particularly when, for example, it is hard to say as much about logical properties such as transparent truth, which—except for the insistence on 'essential normativity' or the like—is hard to strip of the title *truth property.*

In the end, we have a very simple criterion for being a *truth* predicate: namely, being a capture-release predicate (where, recall, capture and release are defined over the entire language). While metaphysics, morals, and more might be used to lobby against the sufficiency of capture-release for *truth* (i.e., for a capture-release predicate expressing *truth*), such lobbying—by my lights—is not useful. Imagine, for example, that we had exactly one predicate that played capture and release for our language L. In that case, would there really be controversy over whether it were a—and, by hypothesis, *the*—*truth* predicate? Perhaps there's no obvious answer without further details, but my guess is that the answer is 'no'. One longstanding feature of truth is its capture-release behavior. If nothing else in the language behaved that way (over the entire language), there'd be no reason to think it *truth.*

Question. If all it takes to be a truth predicate for L is to play capture and release for L, what is to prevent there being a predicate that expresses some robust/explanatory property that also plays capture and release for L? If there were such a predicate in our overall language, it would seem to be bad for your *deflated* pluralism. Are you committed to the claim that: no predicate expressing a robust/explanatory property plays capture and release over the whole language? (This, after all, is a classic motivation for both deflationism and language-relative pluralism.)

Reply. A truth predicate for L is a capture-release predicate for L. Anything less is not a truth predicate for L. Being a capture-release predicate for L is not incompatible with expressing an explanatory (or more-than-logical) property. But if there is some such more-than-logical truth predicate in (and for) the language, then the deflated truth pluralist, as I've (strictly) drawn the position, is undermined. (One could take a middle road here: a capture-release *predicate* is a truth predicate, but not all truth predicates express truth properties. I prefer a simpler framework: truth predicates express truth properties. Sometimes, of course, as in the case of color predicates, we classify a predicate in terms of the properties/relations that it expresses: H is a color predicate just if H expresses a color. But on my view, to express a truth property is to be a capture-release predicate. Unlike in the case of color, where we look at the property to determine whether the predicate is a color predicate, here we look at the logical behavior of the predicate to determine whether the predicate is a truth predicate – and, in turn, whether it expresses a truth property.)

Question. The operator *it is a fact that* (similarly, corresponding predicate) plays capture and release for our language. Hence, by your account, it is a truth operator (similarly, corresponding predicate). But *facthood* is an explanatory, more-than-logical notion. But, then, isn't deflated truth pluralism is undermined?

Reply. Not surprisingly, I agree that *it is a fact that* is a truth operator (similarly, predicate), but disagree that it's more than a logical device. In fact, I agree with Quine [24] that the capture-release 'fact' talk likely reduces to standard talk spelled with 'truth'. (Whether it's *transparent* is a different but, in the present context, not-clearly-relevant issue.) While I do not have an argument, I conjecture that if there is some notion of facthood that proves to be essential to our best overall explanation of the world, it probably fails to capture and release (over the entire language).

7.2 Objections

Objection. Surely none of this makes sense. Truth is just one thing, and so these so-called 'truth predicates' are really just truth-like predicates: they share logical features of *the* truth predicate, but they fail to be a *truth* predicate because they don't express the—one and only—truth property.

Reply. I've already addressed this above. If this is not to boil down to mere terminological quibbles, there must be a principle that determines a (supposed) *unique* truth predicate. What principle? Lynch [16], perhaps more than anyone else, has presented principles that purport to narrow the field to exactly one truth predicate (via one truth property). I remain unconvinced by the proffered principles. The debate is sincere, but currently at a standstill as far as I can see. Where Lynch (or others along Lynchian lines) argue that such and so is *essential* to being *truth*, I myself tend to see the supposed essential ingredients as features (e.g., normativity in some respects) that have nothing to do with truth. The tie to truth (or, as I'd say, truth predicates) is only expressive in the usual way: truth is used to *voice* such claims, but it is not itself essential to the various phenomena at issue.

Objection. One reason that a truth predicate can be seen as non-deflationary is that it figures in explanations of other phenomena but in a more than expressive role. The paracomplete and paraconsistent non-transparent truth predicates you detail could be said to satisfy this. In particular, both might serve to explain why such and so claims should be (or, simply, are) rejected: they're not *true* (in one of the various non-transparent senses of 'true').

Reply. It's true that the (say) paracomplete theorist uses 'stronger', non-transparent truth predicates to say of certain (e.g., gappy) sentences that they are not true; and such claims figure prominently in a variety of explanations – e.g., rational acceptability (or rejectability, as it were) of various theories. And so, as the objection pushes, these notions of truth have explanatory work to do. And now we have a choice – as the objection makes clear. Do we define *deflationary* along the *only built from logical properties* route, or along the *no explanatory role* route – or both? For present purposes, I've taken a stand on the former route, but a comment on the latter route may be useful. In short, the details of the explanatory materials are important. In particular, when our paracomplete (or other target non-classical) theorist says that they reject A because A is a gap in the given sense, that is,

$$\neg Tr(\ulcorner A \urcorner) \wedge \neg Tr(\ulcorner \neg A \urcorner)$$

where Tr is the non-transparent truth predicate constructed along something like the §6.1 lines, they are indeed using the given non-transparent truth predicate to offer an explanation. What is not happening, though, is an appeal to some more-than-logical property that, *when analyzed*, affords an explanation that goes deeper than what was said – deeper than that, well, A is neither true nor false, where this reduces to a claim using only logical resources (e.g., some sort of conditional, etc.).

Objection. Another reason we might say a capture-release predicate is not deflationary is that it has a different meaning from the paradigmatic deflationary truth predicate: namely, the transparent truth predicate. Not being transparent, the additional truth predicates you discuss do have different meanings. Therefore they are not deflationary.

Reply. I agree that this is a clean way to carve out the family of deflationary predicates, but I think that it is unnecessary. We have clean terminology for *the* transparent truth predicate. The notion of *deflationary truth predicates* seems to be wider – involving, as above, either a reduction to logical resources or absence of certain sorts of explanatory work. (Ultimately, this may be mere terminological debate. If so, I am happy for what I've called *deflated truth pluralism* to be labeled something else. But I do think that it falls squarely within standard conceptions of 'deflationary' views.)

Objection. Linked argument: where $T'(\ulcorner A \urcorner)$ is not equivalent to A in non-opaque contexts, they have different meanings (content). The best explanation of this fact is that the predicate T' denotes an additional property whose nature cannot be known just by grasping all instances of release and capture.

Reply. I agree. What's required for grasping the 'nature' of T', where scare quotes are very important in this context, is a grasp of the logical machinery out of which T' is constructed. This machinery delivers capture-release behavior; the capture-release features are not themselves the underlying logical ingredients of T' that constitute the 'nature' in question.

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