DAN ZEMAN
Institute of Philosophy
University of Vienna
danczeman@gmail.com

CONTEXTUALIST ANSWERS TO THE CHALLENGE FROM DISAGREEMENT[1]

abstract

In this short paper I survey recent contextualist answers to the challenge from disagreement raised by contemporary relativists. After making the challenge vivid by means of a working example, I specify the notion of disagreement lying at the heart of the challenge. The answers are grouped in three categories, the first characterized by rejecting the intuition of disagreement in certain cases, the second by conceiving disagreement as a clash of non-cognitive attitudes and the third by relegating disagreement at the pragmatic level. For each category I present several important variants and raise some (general) criticisms. The paper is meant to offer a quick introduction to the current contextualist literature on disagreement and thus a useful tool for further research.

Suppose I utter the sentence

(1)   Marmitako[2] is delicious,

and my lifelong friend and partner in culinary endeavors utters its negation. On the face of it, we disagree. After all, at minimum, I claim that a certain food (marmitako) has a certain property (being delicious), while my friend claims that the same food doesn't have that property. This looks like a textbook case of disagreement.

Such (admittedly raw) data has played a great role in the contemporary debate between various semantic views about predicates of taste and similar subjective – or, as I will refer to them throughout this paper, *perspectival expressions*. The main characteristic of perspectival expressions is that appeal to a subject's perspective is needed for their semantic interpretation. Besides predicates of taste like 'delicious', aesthetic adjectives like 'beautiful', moral terms like 'good' or 'ought', epistemic modals like 'might' and 'must', gradable adjectives like 'tall', epistemic vocabulary like 'know' have been thought of as perspectival. What counts as a "perspective" in each case is, of course, different, but here I'm using the term in a broad sense to refer to whatever element captures the subjective character of the relevant expressions.

The point of drawing attention to exchanges like the one between my friend and I about marmitako was to show that certain views in the debate cannot accommodate the intuition of disagreement that seems to be present in the exchanges in question. For example, according to the view in the debate focused on in this paper – contextualism – when speakers utter sentences like (1) or their negations, the propositions they express are *perspective-specific* – that is, perspectives are part of the expressed propositions. In contrast, for contextualism's main rival, relativism, when speakers utter sentences like (1) or their negations, the semantic contents they express are *perspective-neutral*, with perspectives being relegated to the "circumstances of evaluation" (a technical term familiar from Kaplan (1989), comprising possible and actual

2   https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuna_pot.

situations in which an utterance is evaluated for truth).[3] And while the perspectives relevant for evaluating each utterance can be the same, they need not be: in the exchange above, for example, the perspective relevant for the interpretation of my utterance is mine, while that relevant for the interpretation of my friend's utterance is hers. In this case, disagreement – at least in an intuitive understanding of it – is not accounted for by the contextualist.

This, in a nutshell, is the challenge from disagreement that present day relativists have leveled against contextualism. Recently, however, several ways to meet the challenge have surfaced in the literature. While some of those ways have been sporadically engaged with, and while a number of papers describe various strategies available to contextualists (e.g., Stojanovic, 2007; Marques & Garcia-Carpintero, 2014; Silk, 2016; Khoo, 2017), a detailed systematization of the answers and their variants has not been done. The present paper aims to do precisely that. This will provide both a quick introduction to the latest dialectical moves of the debate focused on and a (hopefully) useful resource for future research. And while I focus on predicates of taste for illustration, the same strategies are possible (and some have been proposed) for other perspectival expressions as well.

Before getting to the strategies mentioned, it would be useful to spell out what the notion of disagreement that the proponents of the challenge have relied on is. Although the case for disagreement is well supported by intuitions,[4] relativists have relied on a specific way of understanding disagreement: as involving certain types of *cognitive attitudes* (belief, judgment, acceptance etc.) directed towards propositions. What exactly is the nature of the cognitive attitude involved in disagreement varies among relativists; here I rest content with describing the attitudes in question as "doxastic", while leaving open their exact nature.[5] The following characterization is I think in line with what most relativists have taken disagreement to be:[6]

Doxastic Disagreement (DD)
Two interlocutors disagree if they have opposite doxastic attitudes towards the same proposition.[7]

The contextualist conundrum can be understood by attending to **(DD)** in the following way: in order for the exchange between my friend and I about marmitako to count as disagreement,

---

3   The terminology here is not ideally clear. As a referee points out, historically, views that have been called by their proponents "relativism" turn out to be, in the more recent understanding of the term, contextualist views (e.g. Harman, 1996; Dreier, 1990). Things are further complicated by the fact that authors like MacFarlane (2014) reserve the term 'relativism' to a certain view about the absoluteness of utterance/propositional truth. Here I take relativism to be the general view, exemplified above, that the perspectival character of the relevant expressions is to be accounted for by postulating a corresponding parameter in the circumstances of evaluation.
4   Or so I will assume for the purposes of this paper. Most contextualists agree that such intuitions exist, and they attempt to solve the challenge from disagreement by taking them at face value. See, however, the discussion in section 1.
5   I also leave it open whether disagreement can happen with other types of cognitive but non-doxastic attitudes such as assuming, enquiring, doubting etc. as well.
6   See, for example, Kölbel (2004), Lasersohn (2005, 2016) etc. Famously, MacFarlane (2007, 2014) argues against **(DD)**; Marques (2014) does too. However, the condition specified by **(DD)** remains a part of both author's proposed replacements: it is part of MacFarlane's improved definitions of disagreement (see "CAN'T BE BOTH ACCURATE (RELATIVE TO C)" in MacFarlane (2007, p. 26) and the various notions discussed in MacFarlane (2014, chapter 6)) and of Marques revised notion ("Doxastic Disagreement" in Marques (2014, p. 132)). Marques also notes that, strictly speaking, it is enough for disagreement to have opposite attitudes towards a proposition (on one hand) and a proposition entailed by the negation of the first proposition (on the other hand). The point is well taken; however, the fix is easily available (Marques provides one herself).
7   A relevant distinction must be mentioned here: that between disagreement *in act* and disagreement *in state* (Cappelen & Hawthorne, 2009). Given that I deal here with exchanges, the former notion seems more suitable; however, this shouldn't be taken to mean that the latter notion is not more fundamental.

we have to hold opposite doxastic attitudes towards the same proposition. But if the propositions expressed by each of us is perspective-specific – so that the proposition expressed by my utterance of (1) is that marmitako is delicious to me (or to a group I belong to), while the proposition expressed by my friend uttering the negation of (1) is that marmitako is not delicious to her (or to a group she belongs to) – then, according to (**DD**), the exchange doesn't count as disagreement. Yet, the intuition is that my friend and I disagree; hence, the challenge. On the other hand, relativism gets the data right: given that the propositions expressed by my friend and I in the exchange above are perspective-neutral, there is a proposition we have opposite attitudes towards: namely, the proposition that marmitako is delicious, full stop.[8]

1. Rejecting the Intuition of Disagreement (in Certain Cases)

One immediate reaction to the challenge from contextualist quarters has been to question the disagreement data. This has not been done by flat-out denying that the intuition of disagreement in exchanges like the one between my friend and I about marmitako exists, but more indirectly by questioning the dialectical import of such exchanges and by claiming that, when they are suitably fleshed out, the contextualist can yield disagreement, even if conceived along the lines of (**DD**). Thus, contextualists have complained that the scenarios provided by relativists are too skeletal to support solid intuitions about disagreement. For example, Schaffer claims that "the case for relativism relies on a misrepresentative sample of underdeveloped cases" (Schaffer 2011, p. 211), and other authors (e.g., Glanzberg, 2007; Stojanovic, 2007; Cappelen & Hawthorne, 2009) have expressed similar opinions. Such authors then proceed to flesh out the said scenarios by employing uses of perspectival expressions that, if not strictly speaking neglected by relativists, have not been their main focus in mounting the challenge.

So, what are these uses contextualists have appealed to in the case of predicates of taste? First, predicates of taste and other perspectival expressions can be used *exocentrically* (that is, from another person's perspective), as opposed to *egocentrically* (from one's own perspective). The exchange between my friend and I regarding marmitako can be interpreted in a way in which we both use 'delicious' from another person's perspective (we are trying to decide where to take a common friend out for lunch on her birthday, say, and thus we both speak from *her* perspective), or as my friend trying to correct me about marmitako, given my previous unpleasant experiences with the food (thus speaking from *my* perspective).[9] Second, the expressions at stake can be used *collectively* (that is, from the perspective of a group). The exchange between my friend and I can thus be interpreted in a way in which we both use 'delicious' collectively (we are trying to decide where to organize the next department lunch, say, and thus we speak from the perspective of the entire group). Finally, the predicates in question can be used *generically* (that is, they convey how things stand from the perspective of the majority, or how things usually are seen). The exchange between my friend and I can thus be interpreted in a way in which we both use 'delicious' generically (we are discussing whether marmitako is generally considered delicious). In each of these cases the contextualist has an easy time explaining disagreement: given that in each case the relevant perspectives are the same, disagreement can be cashed out as two interlocutors having opposite attitudes towards *the same* proposition (albeit different in each case), which is exactly as (**DD**) requires.

Now, it is obvious that this much won't get the contextualist too far. And although it is hard to deny that predicates of taste and other perspectival expressions do have the uses

---

8   There is a further issue whether relativists do indeed capture disagreement; I ignore this issue here.
9   Each of these interpretations becomes more natural when embedded in larger chunks of discourse. For lack of space, I leave this to the imagination of the reader.

mentioned above, they also have other uses for which disagreement is not accounted for (these are the same ones that proponents of the challenge, either explicitly or implicitly, have focused on – see Kölbel, 2004; Lasersohn, 2005 etc.). To give just one obvious example, the exchange between my friend and I can be interpreted in a way in which we both use 'delicious' egocentrically. This seems to be the main use of such predicates underlying the challenge, and in such a case the contextualist doesn't get disagreement, since there is no single proposition the interlocutors can have opposite attitudes towards.

However – and this is the catch –, the trend under scrutiny accompanies the showcase of examples in which disagreement can be accounted for with a denial that the intuition of disagreement is present in the case described above. Coupling the claim that disagreements in cases where predicates of taste are used exocentrically, collectively and generically can be accounted for with the claim that there are *no other cases* of disagreement is certainly one way to solve the issue. But, crucially, much hinges on the reasons given for this latter claim. Sometimes the reason given is merely lack of the relevant intuition (e.g., Glanzberg, 2007). It might be impossible to argue about intuitions, but simply leaving things at that is deeply unsatisfactory because it raises the methodological issue of which intuitions to rely on, while flat-out rejecting those who are problematic for one's theory is most probably not a valid methodological practice. In other cases, however, certain considerations are brought to support the claim. For example, both Stojanovic (2007) and Moltmann (2010) raise the issue of what the topic of disagreement could be when interlocutors use predicates of taste egocentrically, and the issue of the point of engaging in such disputes. Others, like Cappelen & Hawthorne (2009), argue by analogy with cases in which the intuition of disagreement is lacking. This is not the place to take up such arguments;[10] what I want to point out here is that this strategy has the potential to meet the challenge from disagreement *if* the arguments to the effect that in the relevant cases disagreement is impossible are sound. Whether this is so, and thus, whether the present contextualist strategy is successful, still remains to be seen.

2. Disagreement as Clash of Non-cognitive Attitudes

Disagreement has been conceived by the relativist as a clash of cognitive (i.e., doxastic) attitudes. But, intuitively, at least, there are other ways of disagreeing. For example, when one person likes something (say, a certain food), while the other doesn't like that same thing, we can felicitously say that they disagree. If so, disagreement may not involve doxastic attitudes or propositions. This suggests that the disagreement in exchanges like the one between my friend and I about marmitako could be said to involve attitudes that are not cognitive in nature towards mere objects, thus explicitly rejecting (**DD**).

This intuitive idea finds support in philosophical literature. In tackling the issue of disagreement in relation to expressivism, Stevenson (1944) draws a distinction between "disagreement in attitude" and "disagreement in belief",[11] the former comprising ways of disagreeing like the one mentioned above. Recent contextualists have borrowed this distinction and have made it part of their answer to the challenge from disagreement by interpreting disagreements like the one between my friend and I about marmitako as a clash of opposite non-cognitive attitudes (Huvenes, 2012, 2014; Lopez de Sa, 2015; Marques, 2015, 2016; Marques & García-Carpintero, 2014; Stojanovic, 2012; Sundell, 2011). How exactly to cash out this disagreement is a choice point for contextualists. Huvenes (2012), for example, is uncommitted with respect to the exact nature of the attitudes involved in disagreement,

---

10   I do that in Zeman (2016); my conclusions are negative.

11   See Ridge (2012) for a detailed discussion of Stevenson's distinction. See also Huvenes (2017) for expressing skepticism that the distinction is ideal.

remaining content with following the expressivist orthodoxy that they are attitudes of *approval* or *disapproval* towards the object the relevant expression is predicated of. More detailed versions are available too. Marques & García-Carpintero (2014), for example, claim that the attitude involved is a special type of *desire*: what they call "desire *de nobis*" – that is, a desire about a collective course of action, based on our evolutionarily developed need to find solutions to coordination problems. This view also brings to the fore the idea that disagreements often arise in cases in which the people involved face a *practical* decision (similar points have been made by Stojanovic, 2012 and Marques, 2015). In another version of this strategy, that of Marques, the attitudes involved in disagreement are *second-order desires*: desires that the interlocutors desire to desire the object that the relevant predicate is predicated of (2016, p. 23).

Appeal to "disagreement in attitude" also marks a point of convergence between contextualism and expressivism – in particular, "hybrid" versions of the latter (for a representative sample of papers, see Fletcher & Ridge, 2014). The distinctive feature of hybrid expressivism is that in uttering sentences containing perspectival expressions a speaker expresses a non-cognitive attitude of sorts, but also asserts a proposition. The non-cognitive attitude expressed and the proposition asserted can be thought of as different levels of meaning/content. And while some authors claim that "[o]ne can think of disagreement [as clash of non-cognitive attitudes] without endorsing expressivism" (Huvenes, 2011, p. 13), many expressivist views are contextualist in holding that the propositions asserted by uttering sentences containing a perspectival expression are perspective-specific.[12] To give only two examples from recent literature on predicates of taste: Buekens (2011) postulates a level of meaning in addition to the perspective-specific proposition asserted, a level of meaning he calls "affective-evaluative" and which consists in the speaker's attitude of approval towards the object a predicate of taste is predicated of. In a similar vein, Gutzmann (2016) distinguishes between a truth-conditional level (the perspective-specific proposition) and a "use-conditional" level, the latter consisting in a "deontic attitude towards what shall count as [P] in the utterance context" (Gutzmann, 2016, p. 45), where "P" is a predicate of taste. In addition to postulating two levels of meaning/content, Gutzmann's view is also explicitly *normative*. It is important to note that part of the motivation for such contextualist-cum-hybrid-expressivist views is precisely answering to the challenge from disagreement.

This contextualist strategy to answer the challenge from disagreement has a lot in its favor. For one thing, it captures the intuitive idea that disagreements need not involve propositions, and that a mere clash of non-cognitive attitudes is sufficient for disagreement. Second, it also captures the equally intuitive ideas that a normative component is sometimes present in uttering sentences like (1) and that many of our disagreements take place against a background in which a practical issue needs solving. However, interpreting *all* disagreements featuring perspectival expressions as practical or as normative might go one step too far. For example, there seem to be scenarios in which no practical issue is at stake: suppose, for instance, that my friend and I are not pressed to find a place to eat, we are not planning to organize a lunch etc., but merely ponder over the culinary virtues of marmitako – perhaps in comparison with other foods.[13] On the other hand, it seems very intuitive that in ordinary

---

12 Of course, being a broader view with many variants, hybrid expressivism comprises also views according to which the propositions asserted by uttering sentences containing a perspectival expression are perspective-neutral (e.g., Boisvert, 2008), or even propositions that are semantically incomplete (e.g., Clapp, 2015).

13 In a certain sense, *all* issues are practical – namely, in the sense of solving theoretical issues for the sake of knowledge itself. I take it though that this sense of 'practical' is not what the proponents of the view discussed have in mind.

scenarios people don't mean to make normative claims, but they simply utter sentences like (1) to express their preferences. When faced with contradictory sentences that signal disagreement, they might just retreat to qualifications like 'delicious to me'. If uttering sentences like (1) would always have a normative component, it is not clear what the point of such a retreat would be.[14] Such cases put pressure on the corresponding variants of the strategy scrutinized. As for the very idea of clash of non-cognitive attitudes itself, note first (as a few contextualists have themselves argued) that it is not entirely clear under which conditions a mere clash of attitudes amounts to a full-fledged disagreement (e.g., Huvenes, 2011, 2017; Marques, 2015). But even assuming this issue is solved, a claim could be made that there are disagreements that are best not interpreted as a clash of non-cognitive attitudes. For example, in scenarios in which both interlocutors use predicates of taste exocentrically (like the one in which my friend and I are planning to take our common friend to lunch for her birthday) and disagreement ensues, the disagreement is arguably doxastic (in the case of my friend and I about the perspective-specific proposition that marmitako is delicious from our common friend's perspective). This points to the need for the contextualist to appeal to doxastic disagreement as well, in addition to appeal to disagreement as clash of non-cognitive attitudes. This, in turn, immediately raises the question of theoretical parsimony: a view that needs to appeal to two notions of disagreement is clearly costlier than a view that appeals to only one such notion.[15] But while things might not be as clear-cut as the contextualist wishes in this respect, the strategy of appealing to "disagreement in attitude" offers the contextualist enough leeway to approach the challenge from disagreement and thus cannot be ignored in further discussions of the issue.

3. Pragmatic Disagreement

The third contextualist strategy to answer the challenge from disagreement tackled in this paper consists in "going pragmatic": that is, to construe the disagreement in exchanges like the one between my friend and I about marmitako as a pragmatic, rather than semantic phenomenon. This in itself doesn't require abandoning (**DD**), but merely relegating it at the pragmatic level. And since there are quite a few phenomena that are traditionally considered to be pragmatic, the variants of this strategy are numerous.

To start with, one way to relegate disagreement at the pragmatic level is to claim that it involves presuppositions. First, it is easy to note that disagreement can target not what has been asserted, but what is presupposed in a given context (see Sundell, 2011; Plunkett & Sundell, 2013 for convincing examples). This suggests that the disagreement between my friend and I could also be interpreted as disagreement over what is presupposed, and not about what is asserted. But which presupposition is it that the two of us disagree about?

A recent view that situates disagreement at the level of presuppositions is Silk's (2016). Silk's basic idea is that, in order to retrieve the semantic content of an utterance, we make certain presuppositions about the values of the required contextual parameters, values that are provided by context. In the case of predicates of taste, for example, when one utters a sentence like (1) one presupposes a certain value of the contextually-given perspective parameter that

---

14   One way to go is to say that in retreating to the qualified statement one is limiting the range of individuals the normative component of the utterance is supposed to apply to. Insofar as this makes sense (isn't normativity supposed to be universal?), it opens up the question of what that range of individuals is to begin with.

15   One way out for the contextualist would be to treat disagreement involving exocentric uses in the same way as that involving egocentric uses: as clash of non-cognitive attitudes. However, two considerations militate against this solution: first, it is difficult to argue that in using a predicate of taste exocentrically, one is *expressing* an attitude in the genuine sense of the term (Buekens (2011) forcefully argues against this claim); second, if the contextualist allows *any* use of a predicate of taste to express an attitude, then the view fully collapses into hybrid expressivism.

makes the semantic content expressed by the sentence to be what it is. In understanding what has been said, the hearer retrieves that value of the perspective parameter and, if she doesn't object, the presupposition is accommodated and that value is added to the common ground. However, the hearer may not agree with the speaker: in this case, the presupposition is *not* accommodated and the relevant value is not added to the common ground. Thus, disagreement is explained by Silk as a refusal from the hearer's part to accommodate the presupposition that the required value of the contextual parameter is as the speaker intends it to be. It is an explanation that involves a standard semantics and ordinary discursive maneuvers, such as presupposition accommodation, and thus distinctively conservative.[16]

An earlier presuppositional view of disagreement – that belonging to López de Sa (2007, 2008, 2015) – has a different take on the issue. While the previous view has construed disagreement as involving opposite presuppositions (or certain discursive maneuvers associated with them), for López de Sa disagreement *becomes possible* when a "presupposition of commonality" is in place. A presupposition of commonality being in place simply means that the interlocutors take themselves to be alike with respect to the relevant contextual parameter – in the case of (1), alike in taste. Disagreement arises, according to López de Sa, precisely when such a presupposition is in place, and is about whether the marmitako is delicious or not *from the common perspective that is presupposed.* However, when such a presupposition is *not* in place, López de Sa denies that disagreement arises and that usually the interlocutors retreat to claims made from their own individual perspectives.[17]

Other presuppositional views trade on different ideas of what the presuppositions that fuel disagreement are. For instance, Zakkou (2015) claims that disagreement becomes possible not when a presupposition of commonality is in place, as López de Sa has it, but rather when a "presupposition of superiority" is. A presupposition of superiority being in place means that the interlocutors take one of them to be better situated than the other with respect to the relevant contextual parameter – in the case of (1), better in taste. Disagreement arises because each interlocutor holds a different presupposition: namely, that *she herself* is the one with the superior taste.[18] Another presuppositional view is that of Parsons (2013). According to Parsons, when one utters a sentence like (1), the presupposition is not that the interlocutors are alike in taste and hence that all interlocutors find marmitako delicious, but that *they aren't*, and hence that one of them finds it delicious and the other doesn't (he calls this "antisupposition"). Disagreement arises because, under the antisupposition mentioned, if what one of the interlocutors says is true, then what the other says is false (given the rules for negation laid out by Parsons, 2013, p. 166).

Another way disagreement can be thought of as pragmatic is to see it as arising at the level of implicatures. Detailed discussion of the suggestion to construe disagreements like the one between my friend and I about marmitako as arising at the level of implicatures can be found in many places: Huvenes (2011), Sundell (2011), Plunkett & Sundell (2013) etc. Here, however, I want to point towards a further point of convergence between contextualism and hybrid expressivism. Earlier hybrid expressivist views such as Barker's (2000) or Finaly's (2005) have

---

16   For a similar view about accounting for disagreement in terms of discursive maneuvers, but which doesn't rely on presuppositions, see Björnsson (2015).

17   More recently, López de Sa (2015) has clarified his position by holding that in such cases disagreement arises, but cannot be expressed by using the sentences at stake. In addition, he also holds that the existing disagreement should be cashed out as clash of non-cognitive attitudes.

18   Zakkou's view is in fact more general, in that she doesn't put weight on the distinction between presupposition and implicature (she talks about "pragmatically conveyed" content). She can thus figure in the next variant of the pragmatic strategy as well (see below).

it that the evaluative component of a sentence containing moral terms is expressed by way of an implicature. As before, differences in such views come from the type of the implicature postulated (merely evaluative or normative etc.), but in principle most of these views can be applied to a wider range of perspectival expressions. Marques (2016), for example, claims that her hybrid expressivist view about aesthetic predicates can be cast in terms of implicatures.[19] Finally, it has been proposed that pragmatic disagreement be cashed out in terms of disagreement about the meaning of words ("metalinguistic disagreement") or about the context interlocutors are in ("metacontextual disagreement"). To name only a few works, Sundell (2011), Plunkett & Sundell (2013) and Plunkett (2015) contain a significant number of exchanges in which the disagreement the interlocutors have can be rightfully construed in such terms. As regarding the first type of disagreement, one way in which it can be cashed out is by having the interlocutors argue about the (Kaplanian) *character* of the relevant expressions (e.g., about the term 'athlete' - see Sundell, 2011). As regarding the second, the standard case here is taken to be Barker's (2002) example involving the gradable adjective 'tall': there are situations, Barker claims, in which what the interlocutors do is argue either about the comparison class or about the threshold that determines whether a person counts as tall – that is, about features of the context and not about, say, the actual height of the person. The suggestion then is that disagreement in exchanges like the one between my friend and I about marmitako can be seen as metalinguistic or metacontextual. A normative version of this strategy is possible too: instead of claiming that the disagreement is about what words mean or what context the interlocutors are in, the authors cited claim that the disagreement is about what words *should* mean or (perhaps more controversially) about what context the interlocutors *should* be in.

All the pragmatic strategies mentioned point towards interesting aspects of our usage of perspectival expressions like predicates of taste. Given the pervasive presence of pragmatic effects in our language use, it would be quite surprising if disagreement were limited only to semantics. However, the pragmatic strategy faces several challenges. For one, it is notoriously difficult to pry apart purely semantic phenomena from pragmatic ones. Both in the case of presuppositions and implicatures there is still a vivid debate surrounding the viability of the classical tests for such phenomena.[20] Further, it is questionable whether rendering disagreement in such a way does justice to all the cases of intuitive disagreement (one relevant question being what happens when the presuppositions or implicatures postulated are *not* in place[21]). As for metalinguistic and metacontextual disagreements, while it is hard to deny that such disagreements exist, claiming that *all* disagreements involving perspectival expressions are of this kind might go one step too far. For example, it seems very intuitive that in ordinary scenarios people disagree not about words or contexts, but about the very topic of their discussion; in the exchange between my friend and I, it is very intuitive to think that the disagreement is over whether marmitako is, in fact, delicious,[22] and not over the word 'delicious' itself. Second, as several authors have pointed out, talk and belief about language and talk and belief about the world can *coexist*. This has important methodological implications: as Lassiter (2011) writes about what he calls "mixed uses" of predicates of taste (both ordinary and metalinguistic), "[t]his aspect is important because beliefs about the world and beliefs about language obviously do interact: we would not want a theory that

---

19 To be more precise, Marques claims that her view can be cast either in terms of presuppositions or in terms of generalized conversational implicatures. I thank a referee for drawing my attention to this.

20 See, for example, Åkerman (2015) for a discussion of the cancellation test for conversational implicatures.

21 See, for example, Marques & García-Carpintero (2014) for making this point against López de Sa.

22 Whatever that fact might amount to. I leave metaphysical considerations about deliciousness aside in this paper.

separates them completely" (132, fn. 1). Applied to the case of disagreement, this observation amounts to the claim that disagreements about the world and disagreement about language can coexist. This, in turn, means that treating disagreement involving "mixed uses" as solely metalinguistic or metacontextual would leave one crucial aspect of their use (that is, the one concerning the world) unexplained. Unless an argument is given to rule out the possibility of "mixed uses" being part of ordinary exchanges like the one between my friend and I about mamitako,[23] this strategy is incomplete. Thus, both the existence of disagreements that are intuitively non-metalinguistic or non-metacontextual and that of "mixed" cases of disagreement make a strong case against the claim that the strategy under scrutiny is a satisfactory answer to the challenge from disagreement.[24] That being said, this strategy, as the one before, points to important aspects of our use of predicates of taste and thus has to be carefully considered in the next phase of the debate.

<center>***</center>

This completes the overview of recent contextualist strategies responding to the challenge from disagreement and their main variants. Needless to say, other strategies/variants are possible; also, some authors appeal to more than one strategy to explain the whole range of data (e.g., López de Sa, 2015). Whether or not the strategies presented, in themselves or in combination with others, are ultimately successful in dealing with the challenge from disagreement is something that needs to be further inquired into. In any case, they have all significantly advanced the debate surrounding disagreement in semantics and are thus well worth engaging with in the future.

REFERENCES

Åkerman, J. (2015). Infelicitous cancellation: the explicit cancellability test for conversational implicature revisited. *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, 93, 465-474.

Barker, S.J. (2000). Is Value Content a Component of Conventional Implicature?. *Analysis*, 60(267), 268-279.

Barker, C. (2002). The Dynamics of Vagueness. *Linguistics and Philosophy*, 25, 1-36.

Barker, C. (2013). Negotiating Taste. *Inquiry*, 56(2-3), 240-257.

Björnsson, G. (2015). Disagreement, correctness, and the evidence for metaethical absolutism. *Oxford Studies in Metaethics*, 10, 160-187.

Boisvert, D. (2008). Expressive-Assertivism. *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, 89, 169-203.

Buekens. F. (2011). Faultless Disagreement, Assertions and the Affective-Expressive Dimension of Judgments of Taste. *Philosophia*, 39, 637-655.

Cappelen, H., & Hawthorne, J. (2009). *Relativism and Monadic Truth*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Clapp, L. (2015). A Non-Alethic Approach to Faultless Disagreement. *Dialectica*, 69(4), 517-550.

Dreier, J. (1990). Internalism and Speaker Relativism. *Ethics*, 101, 6-26.

Finlay, S. (2005). Value and Implicature. *Philosophers' Imprint*, 5(4), 1-20.

Fletcher, G., & Ridge, M. (Eds.) (2014). *Having It Both Ways. Hybrid Theories and Modern Metaethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

---

23   Barker himself claims that such uses of vague terms (which, according to him, include predicates of taste) "typically, perhaps normally" inform "both about the facts in world, and about the prevailing standards" (2013, p. 243).
24   To be fair, the proponents of the metalingusitc/metacontextual strategy are very cautious and refrain from making completely general claims – see, for example, the hedges used when stating the strategy in Plunkett & Sundell (2013, pp. 4, 25); Barker (2013, p. 242); Ludlow (2014, p. 62) etc.

Glanzberg, M. (2007). Context, Content, and Relativism. *Philosophical Studies*, 136(1), 1-29.

Gutzmann, D. (2016). If Expressivism is Fun, Go for It! In C. Meier & J. van Wijnbergen-Huitink (Eds.), *Subjective Meaning: Alternatives to Relativism*. Berlin/Boston: Mouton de Gruyter, 21-46.

Harman, G. (1996). Moral Relativism. In G. Harman & J.J. Thomson, *Moral Relativism and Moral Objectivity*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1-64.

Huvenes, T.T. (2012). Varieties of Disagreement and Predicates of Taste. *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, 90(1), 167-181.

Huvenes, T.T. (2014). Disagreement without Error. *Erkenntnis*, 79 (1, Supplement), 143-154.

Huvenes, T.T. (2017). On Disagreement. In J. Ichikawa (Ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Epistemic Contextualism*. New York: Routledge, 272-281.

Kaplan, D. (1989). Demonstratives. In J. Almog, J. Perry & H. Wettstein (Eds.), *Themes from Kaplan*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 481-563.

Khoo, J. (2017). The disagreement challenge to contextualism. In J. Ichikawa (Ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Epistemic Contextualism*. New York: Routledge, 257-271.

Kölbel, M. (2004). Indexical Relativism vs Genuine Relativism. *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 12(3), 297-313.

Lasersohn, P. (2005). Context Dependence, Disagreement, and Predicates of Personal Taste. *Linguistics and Philosophy*, 28(6), 643-686.

Lasersohn, P. (2016). *Subjectivity and Perspective in Truth-Theoretic Semantics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lassiter, D. (2011). Vagueness as Probabilistic Linguistic Knowledge. In R. Nouwen, R. van Rooij, U. Sauerland, & H.-C. Schmitz (Eds.), *Vagueness in Communication*. Berlin: Springer, 127-150.

López de Sa, D. (2007). The many relativisms and the question of disagreement. *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 15(2), 269-279.

López de Sa, D. (2008). Presuppositions of Commonality: An Indexical Relativist Account of Disagreement. In M. García-Carpintero & M. Kölbel (Eds.), *Relative Truth*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 279-310.

López de Sa, D. (2015). Expressing Disagreement. *Erkenntnis*, 80, 153-165.

Ludlow, P. (2014). *Living Words. Meaning Underdetermination and the Dynamic Lexicon*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

MacFarlane, J. (2007). Relativism and Disagreement. *Philosophical Studies*, 132(1), 17-31.

MacFarlane, J. (2014). *Assessment Sensitivity: Relative Truth and Its Applications*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Marques, T. (2014). Doxastic Disagreement. *Erkenntnis*, 79(1, Supplement), 121-142.

Marques, T. (2015). Disagreeing in Context. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 6, 1-12.

Marques, T. (2016). Aesthetic predicates: a hybrid dispositional account. *Inquiry*, 59, 723-751;

Marques, T., & García-Carpintero, M. (2014). Disagreement about Taste: Commonality Presuppositions and Coordination. *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, 92(4), 701-723.

Moltmann, F. (2010). Relative Truth and the First Person. *Philosophical Studies*, 150(2), 187-220.

Parsons, J. (2013). Presupposition, Disagreement, and Predicates of Taste. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 113, 163-173.

Plunkett, D. (2015). Which Concepts Should We Use?: Metalinguistic Negotiations and The Methodology of Philosophy. *Inquiry*, 58(7-8), 828-874.

Plunkett, D., & Sundell, T. (2013). Disagreement and the Semantics of Normative and Evaluative Terms. *Philosophers' Imprint*, 13(23), 1-37.

Ridge, M. (2012). Disagreement. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, LXXXVI (1), 41-63.

Schaffer, J. (2011). Perspective in taste predicates and epistemic modals. In A. Egan & B. Weatherson (Eds.), *Epistemic Modality*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 179-226.

Silk, A. (2016). *Discourse Contextualism. A Framework for Contextualist Semantics and Pragmatics.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stevenson, C.L. (1944). *Ethics and Language.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Stojanovic, I. (2007). Talking about Taste: Disagreement, Implicit Arguments, and Relative Truth. *Linguistics and Philosophy*, 30(6), 691-706.

Stojanovic, I. (2012). Emotional Disagreement. *Dialogue*, 51(1), 99-117.

Sundell, T. (2011). Disagreements about Taste. *Philosophical Studies*, 155(2), 267-288.

Zakkou, J. (2015). *Tasty Contextualism. A Superiority Approach to the Phenomenon of Faultless Disagreement.* Ph.D. Thesis, Humboldt University of Berlin.

Zeman, D. (2016). The Many Uses of Predicates of Taste and the Challenge from Disagreement. *Studies in Logic, Grammar and Rhetoric*, 46(1), 79-101.