

Kripke and Two-Dimensionalism

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Overview

1. Are Kripke's views in *Naming and Necessity* consistent with epistemic two-dimensionalism?
2. What's the relationship between Kripke's anti-materialist argument in *N&N* and the two-dimensional argument?

Kripke and 2D

- Epistemic two-dimensionalism is grounded in the Kripkean distinction between priority and necessity, i.e. between epistemic and metaphysical modality.
- Core idea: give a possible-worlds analysis for *both* epistemic and metaphysical modality.

Epistemic and Metaphysical Possibility

- It is metaphysically possible that S iff it might have been the case that S.
- It is epistemically possible that S if it is not a priori that \sim S. [relativized to speakers.]

Examples

- It's epistemically possible but not metaphysically possible that Hesperus isn't Phosphorus.
- It's metaphysically possible but not epistemically possible that the meter stick isn't a meter long.

Metaphysically Possible Worlds

- Kripke illuminates metaphysical possibility using metaphysically possible worlds:
 - Maximally specific ways things might have been
 - S is metaphysically possible iff S is true in some metaphysically possible world.

Epistemically Possible Scenarios

- Epistemic 2D: Illuminate epistemic possibility using epistemically possible worlds (or scenarios)
 - Maximally specific ways the world might be (a priori)
 - S is epistemically possible iff S is true in some epistemically possible scenario.
 - N.B. No claims yet about connection to metaphysical possibility.

Example

- It's epistemically possible that water is not H₂O.
- So: there's an epistemically possible scenario in which water is not H₂O [or: in which "water is not H₂O" is true]
- E.g. a twin earth scenario in which XYZ fills the oceans and lakes, and so on.
- Intuitively: this epistemically possible scenario is an instance of the epistemic possibility that water is not H₂O.

Tests

- Let D be a qualitative description of the Twin Earth scenario (without using 'water')
- Intuitive: The epistemic possibility that D is an instance of the epistemic possibility that water is not H₂O.
- Indicative conditional: if D is actual, water is not H₂O.
- Apriori entailment: It is epistemically necessary that: if D, water is not H₂O.

Intensions

- The secondary (or subjunctive) intension of S is a mapping from metaphysically possible worlds to truth-values.
- The primary (or epistemic) intension of S is a mapping from epistemically possible scenarios to truth-values.
- The 2D intension of S is a mapping from (scenario, world) pairs to truth-values.

Epistemic 2D and Descriptivism

- In some cases primary intensions can be captured by simple descriptions
 - E.g. 'Julius' and 'one meter'.
- In other cases, they can't be
 - E.g. 'Godel' and 'knowledge'.
- Though they might be approximable by descriptions?

Kripke and 2D

- Kripke is obviously not *committed* to epistemic 2Dism.
- But are his views *consistent* with epistemic 2Dism? Or perhaps more strongly, *suggestive* of epistemic 2Dism?
- Is there any clear reason (in N&N or elsewhere) for him to reject the view?

Prima Facie

- Prima facie, Kripke could take all the steps just outlined.
- Distinguish epistemic and metaphysical modality (he does that!).
- Define a space of epistemically possible scenarios.
- Define epistemic intensions.
- Where might he get off the bus?

Bus Stop I: Quinean Skepticism

- Objection I: Quinean skepticism about the a priori (and so about epistemic modality).
- Response: That's not Kripke's view.

Bus Stop 2: Bad Behavior

- Objection 2: A priority is too badly behaved to support a possible-worlds analysis.
- E.g. speaker-relativity? Failures of S5?
The need for idealization?
- Not much sign of this in Kripke, and there are natural ways to deal with all these issues.

Bus Stop 3: Epistemic Rigidity

- Soames: 'Hesperus is Phosphorus' is a priori; so true in all epistemically possible worlds.
- H and P have the same epistemic intension.
- But: this contradicts Kripke's view in N&N.

Sideline: Epistemic Rigidity

- An expression is epistemically rigid iff it picks out the same object in all epistemically possible worlds. Identities between e-rigid terms are a priori.
- Soames: 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus' are e-rigid.
- Kripke (N&N): No.
- But maybe (later work): numerals (e.g. '7') are epistemically rigid?
- Other terms: e.g. 'consciousness'?

Bus Stop 4: Not Enough is A Priori

- Objection 4: Hardly any sentence involving ordinary names is a priori (even for a speaker).
- Specifically: no sentence 'If D, then Godel isn't Schmidt' is a priori (where D is name-free).
- If so, epistemic intensions will be trivial.
- Response: no argument or even hint of this view in N&N. And see arguments for scrutability theses in *Constructing the World*.

Bus Stop 5: Modal Dualism

- Objection 5: Epistemically possible scenarios needn't be metaphysically possible worlds.
- Response: Irrelevant. Epistemic 2Dism (as understood here) doesn't require this connection between the modalities.

Bus Stop 6: Meaning

- Objection 6: Primary intensions may be well-defined, but they aren't meanings (e.g. because of variability between utterances).
- Response: I don't care what counts as "meanings" as long as the intensions behave the right way.

Bus Stop 7: Descriptivism

- Objection: This view is descriptivist (or Fregean), so Kripke can't accept it.
- Response: It doesn't require the descriptivism Kripke refutes, and it's consistent with all Kripke's intuitive data.
- Plus: Some more substantive reason for rejecting it is required.

Part 2

- What's the relationship between Kripke's anti-materialist argument in N&N and the two-dimensional argument?

A Conceivability Argument

1. $P \& \sim Q$ is conceivable.
 2. If $P \& \sim Q$ is conceivable, $P \& \sim Q$ is metaphysically possible.
 3. If $P \& \sim Q$ is metaphysically possible, materialism is false.
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4. Materialism is false.

Kripke-Inspired Objection

- Objection: Zombies (and other versions of $P \& \sim Q$) are only conceivable in a sense in which 'Hesperus is not Phosphorus' is conceivable.
- No such sense entails metaphysical possibility.

Kripke/2D Response

- For (apparent) conceivabilities such as 'water is not H₂O', there's always a metaphysically possible world in the vicinity.
- If the mind-body case works the same way, materialism is still in trouble.

Kripke's Version I

- Special case: when S is an identity involving names $N1$ and $N2$ whose referent is fixed by descriptions $D1$ and $D2$.
- When ' $N1=N2$ ' is apparently contingent (conceivably false), there is a metaphysically possible world where ' $D1=D2$ ' is false.

Kripke's Version 2

- If 'a=b' is apparently contingent (for me), then there is a metaphysically world with a being in an epistemic situation that is qualitatively identical to mine in which a corresponding statement is false.
- Short version: when S is apparently possible, S is K-possible.

Kripke's Argument

- Kripke suggests that this model works for all his cases of the necessary a posteriori, but it can't be used to defend mind-body identities such as 'pain = C-fiber firing'.
- Reason: Any epistemic situation qualitatively identical to one containing pain contains pain. So the K-possibility of 'pain is not C-fiber firing' suggests that it is metaphysically possible that pain isn't C-fiber firing.

Formalized

1. 'p=c' is apparently contingent.
2. If 'p=c' is apparent contingent, 'p≠c' is K-possible.
3. If 'p≠c' is K-possible, 'p≠c' is metaphysically possible.
4. 'p=c' is false.

Analogy

- In this way, Kripke's text can be seen to suggest an argument at least structurally analogous to 2D arguments against materialism.

Problem

- The general thesis associated with Kripke's second model seems to be false.
- There are clear cases where an identity S is apparently contingent but S isn't K-possible.

Bill and Blue

- Let 'Bill' be a rigid designator stipulated to refer to whatever color quality is now instantiated at the center of my visual field (which happens to be blue).
- Then 'Bill=blue' is true, necessary, and apparently contingent.
- But 'Bill≠blue' is not K-possible. In a situation qualitatively identical to mine, a corresponding statement is true.

My Diagnosis

- Kripke's second model is an appropriate way of capturing a principle better captured by epistemic two-dimensionalism.
- In effect, K-intensions are a stand-in for epistemic intensions. The thesis is better formulated in those terms!

Epistemic 2D Version

- ‘Water is not H₂O’ is conceivably false, i.e. epistemically possible.
- So its primary intension is true in some epistemically possible scenario.
- That epistemically possible scenario corresponds to a genuine metaphysically possible world: a Twin Earth world.

General Thesis

- When S is epistemically possible, the primary intension of S is true in some (centered) metaphysically possible world w .
- If w turns out to be actual, S turns out to be true.
- E.g. primary intension of 'H isn't P' is true in a world in which morning and evening stars are distinct.

2D Argument

1. $P \& \sim Q$ is conceivable (e-possible).
2. If $P \& \sim Q$ is conceivable, its primary intension is true in some metaphysically possible world.
3. If 2, then materialism is false or Russellian monism is true.
4. Materialism is false or Russellian monism is true.

Slogan

- For every epistemic possibility, there's a corresponding metaphysical possibility.
- This slogan appears to fit all the standard Kripkean cases (including the Bill case).

Strong Necessities

- Type-A materialists deny the conceivability claim. Type-B deny the conceivability-possibility claim.
- Type B: For some epistemically possible S, there is no corresponding metaphysically possible world (where S's primary intension is true).
- Long debate over this!