

PHIL 332: Philosophy of Language  
 Class 26: More on Stalnaker on Propositional Concepts

Recap from last time:

1. Suppose there are just three worlds,  $i$ ,  $j$  and  $k$ . Suppose that grass is green in  $i$  but not  $j$  or  $k$ . My utterance of 'Grass is green' determines a propositional concept, which we can represent by the following matrix:

'Grass is green'

	$i$	$j$	$k$
$i$	T	F	F
$j$	T	F	F
$k$	T	F	F

If what I have said is true then I am not in world  $j$  or  $k$ .

2. Suppose that in each of  $i$ ,  $j$  and  $k$  it is raining in Ithaca and Oxford but not in Wagga. Suppose that in  $i$  I am in Ithaca, in  $j$  I am in Oxford, and in  $k$  I am in Wagga. Then:

'It is raining here'

	$i$	$j$	$k$
$i$			
$j$			
$k$			

If what I have said is true then I am not in world  $k$ .

3. An example of the *contingent a priori*:

'I am here'

	$i$	$j$	$k$
$i$	T	F	F
$j$	F	T	F
$k$	F	F	T

This time:

4. An example of the *necessary a posteriori*. Let  $i$  be the actual world; let  $j$  and  $k$  be worlds in which the planet that is seen in the morning is distinct from the planet that is seen in the evening. Then:

'Hesperus is Phosphorus'

	$i$	$j$	$k$
$i$	T	T	T
$j$	F	F	F
$k$	F	F	F

5. Adding sentence operators. Suppose that in  $i$  I am in Ithaca, in  $j$  I am in Oxford, and in  $k$  I am in Wagga:

**‘It is not the case that I am here’** (extensional operator)

	<i>i</i>	<i>j</i>	<i>k</i>
<i>i</i>	F	T	T
<i>j</i>	T	F	T
<i>k</i>	T	T	F

**‘It is necessary that I am here’** (one-dimensional operator)

	<i>i</i>	<i>j</i>	<i>k</i>
<i>i</i>	F	F	F
<i>j</i>	F	F	F
<i>k</i>	F	F	F

**‘An utterance of ‘I am here’ is true’** (two-dimensional operator)

	<i>i</i>	<i>j</i>	<i>k</i>
<i>i</i>	T	T	T
<i>j</i>	T	T	T
<i>k</i>	T	T	T

Now suppose that in *i* I am talking to O’Leary, O’Leary is a fool, and Daniels is not a fool; in *j* I am talking to O’Leary, O’Leary is not a fool, and Daniels is a fool; in *k* I am talking to Daniels, O’Leary is a fool, and Daniels is not a fool:

**‘An utterance of ‘You are a fool’ is true’** (two-dimensional operator)

	<i>i</i>	<i>j</i>	<i>k</i>
<i>i</i>	T	F	F
<i>j</i>	T	F	F
<i>k</i>	T	F	F

The sentence operators ‘It is not the case that ...’, ‘It is necessary that ...’ and ‘An utterance of ‘...’ is true’ determine functions from propositional concepts to propositional concepts.

6. Stalnaker’s treatment of the negative existential, ‘Sherlock Holmes does not exist’. Let *i* be the actual world; let *j* be a world in which a famous detective named ‘Sherlock Holmes’ lived in London and Doyle wrote a series of historical accounts of his cases; and let *k* be a world in which Doyle was a famous detective names ‘Sherlock Holmes’ and wrote about himself under the name ‘Doyle’. Then:

‘Sherlock Holmes does not exist’

	<i>i</i>	<i>j</i>	<i>k</i>
<i>i</i>	T	T	T
<i>j</i>	T	F	T
<i>k</i>	F	F	F