Contextualism and Relativized Content: A Critical Study on François Recanati's *Perspectival Thought*

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INTRODUCTION

Professor Recanati's book is structured in 3 big sections. The framework of *strong moderate relativism* (SMR) is introduced in the first part, together with a comparison with similar semantic approaches due to Kaplan and Lewis, and a defense of temporal relativism. The second part of the book is devoted to the study of the content of mental states, based on the model of speech acts. Finally, in the third section of the book Recanati presents a solution for the problem of the essential indexical and, in general, an original approach to the topic of egocentricity.

In spite of its title, and the overwhelming amount of work about relativism that has been produced in the last few years within the realm of the philosophy of language, it would not be entirely appropriate to say that Recanati's book is about relativism. The reader who approaches this book looking for an original and elaborate position on the current issues concerning truth-relativity, taste predicates, epistemic modals, or faultless disagreement might end up being moderately disappointed. Recanati's only direct contribution to the debate is his endorsement of Isidora Stojanovic's view on so-called faultless disagreement [vid. Stojanovic (2007); Recanati (2007), pp. 90-94].

S*trong moderate relativism*, the framework Recanati puts forward in this book, is not motivated by the usual concerns about how in a discussion two people can disagree but be right at the same time. This is a book about *content*, the correctness conditions that can be used to individuate both a wide array of mental states and the linguistic utterances that we meaningfully produce. Two utterances or thoughts have the same content if we can give the same kind of answer to questions of the following kind: what would be the world like if this utterance/thought was true? what follows from it? what are

the utterances/thoughts from which this one follows? The views defended in this book need to be understood as an effort to determine how our thoughts and utterances can be grouped together with respect to their content.

Strong Moderate Relativism is introduced in the first section of this study, its mechanics, and some of its main competitors. In the second section, I will summarize some of the main applications of the framework, including the analysis of the content of mental states, the topic of immunity to error through misidentification, and the problem of the essential indexical. Finally I will compare SMR with the theory about the content of our linguistic utterances that Recanati is mostly known for, Truth-Conditional Pragmatics

I. THE FRAMEWORK: STRONG MODERATE RELATIVISM

Classical content is *complete*, it can be evaluated as such as true or false, and contains in one level – the propositional level – everything that is needed to be evaluated. Relativism extends the usual semantic treatment of modal expressions, to make content relative not only to possible worlds, but to many other parameters as well. According to Recanati, relativizing classical content is a process that involves the following two theses:

1) Duality: To get a truth-value, we need a circumstance of evaluation as well as a content to evaluate.
2) Distribution: The determinants of truth-value distribute over the two basic components truth-evaluation involves: content and circumstance. [Recanati (2007), pp. 33-34].

Relativizing content in Recanati's terms is distributing the ingredients of the classical proposition over two different levels: the *lekton*, the content to be evaluated with respect to the circumstance, and the *Austinian proposition*, the union of the *lekton* and the *circumstance of evaluation*.

The framework defended in this book, *Strong Moderate Relativism*, has to be distinguished from *Frege's view* on propositional content, from *radical relativism*, and from *weak moderate relativism*. Frege's view denies Duality and Distribution, but every other position accepts both theses. Frege maintained that only complete propositions can be used to individuate thoughts and utterances with respect to their logico-semantic properties. The content of a certain utterance must have every ingredient that is necessary for it to be declared as true or false. *Radical relativism* is the view that a determined interpretation of the *lekton* (narrow content) suffices to group together utterances and mental states of the same content. John MacFarlane, one of the advocates of Radical relativism, calls Frege's view 'the absoluteness of utterance-truth' [MacFarlane (2003), p. 336], and has suggested that certain utter-

ances should be evaluated with respect not only to their contexts of utterance, but also to their contexts of assessment. This view makes the content slimmer, it moves some parameters into the circumstance of evaluation. Both the Fregean view and Radical relativism posit one single level of content, but this level corresponds to an absolutely truth-evaluable proposition for the former, and to a relativized proposition for the latter

Within *weak moderate relativism*, in contrast, two levels of content are postulated. Content has to be individuated with the aid of a narrow level and a wide level. In cases in which the *lekton* is truth-conditionally complete, the *circumstance* is considered as irrelevant. Finally, *Strong Moderate Relativism* supports the thesis that two different levels of content are *always* necessary. These levels are the *lekton* and the *Austinian proposition*.

The similarities and differences between these four positions can be assessed with the aid of the following chart:

	Levels of content	Is every level complete?	Is every level always necessary?
Frege's view	1	yes	yes
Radical relativism	1	no	yes
Weak moderate relativism	2	no	no
Strong moderate relativism	2	no	yes

The *lekton* is the result of compositionally computing the linguistic meaning of every linguistic expression involved in the characterization of the thought that we are entertaining or trying to convey. It also includes contextual information, as far as that contextual information affects what it is *explicitly articulated* in the representation. The *circumstance of evaluation*, or *situation of evaluation*, includes those implicit parameters that are necessary to evaluate the *lekton*. The *Austinian proposition* is the conjunction of the *lekton* and the *circumstance*, and it is truth-evaluable from an absolute point of view. In earlier versions of Austinian Semantics, Recanati says that the

Austinian proposition is true *if the situation supports the fact represented in the lekton* [vid. e. g. Recanati (2004), p. 128].

The criterion to split the information expressed by an utterance, or contained in a thought, in these two components of content is based on the following features:

a) *Articulation*. Articulated information belongs to the *lekton* [Recanati (2007), pp. 220, 224].
b) *Absolute and Parametric Invariance*. Non-explicit invariant information, both parametrically and absolutely invariant, is exclusively part of the *situation of evaluation* [Recanati (2007), pp. 276 and ff.].

A piece of information is *articulated* if it is explicitly represented, if there is an item for it in the representation. Information required by the explicit material of our thoughts and utterances is also *articulated*. Thus, the information that we retrieve from the context when interpreting the indexicals of our utterances or thoughts is articulated. There is, in addition, a different source of *articulated* information: pragmatic processes that adjust the conventional meaning of the words contained in the sentence when they appear in the context in which they are uttered. We will come back to this point in section 3.

In order to assess the truth of some of the things that we say, certain bits of information are crucial in a systematic way. Some laws of physics, for example, determine the truth or falsity of many of our claims about the world, even though we do not usually think about them when we speak. This information is *absolutely invariant*. *Parametric invariance*, alternatively, is the defining feature of some bits of information whose values may change from context to context, but that always have to be taken into consideration in the process of evaluating a thought or an utterance. For example, raining always happens *in a place*, not necessarily the same one. The location-parameter is constant – invariant –, even though the value that this parameter receives might vary from context to context. When the place in which it is raining is not made explicit, the location is part of the *situation of evaluation*.

a) and b) are supposed to be complementary. An ingredient of the content is either explicit and articulated, or non-explicit and absolutely/parametrically invariant.

II. THE FRAMEWORK AT WORK

The core of the book is dedicated to introducing in detail the virtues of this framework. Recanati argues that a view on content such as the one put forward by SMR can offer plausible solutions to long-standing philosophical issues,

such as the meaning of tensed sentences, the content of mental states – imagi-nation, or memory – immnunity to error through misidentification, and the problem of the essential indexical. In this section, the benefits of SMR will be described in each of these theoretical realms. But first let us introduce two of the basic examples used by Recanati to motivate SMR, both taken from Barwise:

> Commenting upon a poker game I am watching, I say: 'Claire has a good hand now'. What I say is true, iff Claire has a good hand in the poker game I am watching at the moment of utterance. Suppose I made a mistake and Claire is not among the players in that game. Then my utterance is not true, because the situation it concerns (the poker game I am watching) is not one in which Claire has a good hand at the time of utterance. Whether we say that, in this sort of case, the utterance is false, or truth-value-less because of presupposition-failure, is irrelevant to our present purposes. But suppose that, by coincidence, Claire happens to be playing bridge in some other part of town and has a good hand there. There certainly is a sense in which, in such circumstances, what is said can be considered as 'true' (true by accident, as it were). So we have conflicting intuitions about such a case. Is the utterance true or false ? In the SMR frame-work, we can accept both answers. What is said is true, absolutely speaking, but it is not true of the situation the utterance purports to characterize [Recanati (2007), p. 50].

> Suppose Holmes and Watson face each other. In between stand the salt and the pepper. Holmes says 'The salt is left of the pepper', because the salt is left of the pepper from Holmes's perspective. From Watson's perspective, the pepper is left of the salt; however, Watson is mistaken as to which shaker is which, and he wrongly says 'The salt is left of the pepper'. Holmes and Watson apparently 'say the same thing' (so they express the same lekton) but Holmes is right and Watson wrong (so they believe different classical propositions, or different Austinian propositions [Recanati (2007), p. 84]

Two levels of content are necessary in order to understand how 'Claire has a good hand now' can be true *in a sense*, while false *in another sense*. Simi-larly, the *lekton* and the *Austinian proposition* can be used to explain how Holmes and Watson can be said to be thinking the same thing, in a sense, while they too can be considered as thinking two different things, in another sense. This kind of cases constitute one of the main motivations for Strong Moderate Relativism.

II.1 *Temporal relativism*
    In the first part of his book, Recanati defends *temporalism*, the idea – de-veloped by Kaplan, Prior, and others – that the truth of propositions should not only be relativized to possible world indices, but to temporal indices as well. The content of the propositions that we express whenever we utter tensed

sentences is *temporally neutral*. The temporalist wants to preserve our temporal innocence, a counterpart of modal innocence that grasps the intuition that we can think and talk meaningfully even if most of the time we are totally unaware of the exact time of our thoughts and utterances. It is precisely because the content of our utterances and thoughts is temporally neutral, that we can use temporal operators such as 'half an hour ago', 'in the past', 'when I get older', etc.

Recanati shows how SMR can survive both *semantic* and *epistemic* objections to temporalism. Unlike run-of-the-mill relativism, Recanati does not have to give an answer to the Fregean semantic objection that relativized content is not complete. SMR contains two levels, and one of them, the *Austinian proposition*, is as complete as it gets. On the epistemic side, it is against a well known argument used by Richard to undermine temporalism that a two-level picture such as SMR proves to be most useful. Richard [Richard (1981)] attacked temporalism using the following argument:

> (1) Mary believed that Nixon was President.
> (2) Mary still believes everything she once believed.
> (3) Mary believes that Nixon is President.

If temporalism was true, Richard argues, this argument should be considered as a valid one. But it is not; from the fact that Mary once believed that Nixon was President, and that she still believes what she believed then, it does not follow that she believes that Nixon is President now. Mary can very well believe that George W. Bush is the President of the USA and that there is only one President of the USA at a time, and she would not be in a contradiction with (1)-(2). Therefore, temporalism is false.

But this is not necessarily so. According to Recanati, there is a reading under which (1)-(3) turns out to be a valid argument. Imagine that Mary had an accident during the Vietnam war and has spent in a coma the last 33 years. When she wakes up in 2008, she does not know what has happened to her, and she still believes that Nixon is President! In this context, (3) follows from the truth of (1) and (2).

Of course, Recanati acknowledges, there is another reading, the one Richard favors, under which the argument is invalid. But the mere possibility of two different readings is enough to defend SMR. In fact, only a two-level approach like SMR can give an appropriate account of the ambiguity of the second premise in Richard's argument, the premise whose ambiguity might prompt two different readings of the argument. If the quantifier quantifies over *lekta*, then the argument is valid, and we can explain the Mary-in-coma scenario. If the quantifier, on the other hand, quantifies over complete propositions including temporal indices, then it is the *Austinian proposition* that is at play, and the argument is invalid.

Recanati's temporalism can also be used to illustrate his notion of *parametric invariance.* Temporal parameters, he says, are *parametrically invariant*. Most of the things we can think and talk about are temporally indexed. Even on those occasions in which we want to think or talk *sub specie aeternitatis*, it is eternity, a temporal parameter, that we are using as the index with respect to which our content has to be evaluated. The temporal specification can vary, but the temporal parameter is always there to be filled in one way or another. That is parametric invariance.

II.2 *Content of mental states*

Inspired by the analysis of speech acts, which distinguishes between illocutionary force and sense, Recanati, in the second part of his book, turns his attention to the analysis of mental states. The content of our thoughts can be individuated following two different criteria: sometimes we are entitled to say that two people are in the same mental state because they share not only the *explicitly represented* material, but also the *psychological mode*; some other times, however, it is only the explicitly represented material, the *lekton*, that counts. John and Mary can be said to be in the same mental state when they perceive the same object, from the same position, the same lighting conditions, etc. But we can also say that John saw one day something that he will remember for the rest of his life, where what he perceived and what he will remember share exclusively the *lekton*.

In this spirtit, Recanati applies SMR to the analysis of perception, episodic memory, proprioception, and imagination. In each and every case, a similar strategy is adopted: the *lekton* of the mental state contains exclusively what is explicitly represented, the remaining conditions – necessary to make that representation truth-evaluable – are specified by the psychological mode. When we perceive, remember, or imagine a red tomato, we are in a specific relation with the same explicit representation. The content of those mental states, in this sense, is the same. Obviously, the truth-conditions of my perceiving a red tomato are different from the truth-conditions of my memory or imagination of the same vegetable. In the analysis of the utterance of tensed sentences, the lekton was evaluated with respect to a set of parameters that included a temporal index. Perceiving, remembering, and imagining are different psychological modes, and they determine the parameters with respect to which the explicit representation is going to be evaluated. These parameters necessarily differ, *perceiving* a tomato is not the same as *remembering* or *imagining* a tomato, in every case I am related to the scene in a different way, but the explicitly represented information remains unchanged. The *lekton* of these mental states contains only what is explicitly represented. The rest of the information is part of the parameters of the *circumstance of evaluation*, which are determined by the specific psychological mode.

The *proprioceptive-kinaesthetic* mode receives a special treatment within this framework. Examples of mental states that fall under this psychological mode are my thinking that 'I'm hungry' , 'I have a headache', or 'My legs are crossed'. In these cases, our knowledge comes directly from our own body, and we cannot be wrong as to the person that we are ascribing those properties to. Concerning this person – me – I am *immune to error through misidentification*. I can be mistaken in thinking that the person I am attributing the property of being in front of me wearing a Mexican hat is Nathaniel. The same mistake is possible if I remember or imagine the scene. I might confuse that person with my friend Nathaniel in perception, episodic memory, and imagination, but whenever I think that I have a headache, there is no question as to who is the individual in pain: it has to be me.

Recanati maintains that self-reference in proprioceptive states is *implicit*, and therefore is not part of the *lekton*, but a parameter fixed by the psychological mode. The mode fixes that whoever is in a state of this sort is entertaining a representation that has to be evaluated with respect to a set of parameters including the person experiencing the mental state. In mental states regimented by the proprioceptive-kinaesthetic mode nothing but a property – the property of 'having a headache', 'being hungry', etc. – is explicitly represented.

The same explanatory pattern is used by Recanati to offer a solution to the classic *problem of the essential indexical*. We cannot replace instances of the first person pronoun by other expressions referring to the same individual *salva veritate*, or with the same cognitive significance, because that self-reference is not part of the explicitly represented content. The *lekton* of expressions such as 'My pants are on fire' is purely a property, which has to be evaluated with respect to a set of parameters that includes the individual who utters the sentence. The reason we cannot replace the first person pronoun by another expression with the same reference is not that it introduces a special mode of presentation, but that it introduces no reference at all in the explicitly represented content of our utterance or thought.

II.3 *Reflexivity*

Immunity to error through misidentification does not only affect mental states regimented by the proprioceptive-kinaesthetic mode, though. Perception, episodic memory, and imagination involve forms of self-reference whose status Recanati is also interested in. An ascription of a perception, memory, or imagination state is not true simply because whatever it is explicitly represented is the case in the actual world. I cannot be said to be truly perceiving a red tomato simply because there is a red tomato in front of me, I need to be related to that object in a special way, and that special way is fixed by the perceptual mode. Similarly, remembering a red tomato involves my

being in a particular relation with a previous perceptual experience that I had, at least in episodic memory.

Our perceptual and episodic-memory states are immune to error through misidentification in two different ways. In the first place, we cannot be wrong about the individual who is in that mental state, the individual who is having the experience of perceiving or remembering something. Secondly, immunity to error also affects the individual who is related in that special way with the scenario that we are perceiving or remembering. As he does for the analysis of proprioceptive-kinaesthetic states, Recanati claims that these instances of self-reference are implicit; they are not part of the content explicitly represented, the *lekton*.

This double immunity to error through misunderstanding characterizes what Recanati calls the *Reflexive Constraint*, a principle that does not necessarily hold for every mental state. We can imagine, for example, being Napoleon in the battle of Waterloo, seeing what he saw and feeling what he felt. This does not change the fact that it is *we* who are having the experience, because in imagination the mode determines implicitly *the individual who is experiencing the mental state*, but we do not need to be also the ones *who are related in a special way with the scene* that we are imagining. When we imagine being Napoleon, *we* are having the experience of imagining seeing through Napoleon's eyes, etc. Empathy is also cited by Recanati as a psychological mode where the Reflexive Constraint does not hold.

The last chapters of the book are devoted to the scrutiny of an extension of the Reflexive Constraint, the *Generalized Reflexive Constraint*. The new principle affects not only self-referential parameters, as the more limited Reflexive Constraint, but every parameter that has to be taken into account to evaluate the representation. According to this new principle, the parameters that the mode determines are to be filled with information *from the context in which the holder of the mental state is*. Psychological modes that respect this principle are *egocentric*.

But the *Generalized Reflexive Constraint* does not apply universally either, modes can be *anaphoric* as well. We are able to drastically change our perspective, and make sense of representations with respect to parameters taken from a context that is not necessarily our present context. Recanati uses the distinction between mental states of the *egocentric mode* – those in which the Generalized Reflexive Constraint holds –, and mental states under the *anaphoric mode* – those where it does not – to explain cases in which cognitive significance varies, even though the *lekton* and the *Austinian proposition* remain unchanged. Consider the case where two people are on the phone. One is in Paris and another one is in London. The Parisian tells the Londoner that it is raining, and the latter believes it. In this case, both have the same belief, they both believe that it is raining *in Paris*. The content explicitly represented, the *lekton*, is expressed by the zero-adic predicate 'it is raining', while

the *Austinian proposition* also includes a set of parameters, including, among others, the location with respect to which the *lekton* has to be evaluated, Paris. If their thoughts have exactly the same content, both at the level of the *lekton* and the *Austinian proposition*, how is it possible that their dispositions are so radically different? The Londoner will leave his umbrella at the office, while the Parisian will certainly take his. The difference, according to Recanati, is that the place-parameter is not completed, in the case of the Londoner, by the context he is in, unlike in the case of the Parisian. The former mode is *anaphoric*, while the mode of the latter thought is *egocentric*.

III. STRONG MODERATE RELATIVISM AND TRUTH-CONDITIONAL PRAGMATICS

Recanati is commonly associated with Truth-Conditional Pragmatics (TCP), a view according to which the proposition expressed by the utterance of a sentence is not only a function of the linguistic/conventional meanings of the expressions included in that sentence. Propositions contain also elements that are not linguistically encoded, but pragmatically conveyed. Within Recanati's version of TCP [vid. e. g. Recanati (2001), (2002), and (2004)], the interpretation of a linguistic utterance can be roughly anatomized into the following processes:

    i) Pre-semantic processes. Language-determination, lexical and syntactic ambiguity resolution.
    ii) Semantic processes. Computation of the conventional meanings of the expressions contained in the uttered sentence.
    iii) Primary Pragmatic processes:
        iii.a) Mandatory primary pragmatic processes. Saturation, bottom-up processes, linguistically mandated;
        iii.b) Optional primary pragmatic processes. Enrichment, top-down processes, not linguistically mandated.
    iv) Composition.
    v) Secondary Pragmatic processes. Implicature derivation.

First – in logical but not necessarily temporal sequence – the language that encodes the linguistic message that we are interpreting is determined, then cases of lexical and syntactic ambiguity are solved. Contextual information is as decisive in this first stage as it is in stage iii). Once the conventional meanings of the linguistic expressions used are retrieved, these are modulated – pragmatically adjusted, iii.b – and contextual gaps carried by them – if any – are filled out, iii.a. Certain phenomena associated with enrichment are sometimes explained with the use of *unarticulated constituents* [Recanati (2002)], contextually provided constituents of the proposition for which there is no lexical item in

the sentence. Enrichment does not only affect *articulated* constituents of the proposition (*modulation*), but can also introduce new information altogether.

Finally, every piece is put together through composition, in such a way that the meaning of the whole is a function of the meaning of the parts, and the way they are combined. When the proposition expressed is at our disposal, what we imply, suggest, etc, can be derived. Secondary pragmatic processes take part in this post-propositional sequence and they provide the implicatures intended by the speaker.

TCP is a one-stage picture of content. The representational properties of our linguistic utterances are systematically individuated by paying attention to one level only, the level of the proposition expressed, *what is said*. The test to determine what is said by the utterance of a sentence is the so-called *Availability Principle*:

> On this view what is said by uttering a sentence depends upon, and can hardly be severed from, the speaker's publicly recognizable intentions. Hence my 'Availability Principle', according to which 'what is said' must be analysed in conformity to the intuitions shared by those who fully understand the utterance — typically the speaker and the hearer, in a normal conversational setting [Recanati (2004), p. 154].

This criterion is used to set apart the information that is relevant to establish the truth-conditions of what we say (processes i-iv above) from the information that belongs to what we implicate by saying what we say (processes included in stage v). The result is a single level of content, that we evaluate as true or false *simpliciter*.

SMR results from a line of research that has been at times associated with the usual characterization of TCP [Recanati (2004), ch. 8], but can also be traced independently in Recanati's production [Recanati (1987), (1997), (2000)]. One could wonder whether those are two completely independent programs of research or not. How does TCP fit within the two-stage picture defended in [Recanati (2007)]?

One possible alternative, let us call it the *naive alternative*, would be to argue that *what is said*, the complete proposition expressed, resulting from the computation of both articulated and unarticulated constituents, corresponds to the *Austinian proposition*, the union of the *lekton* and the *circumstance*. What about the *lekton* under this naive alternative? Is there a theoretical element in TCP analogous to this fundamental level of SMR? The *lekton* contains all the ingredients that are *articulated*, Recanati says along the book, and this kind of level – the one that contains articulated content – is often mentioned whenever TCP is explained or defended [vid., e. g. Recanati (2004), pp. 20-22], receiving the name of 'minimal proposition'. The minimal proposition is the result of pre-semantic processes, computation of lin-

guistic meanings of the expressions contained in the sentence, plus the output of mandatory primary pragmatic processes — those that provide contextual information required to fill linguistic gaps.

Recanati describes two different views under which the minimal proposition holds a meaningful theoretical role: *minimalism* and the *syncretic view* [vid. Recanati (2004), sections 1.8, and 4.1]. *Minimalism* maintains that the only level of content that is relevant to individuate the truth-conditional properties of our linguistic utterances is the *minimal proposition*. It differs from *radical relativism* in that, according to minimalism, the minimal proposition is *always* complete: The minimal proposition is the first – absolutely – truth-evaluable level of meaning. Radical relativism, as we saw in the first section of this study, defends the view that the content of our utterances and thoughts does not always have to be complete.

The *syncretic view*, on the other hand, defends the view that both the minimal proposition and *what is said* are theoretically useful components of a theory of content. The syncretic view cannot be identified with *weak moderate relativism*, since in the latter theory the *lekton* is not always complete, and whenever it is, the *Austinian proposition* becomes useless, while the syncretic view maintains that the minimal proposition is always complete and that both levels are always necessary. The syncretic view is also different from SMR. SMR preserves both levels in every case, the *lekton* and the *Austinian proposition*, unlike weak moderate relativism, but the *lekton* is not always truth-evaluable. Is SMR, as the naive alternative would suggest, a syncretic view whose component corresponding to the narrow content can be incomplete?

The main difference, apparently, between the syncretic view and SMR has to be spelled out in terms of the differences between the minimal proposition and the *lekton*. The minimal proposition is the first propositional level – absolutely truth-evaluable – as we add information in the process of determining the content of an utterance. Recanati is highly skeptical about the theoretical usefulness of such a notion:

> ... the minimal proposition does not necessarily correspond to an aspect of what the speaker asserts and cannot be abstracted from it (§4.4). The minimal proposition is a hybrid which goes beyond what is determined by the rules of the language yet has no psychological reality and need not be entertained or represented at any point in the process of understanding the utterance [Recanati (2004), p. 64].

If the minimal proposition and the *lekton* were the same theoretical entity, his argument against the first one would immediately apply to the second. But there are crucial differences between these theoretical entities.

In the first place, the *lekton* is not an abstraction from what is said, leaving aside all those elements that are not strictly necessary to have a truth-evaluable entity, but a data-driven theoretical entity, whose exact determination does not hinge on its completeness. The *lekton* might be complete, but many times it can only be considered as true or false with respect to the parameters contained in the *circumstance of evaluation*. The minimal proposition, on the other side, has to be a complete proposition. So, even though sometimes the minimal proposition and the *lekton* might coincide, there will be cases in which the *lekton* will be incomplete [Cfr. Recanati (2004), p. 129].

Secondly, the criteria to determine the amount of information that goes into the minimal proposition and the *lekton* show significant differences. The information contained in the minimal proposition is exclusively the result of pre-semantic, semantic, and mandatory primary pragmatic processes. This information is allegedly *linguistically mandated*, supplied by the linguistic material or extracted from the context to fill the gaps left open by certain linguistic expressions, as indexicals. The *lekton*, in contrast, might contain information provided by optional primary pragmatic processes, as long as it is not parametrically/absolutely invariant. The criterion to determine the components of the *lekton* is thus completely independent from its truth-evaluability, *Absolute/Parametric invariance* and *articulation* determine what falls on the side of the *lekton* and what belongs to the circumstance.

In order to understand both the motivation for the naive alternative and the reason of its failure, some terminological issues are at stake. Recanati insists on the idea that the *lekton* only contains *articulated* information [vid. e. g. Recanati (2007), p. 147]. 'Articulated' means here 'explicitly represented'. Paragraphs such as the following one could lead the reader into believing that distinctions *top-down Vs. bottom-up* and *articulated Vs unarticulated* amount to the same thing:

> Many theorists think one should not allow top-down processes, which are pragmatic through and through, to affect the proposition expressed by an utterance. In order to be part of what is literally said, they claim, a contextually provided constituent must at least correspond to something in the sentence. It must be 'articulated' [Recanati (2002), sect 1.2]

If those two distinctions split the set of cases in the same way, then top-down pragmatic processes could not affect – or be considered as – 'articulated' material. 'Articulated' would mean in this case *linguistically mandated*, either the conventional meanings of the expressions in the representation, or indexically determined contextual information.

But nothing can be further from Recanati's intention as expressed in [Recanati (2007)]. The information contained in the *lekton* may be the result of top-down pragmatic processes, and it is fully 'articulated'. Some optional

primary pragmatic processes affect the articulated material, the *lekton*, while some others only modify the *circumstance of evaluation* . *Local* top-down processes are confined to the *lekton*, and *global* ones help in determining the *circumstance* [Recanati, personal communication]. When optional primary pragmatic processes affect one of the elements articulated in the representation, and that element's conventional meaning is *modulated*, the process is *local*. Whenever enrichment provides entirely new ingredients to the proposition, *unarticulated constituents*, whose impact is not confined to one or another articulated constituent, but affect the proposition as a whole, the process is said to be *global*.

Rejecting the naive view to conclude that SMR properly contains TCP is not a path free of trouble either. A less innocent alternative could be characterized in the following way: Absolute/Parametric invariance and articulation define the amount of information that goes into the *lekton*. The pre-semantic, semantic, and pragmatic processes involved in the reconstruction of content in TCP are left untouched, except for the fact that the output of pre-semantic, semantic, mandatory primary pragmatic, and local optional primary pragmatic processes is now called 'the lekton'. The level of content that includes global optional primary pragmatic processes is the *Austinian proposition*.

But Barwise's examples suggest that in the process of determining the content of a certain utterance, one could *zoom in* and *zoom out*, as it were, to focus on the *lekton* or the *Austinian proposition*. The availability principle could still be applied to determine what is said, and would allow the theoretician to distinguish between the proposition expressed by uttering a certain sentence from the proposition/s conveyed by expressing the first proposition in a certain context. If the *lekton*, alone or together with the *Austinian proposition*, is going to play the role of what is said, it is left unexplained how an inferential process, such as the one that is necessary to derive implicatures, can contain elements that are propositionally incomplete. Furthermore, *what is said* was the level of content that an agent, a thinker and a speaker, was committed with, the amount of information that she could be held responsible for when speaking or thinking. It remains unclear whether the *lekton* can play that role.

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RESUMEN: Éste es un estudio crítico sobre [Recanati (2007)]. Se discuten aquí algunas de las aplicaciones del Relativismo Moderado (análisis del contenido de diversos tipos de estados mentales, inmunidad al error por identificación el problema del deíctico esencial) y se compara esta teoría con la Pragmática de las Condiciones de Verdad.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *contextualismo, pragmática, relativismo, contenido, Recanati.*

ABSTRACT: This is a critical study on [Recanati (2007)]. Some of the main applications of Moderate Relativism are discussed –the analysis of the content of mental states, immunity to error through misidentification, the problem of the essential indexical–, and the new framework's status with respect to Truth-Conditional Pragmatics is assessed.

KEYWORDS: *contextualism, pragmatics, relativism, content, Recanati.*