

Problems Concerning Logic and the
Philosophy of Language in the *Tractatus*
Logico-Philosophicus

– Doctoral Dissertation –

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Abstract

1 Introduction

In my dissertation I discuss some problems concerning logic and the philosophy of language in Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (henceforth, *Tractatus*). I tried to choose problems about which I could make important new observations, either because the problems have not been covered in literature so far, or because I feel there is a false consensus regarding them. However, I did not attempt to discuss questions beyond the scope of the *Tractatus*.

1.1 Tractarian solutions to the color exclusion problem

In the literature there is a certain consensus that the ontological and semantical ideas of the *Tractatus* are incapable of solving the *color exclusion problem*. In particular, the doctrine of the independence of elementary propositions is apparently inconsistent with the linguistic fact that propositions that attribute different degrees of a property to a certain object contradict each other. In this chapter, I attempted to challenge this consensus. By means of constructing a couple of intuitive models, I believe to have showed that even if Tractarian ontology allows for facts involving degrees, it is neither inconsistent nor categorical.

1.2 The proper treatment of Tractarian Quantification

For a long time it was commonly held in the literature that although the *philosophical* system of the *Tractatus* is highly problematic, its internal *logical* system is a sound one for its own purposes. This consensus was broken in the late 70's by Robert Fogelin's work. A couple of years later Peter Geach and Scott Soames attempted to refute Fogelin's arguments, and to show that all first-order propositions can be expressed by Tractarian means. With a few exceptions their solutions are held definitive in the literature. In this chapter I aim to show that both Fogelin's, Geach's and Soames' arguments are based on some false premises. Moreover, the problems posed by Fogelin can be solved in the Tractarian framework, but other propositions still seem inexpressible. At the end of the chapter, I show that even these propositions become expressible after some modifications of the Tractarian system.

1.3 A Formal Reconstruction of the Tractarian Logical Notation

In this chapter, I attempted to develop a formal reconstruction of the Tractarian theory of propositions. As a framework, I chose a rather weak axiomatic set theory which is introduced at the end of the chapter. The reconstruction itself has four steps. The first is the development of *logical space*. The second is the introduction of elementary propositions and elementary *propositional variables*. The third is the introduction of complex propositions and propositional variables. The fourth is the definition of Tarskian semantic concepts.

1.4 Notes on the reconstruction

In the final chapter of my dissertation, I attempted to draw conclusions from the reconstruction developed in the previous chapter. First, I showed that various interpretations of the concept of *logical space* are compatible with the one in the reconstruction, which thus proved to be a neutral one. In the second section I investigated some arguments concerning the cardinality of Tractarian objects. The third section is devoted to the peculiar relation of syntax to semantics in the *Tractatus*. In the concluding section I took the *showing-saying* distinction into consideration.