

Neil Tennant

‘Structuralism About Truth Itself’

Conference on The Emergence of Structuralism and Formalism

Prague, June 2016

Abstract

Simple forms of inference determine the truth value of a sentence in a model. They allow one to define co-inductively the notions ‘ V is a verification of φ in the model M ’ and ‘ F is a falsification of φ in the model M ’. Such *evaluations* explicate the different *ways* that φ can be true, or false, in M .

These evaluations employ facts *relevantly* to determine truth-value. They can be infinitary if the domain is infinite. Verifications and falsifications are relevantly *from*, or *relative to*, a set of *literals* expressing some of the atomic information in the model.

A sentence’s being true-in- M in the sense of Tarski *consists in* its having an M -relative verification.

In game-theoretic semantics for first-order logic, Player **T** and Player **F** contend on a sentence against the background of a model M . The sentence is true [false] in M just in case Player **T** [**F**] has a winning strategy. Evaluations *are* the winning strategies themselves. They are *game plans* that can be used to win the game. A sentence’s truth-in- M *consists in* all its different M -relative verifications. A conclusion follows logically from given premises just in case one can *transform* any M -relative verifications of the premises into an M -relative verification of the conclusion.

The nature of truth is revealed by our reifications: these *abstract tree-like structures* represent the different *ways* that a sentence is true in a model. We have here structuralism about truth—a structuralism worthy of the name.