Filozofia Nauki (The Philosophy of Science)
ISSN 1230-6894 e-ISSN 2657-5868
2022, vol. 30(4) [120]: 63-76
DOI: 10.14394/filnau.2022.0033

EDUARDO PÉREZ-NAVARRO*

FAILING TO MAKE IT EXPLICIT: SUPERFICIAL AND IRREDUCIBLE PERSPECTIVALITY**

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to explore what the different answers that might be given to the question about the role of perspective in language – *indexical contextualism*, *nonindexical contextualism*, and *assessor relativism* – amount to, using Perry's work about thought without designation and thought without representation as our point of departure. In particular, I argue that Perry's discussion of the possibility of making explicit the parameter on which the truth-value of a certain sentence depends provides us with a useful criterion to distinguish between indexical and nonindexical contextualism. Then, I show that some of MacFarlane's insights can be seen as a continuation of Perry's discussion. The most salient outcome of the comparison between Perry's and MacFarlane's frameworks will be the distinction between the *superficial perspectivality* that can be found in sentences like "It is raining" and the *irreducible perspectivality* that we find in sentences like "Licorice is tasty." The apparently paradoxical conclusion will be that language is truly perspectival precisely when it does not encode a perspective.

Keywords: perspective, indexical contextualism, nonindexical contextualism, assessor relativism, John Perry, John MacFarlane, explicitization

It has nowadays become a platitude to say that some uses of language are perspectival. For instance, virtually all theorists, except perhaps for the most

* University of Barcelona, LOGOS-BIAP, Carrer de Montalegre 6-8, 08001 Barcelona, Spain; e-mail: epereznavarro@ub.edu; ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2240-2380.

** This paper has been funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation under the grant FJC2020-045045-I and the research project "The Philosophy of Hybrid Representations" (PID2020-119588GB-I00) and by the BBVA Foundation under the research project "Evaluations in Disguise: A Dynamic Expressivist Account of Propaganda" (DINEXPROP). The author would also like to thank María José Frápolli and Neftalí Villanueva for their helpful comments and suggestions.

hardcore objectivists, would agree that my liking of licorice – my *perspective* on it – plays some role or another when I say that licorice is tasty.[1] Once we accept that perspectives must play some role in some of our uses of language, however, one question remains: what role exactly? This debate is contemporarily framed along the axes drawn by three families of theories: *indexical contextualism* (Glanzberg 2007, Schaffer 2011, Sundell 2011, 2016), *nonindexical contextualism* (Kölbel 2004, Recanati 2007), and *assessor relativism* (MacFarlane 2014). According to indexical contextualism, the *content* asserted by uttering "Licorice is tasty" depends on the speaker's perspective, or some perspective suitably related to the speaker (see Pérez-Navarro 2021). According to nonindexical contextualism, the content remains unchanged irrespective of any perspective shift, but its *truth-value* varies along with the speaker's perspective. According to assessor relativism, the content's truth-value depends not on the speaker's perspective but on the perspective of the person who asks about it.

The aim of this paper is not to support any particular answer to the question about the role of perspective, but to explore what the different answers that might be given amount to. In particular, I will take John Perry's (1986/1993) discussion of the possibility of making explicit the parameter on which the truth-value of a certain sentence depends as providing us with a useful criterion for distinguishing between indexical and nonindexical contextualism. Then, I will show that some of John MacFarlane's (2014) insights can be seen as a continuation of Perry's discussion. The most salient outcome of the comparison between Perry's and MacFarlane's frameworks will be the distinction between the *superficial perspectivality* that can be found in sentences like "It is raining" and the *irreducible perspectivality* that we find in sentences like "Licorice is tasty." The apparently paradoxical conclusion will be that language is truly perspectival precisely when it does not encode a perspective.

The structure of the paper is as follows. In section 1, I introduce Perry's view. In section 2, I explore the connection between the contemporary distinction between indexical and nonindexical contextualism and the one drawn by Perry between a sentence's being about something and its concerning this something. In section 3, I introduce MacFarlane's view and discuss the similarities and differences it maintains with Perry's. In section 4, I show that the possibility of making explicit the parameter on which the truth of a proposition

[1] As witnessed by most objectivists' efforts to incorporate what MacFarlane calls "the TP rule": "If you know first-hand how something tastes, call it 'tasty' just in case its flavor is pleasing to you, and 'not tasty' just in case its flavor is not pleasing to you" (MacFarlane 2014: 4). The objectivist can say that neither the content nor the truth-value of sentences like "Licorice is tasty" depend on the speaker's taste, but even she seems constrained by the idea that the speaker needs to like licorice in order to be entitled to utter the sentence.

depends provides an interesting axis of comparison between the two views. In particular, I distinguish between the senses in which Perry and MacFarlane take explicitization to be impossible. In section 5, finally, I relate these two senses to the two kinds of perspectivality mentioned above.

1. PERRY'S VIEW

In this section, I introduce Perry's distinction between thought without designation and thought without representation, as well as the corresponding distinction between a sentence's being about a parameter and its concerning that parameter. I then discuss how Perry's framework coheres with David Kaplan's, of which I also offer a brief summary.

Perry (1986/1993) starts by considering the possibility of thought without designation, which takes place when there is a constituent of the proposition expressed by a sentence that is not designated by any of the sentence's components. Still, the sentence is *about* the constituent. For instance, it seems reasonable to think that by uttering "It is raining" in, say, Palo Alto we express a proposition that includes Palo Alto as one of its constituents – something like the proposition that it is raining in Palo Alto. As uttered in this context, then, "It is raining" is about Palo Alto. Perry then moves to the possibility of thought without representation, which takes place when a sentence expresses a *propositional function*, that is, a function that yields a proposition only when fed a certain argument.[2] Once an argument value is supplied, a proposition, and with it a truth-value, will be determined. This means that a propositional function will only be true or false relative to an argument value. The sentence that expresses this propositional function is thus not about the value, but it *concerns* it.

To understand what thought without representation amounts to, Perry invites us to imagine a country, Z-land, whose inhabitants do not know that other places exist beyond their borders. When a Z-lander utters "It is raining," she expresses a propositional function that is to be evaluated with respect to Z-land: it will be true if it is raining in Z-land, and it will be false if it is not. However, the Z-landers cannot make this explicit because they are not aware of the fact that more than one location exists, and, consequently, of the fact that the contents they express are to be evaluated relative to a parameter that

[2] In current relativist jargon, the content of these sentences would be said to be a proposition all the same, albeit a relativized one. This is mainly a terminological issue that needs not worry us here. From section 2 on, in fact, I will use the word "proposition" to cover both what I am calling "propositions" here and what I am calling "propositional functions."

can change, such as location. As uttered by a Z-lander, then, "It is raining" concerns Z-land. However, it is not about Z-land, as the Z-landers have no representation of it.

So far, the picture just offered does not differ too much from the one advanced by Kaplan (1977/1989), according to whom the interpretation of a sentence, as uttered in a certain context, takes place in two steps. First, the reference of all indexical expressions is resolved by applying the rule that constitutes its *character*, i.e., its linguistic meaning. This rule tells us, for each context in which the expression might be used, how to derive a *content* for it. For instance, the character of the personal pronoun "I" is a rule that tells us to assign the speaker of the context as its content. As a result, moreover, sentences themselves have a character, that is, a rule that tells us how to assign a content to the sentence as uttered in a certain context. This is the first role that the context of utterance plays in Kaplan's picture, but it also plays another role *after* a content is derived. This content only determines a truth-value relative to a set of *circumstances of evaluation* (Kaplan 1977/1989: 502), which are the parameters with respect to which it is possible to ask about the extension of a certain expression. The values for these parameters are determined by the context too.[3] For instance, the content of "David is in LA" may be true as evaluated now but false as evaluated tomorrow. If the sentence is uttered now, though, it is understood that the content should be evaluated relative to the present time.

There is disagreement between Kaplan and Perry as to which sentences express propositions and which sentences express propositional functions, but both frameworks make room for the latter, as, according to the definitions above, Kaplanian contents would be propositional functions. Thus understood, Kaplan says that tensed sentences express propositional functions that are true or false only relative to a supplied time; Perry, much in David Lewis' (1980) spirit, instead takes time to be a propositional constituent. If the sentence is one like "It is raining," however, it will still express a propositional function whose truth-value, though independent of time, depends on location.

The novelty in Perry's proposal has to do with the *transparency* of those parameters that our sentences concern. Kaplan seems to assume that if a sentence of a language expresses a propositional function, it will be transparent for speakers of that language that it does so, and they will be able to reconstruct the corresponding proposition once an argument value is supplied.[4] Perry, for

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[3] This is actually only one of two ways in which the circumstances of evaluation can be fixed in Kaplan's view. They can be *initialized* by the context, as just depicted, but they can also be *shifted* by operators. I will not get into the latter case here.

[4] This should not be understood as implying that Kaplan takes speakers to ultimate-

his part, makes this picture more complex by considering the variety of cases that may result, depending on whether speakers know that different values for the same argument may be supplied.

In the next section, I move a little closer to the present and propose revisiting Perry's distinctions in the light of the contemporary discussion about the meaning of predicates of personal taste. Doing so will help us highlight some crucial aspects of Perry's view that I have left aside for the moment.

2. INDEXICAL AND NONINDEXICAL CONTEXTUALISM

In this section, I relate Perry's distinction between a sentence being about a parameter and it concerning that parameter to the contemporary one between indexical and nonindexical contextualism. For ease of exposition, I will focus on what these two views have to say about predicates of personal taste and then show that each of them dovetails with one of the scenarios for "It is raining" envisaged by Perry, even if this case concerns location rather than taste.

Let us begin by introducing indexical and nonindexical contextualism. Indexical contextualists (Glanzberg 2007, Schaffer 2011, Sundell 2011, 2016) take certain sentences to feature a *hidden indexical*.[5] As I said in the previous section, "I" is an indexical whose character tells us to assign the speaker as its content: if John Perry says, "I am in Palo Alto," for instance, the content of "I" is John Perry. In a similar way, according to some forms of indexical contextualism, "Licorice is tasty" features a hidden indexical that has a personal taste standard as its content. Thus, although "tasty" may seem like a monadic predicate, it really is a dyadic predicate when we look at its logical form. The extra argument place can be made explicit, as when one says, "Licorice is tasty for most people, but not for me." In this case, we could either say that the extra argument place is filled, or that it is bound by a quantifier (see Stanley 2000, 2002). But, if neither of these two things happen, it is the context of utterance that provides us with a value.

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ly assign full-fledged propositions which have their truth-value *simpliciter* to sentences. It does not mean either that speakers should be expected to make explicit the rule connecting propositional functions in context to propositions. My point here is simply that if a speaker were asked which full-fledged proposition corresponds to a given propositional function in context – "It is raining *where*?" – she would know how to reply.

[5] Indexical contextualists can also rely on processes that, unlike the one triggered by indexicals, are not obligatory but optional: *free enrichment* processes for which no particular linguistic expression, but the whole sentence, is responsible (see Recanati 2010). I will leave these varieties of indexical contextualism aside in this paper.

Nonindexical contextualists (Kölbel 2004, Recanati 2007), for their part, undertake two distinctive commitments. The first is that certain sentences express propositions that are not true or false *simpliciter*. Instead, these propositions are true or false only relative to a set of circumstances of evaluation (see section 1). These propositions thus amount to Kaplan's contents and Perry's propositional functions, to which I will no longer refer. Instead, I will henceforth talk about propositions to refer to things that might or might not be true or false *simpliciter*. Nonindexical contextualists' second commitment is that it is the context of utterance that is in charge of supplying the values for the parameters in the circumstances of evaluation, as it was in the Kaplanian picture. According to nonindexical contextualism, then, "Licorice is tasty" expresses a proposition whose truth-value is relative to a personal taste standard, which is part of the circumstances of evaluation. When deciding whether "Licorice is tasty" is true or false as uttered in a certain context, we will have to evaluate the proposition expressed relative to the personal taste standard supplied by that context.

Perry's "thought without designation" can be said to amount to indexical contextualism, while his "thought without representation" can be said to amount to nonindexical contextualism. To see this, note that thought without designation takes place when there is a constituent of the proposition expressed by a sentence that is not designated by any of its components. This is what the indexical contextualist would take to happen, as we have seen, with the sentence "Licorice is tasty." She would take it to express the proposition that licorice is tasty relative to a certain personal taste standard, but no component of the sentence – either "licorice," "is," or "tasty" – designates that standard. The sentence is thus about the standard, even if none of its components designates it.

The nonindexical contextualist, for her part, would say that the sentence "Licorice is tasty" expresses a proposition that is not true or false *simpliciter*, such as the proposition that licorice is tasty relative to standard *x*. Only after specifying a standard can we determine a proposition, and with it a truth-value. But the proposition that licorice is tasty relative to *x*, which is what "Licorice is tasty" expresses, will only be true or false depending on what standard *x* is. The sentence that expresses this proposition, therefore, is not about the standard, but it concerns it.

Indexical and nonindexical contextualism, however, are not the only actors in the contemporary discussion about the meaning of predicates of personal taste. There is a third contender, which I will introduce in the next section: assessor relativism. As we will see, its tenets do not coincide as exactly with

those of Perry's view as indexical and nonindexical contextualism's did, but it is precisely one of the aims of this paper to explore the possible overlaps.

3. MACFARLANE'S VIEW

The conceptual tools that allow us to address cases involving perspectives have developed in the almost forty years that have passed since the publication of Perry's paper. A major step forward that stems from Kaplan's framework is MacFarlane's assessor relativism. In this section, I introduce MacFarlane's proposal and compare it with Perry's. The conclusion of this comparison will be that, although some of Perry's commitments are more radical than MacFarlane's, the latter's proposal constitutes, all things considered, a step ahead in the study of perspectivality.

MacFarlane's (2014) view results from the acceptance of two theses. The first is shared by assessor relativism and nonindexical contextualism: sentences like "Licorice is tasty" express propositions that do not have a truth-value *simpliciter*. Instead, their truth-value depends on a personal taste standard. The second thesis distinguishes assessor relativism from nonindexical contextualism: the context that is relevant to determining the truth-value of the propositions at issue is not the context of utterance – as happens in nonindexical contextualism – but the *context of assessment*, i.e., the context from which we assess the proposition.

Perry does not see anything of this kind happening in the Z-landers' case. As should be expected, he accepts the relativist's first thesis, since this commitment is shared by the relativist and the nonindexical contextualist, whose explanation of this case should coincide with Perry's. I will thus assume from now on that the propositions expressed in the cases at issue are true or false only relative to a set of circumstances of evaluation. But "It is raining," as uttered by the Z-lander, will express a true proposition if it was raining in Z-land at the time of utterance and a false one otherwise, and this will be so from our point of view as well as from the Z-landers'. That is, the proposition's truth-value does not vary as we move from one point of view to another. This is reflected by Perry's talk of speakers *intending* their utterances to concern a given parameter in such a way that the context of assessment is left with no role – the speaker's intentions are part of the context of utterance, so it provides us with everything that is relevant to determining the proposition's truth-value. Thus, in a sense, Perry's proposal is less radical than MacFarlane's.

In another sense, however, Perry's proposal goes beyond MacFarlane's. It does so because MacFarlane presumes that even if we may not know what

value to give to the parameter with respect to which the proposition is to be evaluated, we are aware that the proposition's truth-value depends on that parameter.[6] Perry gets rid of this assumption, at least for the Z-landers. Put in MacFarlane's terms, Perry's point would be that the truth-value associated with an utterance of "It is raining" does not depend on the context of assessment, but the content expressed does. From the Z-landers' point of view, a Z-lander's utterance of "It is raining" expresses a proposition that is true or false *simpliciter*. From our point of view, it expresses a proposition whose truth-value depends on location. Here, our point of view and the Z-landers' both work as contexts of assessment.

A speculative note may be justified here. Perry's argument concerns only the Z-landers. But what is the difference between the Z-landers and us? Of course, we are aware that multiple locations exist and that the same sentence can be true or false depending on location, but what precludes us from being unaware of other features that can distinguish one context from another? Before traveling out of Z-land, the Z-landers already know that "It is raining" is true in one particular context, such as the one in which they found themselves yesterday, but false in another, such as today's context. The Z-landers can then say that the sentence expresses a proposition whose truth-value depends on whatever parameter can be found that distinguishes these two contexts, such as the time of utterance.

But the Z-landers may as well find a third context in which the sentence seems to be false, even if the time of utterance does not distinguish the new context from the one in which the sentence is true. This is what happens when they find out that the world is bigger than they thought. When this happens, the Z-landers are forced to introduce a new parameter – location – that distinguishes the contexts. They had a set of circumstances at first, and they thought it to uniquely determine a context, but then they found out that it does not. However, this also applies to us and our current situation. How can we be sure that the set of parameters we have is not as incomplete as the Z-landers' was before they began traveling? A new parameter can always be introduced.

So, there is a sense in which Perry's view – even though it's not a variety of relativism in the sense in which it is the view that makes truth depend on the context of assessment – is more radical than MacFarlane's. In this paper, how-

[6] Just like "transparent" in the previous section (see n. 4), "aware" obviously has a specific sense here. Speakers cannot be asked to state the semantics of the sentences they use, but they can be said to be aware that the truth-value of a certain proposition depends on a certain parameter if their ascriptions of truth and falsity are better made sense of by taking this fact to underlie their practices.

ever, I will leave this sense aside to focus on the sense in which MacFarlane's view is more radical than Perry's.

4. MAKING IT EXPLICIT[7]

We have seen that both Perry's and MacFarlane's approaches overcome the standard Kaplanian framework. In this section, I explore a further dimension along which these approaches can be compared. It follows from both approaches that the circumstances of evaluation of a proposition cannot always be made explicit, but this means a different thing in each case.

In section 1, I defined circumstances of evaluation, following Kaplan (1977/1989: 502), as the parameters with respect to which it is possible to ask about the extension of a certain expression. If this definition is accurate, "circumstances of evaluation" is an ambiguous expression. It can refer either to a sequence of parameters (time, location, etc.), or to a sequence of *values* for those parameters (a particular time, a particular location, etc.). To say that circumstances of evaluation cannot be made explicit in the first sense means to say that, for a given proposition, we cannot say on which parameters its truth-value depends. To say that circumstances of evaluation cannot be made explicit in the second sense, for its part, means to say that, although we know that the truth-value of a given proposition depends on a certain parameter, no paraphrase of the sentence expressing that proposition – no other sentence synonymous to it – can be given that includes an explicit reference to a value for that parameter. Perry discusses cases in which circumstances of evaluation in the first sense cannot be made explicit, while, in the cases that MacFarlane discusses, it is circumstances of evaluation in the second sense that cannot be made explicit.

Let us start with Perry. By saying "It is raining," the Z-landers express a proposition whose truth-value depends on the location supplied by the context of utterance, and this location is always Z-land. We travelers could make this location explicit by turning "It is raining" into "It is raining in Z-land." However, the Z-landers lack the conceptual resources that would allow them to make this move. They do not have an expression designating Z-land. In fact, they do not even know *there is* anything they might want to coin the expression "Z-land" to designate: as long as they cannot distinguish between Z-land and the world as a whole, the Z-landers do not know that there is such a thing as

[7] This is of course a reference to Brandom's (1994) *opus*. The role that explicitization plays in his framework might be related to the role it plays here. I will not discuss the relationship here, though.

Z-land. This is because by "Z-land" we refer to something *as opposed to* other places. In a sense, then, the Z-landers do not even know they are *anywhere*. It is in this sense that the Z-landers cannot make location explicit.

Even in this case, though, the circumstances of evaluation of the proposition expressed are determined by the context of utterance. Whenever this happens, it is *in principle* possible to make explicit the values that such circumstances determine. To see this, let us switch to a slightly different example. If we say, "It is raining now," the context of utterance determines that the proposition expressed must be assessed regarding the time of utterance. The time I am writing this, for instance, is 17 March 2022 at 8:15 a.m. So, I can make this information explicit by saying "It is raining on 17 March 2022 at 8:15 a.m." (see Richard 1981: 3). The Z-landers cannot do this with location, but this would be solved by adding the expression "Z-land" to their vocabulary. As soon as they start traveling, they will become aware that location is a parameter in the circumstances of evaluation of the proposition they express through "It is raining," and that Z-land is a value for that parameter – in particular, the value that makes their utterances of "It is raining" true or false.

When the circumstances of evaluation are determined not by the context of utterance but by the context of assessment, by contrast, this maneuver is not possible anymore. To see this, let us introduce MacFarlane's "noy" operator, which shifts the time of evaluation not to that of the context of utterance but to that of the context of assessment (MacFarlane 2014: 62–63). Now, let us suppose that we say, "It is raining noy." If "noy" works as we have said, the time of assessment cannot be made explicit in uttering the sentence, for, while the indicated value "17 March 2022 at 8:15 a.m." was unique, the time-values *t* now indicated are potentially infinite: "It is raining on 17 March 2022 at 8:15 a.m." is (once we fix a possible world and location) true or false *simpliciter*, but "It is raining at *t*" is not.

"Noy" is not an English word, of course, and there does not seem to be much point in adding it to the English vocabulary, but MacFarlane's insight is that some expressions of our language work in a similar way to "noy." This he takes to be the case, for instance, with "tasty." If he is right, no sentence including an explicit reference to a personal taste standard can be found that is synonymous in that context with "Licorice is tasty" (see Pérez-Navarro 2022: 1374–1376). Here, I take two sentences to be synonymous in a context when they express propositions whose truth-value is the same at each possible context of assessment. So, as uttered by (say) Alex, "Licorice is tasty" is not synonymous, for instance, with "Licorice is tasty relative to Alex's standard." To see this, suppose that licorice is indeed pleasing to Alex's tastes. While the proposition expressed by "Licorice is tasty relative to Alex's standard" will in this case still be

true as assessed from a context in which a personal taste standard disfavoring licorice holds, the proposition expressed by "Licorice is tasty" will be false as assessed from that context. If "Licorice is tasty" were not assessment-sensitive but use-sensitive (see MacFarlane 2014: 64), by contrast, a paraphrase featuring an indexical, such as "Licorice is tasty relative to my standard," would be possible, and a further paraphrase featuring a proper name, such as "Licorice is tasty relative to Alex's standard," would be too.[8]

MacFarlane's view thus has consequences for what can be made explicit. In this case, however, what cannot be made explicit is a parameter's value, while the Z-landers cannot make explicit what the parameter itself is. The Z-landers lack a sentence of the form "It is raining in *l*" that expresses a proposition whose truth-value covaries with that of the proposition expressed by a Z-lander's utterance of "It is raining," but this is because they lack the conceptual resources that one acquires when one learns that one's location is not the only one that exists. As soon as travel makes the Z-landers incorporate location into their conceptual repertoire, a suitable "It is raining in *l*" becomes available. Explicitization is unavailable in a deeper sense in MacFarlane's case: it is impossible *by principle* to find a sentence of the form "Licorice is tasty relative to standard *x*" whose truth-value covaries with that of "Licorice is tasty." Even when we become aware that there are other tastes than our own, no taste is fixed in an utterance of "Licorice is tasty," while a location is fixed in an utterance of "It is raining." This is so because location is determined by the context of utterance, while the personal taste standard is determined by the context of assessment.

Perry thus already hinted at a way in which it could be impossible to make explicit what the truth of a sentence depends on, but this was a superficial impossibility. As long as we gain experience and develop the appropriate conceptual resources, perspectivality can be overcome. In MacFarlane's framework, by contrast, there are cases in which explicitization is not possible, no matter how much we enrich our conceptual repertoire. In these cases, we have irreducible perspectivality, which is the topic of the next section.

5. THE MARK OF PERSPECTIVALITY

In the previous section, we saw that there are two different senses in which we can say that a proposition's circumstances of evaluation cannot be made explicit. When we say that this is the case with the proposition expressed by

[8] These considerations go against MacFarlane's (2014: 73) own arguments against a particular version of relativism, which he labels "content relativism" (Pérez-Navarro 2022).

a Z-lander's utterance of "It is raining," what we mean is that the Z-landers cannot say on which parameter the proposition's truth-value depends. When we say that the assessor relativist cannot make explicit the circumstances of evaluation of the proposition expressed by an utterance of "Licorice is tasty," by contrast, what we mean is that she cannot specify the parameter value on which the proposition's truth-value depends. This is an important distinction, as it allows us to track a further distinction between varieties of perspectivality.

When the truth-value of a sentence depends on the location where it is uttered, as happens with "It is raining," the sentence encodes a perspective, but it does so precisely in a way that precludes it from being truly *perspectival*. After all, as we saw, a paraphrase of this sentence can be found whose truth-value does not depend on the place of utterance: "It is raining in Z-land" will be true (if it is indeed raining in Z-land) or false (if it is not) irrespectively of where it is uttered. All this paraphrase does is to explicitly encode what "It is raining" leaves implicitly encoded. Since a non-perspectival paraphrase can be found, "It is raining" is only *superficially perspectival*.

However, when the truth-value of a sentence depends on a personal taste standard, as happens with "Licorice is tasty," the sentence does not encode a perspective. While "It is raining" could be turned into a sentence not only concerning Z-land but actually about it, this move is necessarily unavailable when it comes to "Licorice is tasty." Since no paraphrase of "Licorice is tasty" can be found that explicitly encodes the personal taste standard concerned by the sentence (as, in fact, the sentence concerns no particular standard), no standard can be said to be implicitly encoded in the latter. This I take to be the mark of *irreducible perspectivality*, as it characterizes sentences for which, besides their being perspectival, a non-perspectival paraphrase cannot be found.

If the conclusion that encoding a perspective precludes a sentence from being truly perspectival and truly perspectival sentences do not encode perspectives feels counterintuitive, it should be enough to notice that there is nothing perspectival about "Licorice is tasty for Alex." Once the referent of "Alex" is fixed, nothing about this sentence will depend on any perspective we take. It is true that "Licorice is tasty for Alex" *explicitly* encodes a perspective, but a sentence that implicitly encoded that perspective would not be any more perspectival. Only when no perspective is encoded, either explicitly or implicitly, is the sentence truly perspectival.[9]

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[9] Cf. Field's point that as we move from "We ought to withdraw our troops within a month" to "We ought to withdraw our troops within a month relative to policy n_j," "the sensitivity to norms has been lost by the explicit relativization" (Field 2009: 275). Sensitivity to norms is the kind of thing I have in mind when I talk about perspectivality.

This, incidentally, can be seen as an argument in favor of MacFarlane's view. I will not fully develop the argument here, but let me at least offer some of its master lines. If we chose to explain the meaning of "Licorice is tasty" like Perry explains that of "It is raining," as nonindexical contextualists do, the conclusion would be forced upon us that "Licorice is tasty" is not truly perspectival. Of course, an elaborate argument could be built to show that, in spite of appearances, "Licorice is tasty" is not perspectival. But this sentence's perspectivality seems the handiest explanation to account for its connection with action – the fact that the utterance of this sentence alone entitles us to expect certain courses of action from the speaker irrespectively of any surrounding circumstances (see, e.g., Chrisman 2010, Strandberg 2012). The nonindexical contextualist about "tasty" thus owes us an explanation of the practical dimension of sentences featuring this expression that does not rely on perspectivality. Whether such an explanation can be found is an issue for another day.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this paper, I have shown how Perry's (1986/1993) framework prefigures the distinction between indexical and nonindexical contextualism. It does so, however, by focusing on an aspect that has been left aside in most contemporary discussions on perspectivality: the possibility of explicitization. The possibility I have linked to indexical contextualism is one in which the parameter on which the truth-value of the proposition expressed by the sentence depends can be made explicit, while nonindexical contextualism is compatible with a community of speakers who lack the representations that would allow them to do this. However, the perspectivality that can be found in the latter case is only superficial, as – given the appropriate experience – conceptual resources can always be enriched so as to allow that community to make the parameter explicit after all. In MacFarlane's (2014) framework, by contrast, explicitization is unavailable by principle. This is, I take it, the mark of irreducible perspectivality, to which only assessor relativism makes true justice.

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