Pautz’s Multistage Theory of Intentionality
Pautz on Intentionality

1. Problems for reductive externalism
2. Problems for phenomenal intentionality
3. Multistage theory
Pautz’s Multistage Theory

1. Primitive thin contents for conscious perception and action
2. Best-system interpretivist contents for some beliefs
3. Anchored use theory for content of outer language
4. Language-based contents for other beliefs
Comparison to Williams

- Williams’ three-stage theory: 1. teleological contents for perception 2. interpretivist content for beliefs and desires, 3. language

- Pautz’s differences: 1. phenomenal contents for perception, 2. no language of thought for belief, 3. different picture for language and language-based belief
Pautz’s Grounds for the Mind

- Conscious experiences associated with perception and action
- Black box in between (later supplemented by acceptances of sentences)
- Plus normative facts about reasons and rationality.
I. Contents of Perception and Action

• Contents of perceptual experience are thin: just color, shapes, etc.

• What about contents of action?
  • Pautz: these are thin too: bodily motions, sounds, etc.
  • Worry: Is this a plausible account of content of most actions, e.g. utterances?
2. Contents of Belief I

• Best systems theory: Karl believes p or desires q iff the best interpretations of Karl given his experiences and actions assign him the belief that p or the desire that q.

• Best interpretations: those that maximize substantive and structural rationality:
  • perception-belief, affect-desire, belief-belief, desire-desire, belief-desire-action, …?
Limitations

- Pautz: without language, beliefs can’t get outside the perceptual circle.
- Thin contents
- Rosch’s basic-level categories (e.g. chair)
- Kinship relations (e.g. father)
Questions

1. If we can get to *chair* and *father*, why can’t we get further?
   - Experiences justify *chair*-beliefs, why then *chair*-beliefs justify *furniture*-beliefs, etc?

2. If we’re limited to thin-content beliefs — why? Why can’t thick contents be justified by experience and maximize rationality?
3. Anchored Use Theory of Linguistic Meaning

- Meaning of thin expressions is grounded in belief content, meaning of thick expressions is grounded in nonmentalistic regularities of use.
Inferential Regularities of Use

• Key regularity: If you accept thin sentences O₁, O₂, …, you’ll accept thick sentence A₁.

• Content of A₁ derives from content of O₁, O₂, etc.

• Cf. Carnap in “Meaning and Synonymy in Natural Languages”.

• Truth-conditional inferential-role semantics.
Questions

1. Relation to 2D-style anchored inferentialism?

2. Isn’t acceptance mentalistic, so this is a mentalistic theory of language content?

3. What about limited/mistaken dispositions? Pautz: naturalness. Why not appeal to rationality-maximizing instead?
4. Language-Based Beliefs

- The outer-sentence theory of belief. If Karl understands and accepts an outer sentence that means that p in his community, then this grounds his believing that p.

- Cf. Harman in *Thought*: there’s a language of thought and it’s English (or one’s natural language).
Questions

1. What are sentence acceptances? Beliefs with thin content about sounds or images?

2. Do all stage-4 beliefs have to be accompanied by sound/image content, and is this plausible?

3. Could we secretly scramble beliefs so that accepting B plays the accepting-A role?