Groundedness in Philosophical Logic

Syllabus

30th September 2011

1 Seminar description

Since the project *Plurals, Predicates and Paradox* was launched in Spring 2010, the notion of groundedness has been touched upon in various contexts. So far, however, it has not been addressed directly. This seminar now will be dedicated to detailed discussion of groundedness. Thus, it will provide an important building block to the project as a whole. Its goal is to let the participant engage with the various conceptions in the literature and enable her to form a view on groundedness herself.

The relevant literature is rather heterogeneous and the views on groundedness are not always transparent. Therefore, the seminar will involve some amount of exegetic work. Then, the findings will be evaluated by the following criteria.

1.1 Guiding Questions

- Independence: Is groundedness a basic or a derived notion?

- Adequacy: Does it apply to paradigm examples?

- Precision: How sharp is the conception? Does it rule out non-examples?

- Philosophical substance:
  
  (i) Does the notion enrich our explanatory tool kit? When we call something grounded, does this increase or specify our understanding of it?
  
  (ii) Does the notion at hand strengthen our argumentative arsenal? If something has been identified as grounded, does this allow new interesting conclusions? Does it simplify existent arguments
We will also have a look at formal definitions of groundedness, and ask

- How well does the definition capture which philosophical understanding?
- Does it collapse into some well-known mathematical concept?
- Does it have interesting mathematical applications?

1.2 Format

The seminar will consist of four two-hour sessions. Each session is based on one main and a number of optional readings. The participants are presumed to have formed some understanding of the main readings.

As it befits a research seminar in philosophy, the sessions will be informal and need not follow a rigid structure.

2 Outline

2.1 Semantic Groundedness in Partial Logic

- Yablo 1982 (main)
- Kripke 1975: pp. 693–4, 701–6 (background)
- Herzberger 1970

2.2 Classical Groundedness

- Leitgeb 2005 (main)
- Bonnay and van Vugt ‘What Makes a Sentence be about the World?’, MS
- Toby Meadows ‘Truth, Dependence and Supervaluation: Living with the Ghost’, MS
- McCarthy 1988
2.3 **Groundedness and Abstraction**

- Leitgeb ‘Grounded Abstraction’, MS (main)
- Horsten and Linnebo ‘Term Models for Abstraction Principles’ MS
- Linnebo ‘Grounded Abstraction’

2.4 **Grounded Classes**

- Fine 2005 (main)
- Linnebo 2006
- Maddy 1983

**References**


