

Semantical Paradoxes & The Indeterminacy of Truth

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My talk circles around the following two theses: (i) truth may be semantically indeterminate, i.e. there may be various extensions of the truth predicate s.t. there is no objective ground to prefer one extension to another, and for that reason (ii) languages may contain their own truth predicate, i.e. there may be semantically closed languages. (I say 'may' because whether (i) and (ii) are actually the case, depends on the values of certain parameters.)

In the first part of my talk I will focus on thesis (i): I will try to give good reasons why one should acknowledge the possibility of the indeterminacy of truth, if one also acknowledges the possibility of the Quinean indeterminacy of translation while granting the Tarskian notion of truth. In the second part I will introduce a simple concept of interpreted language on the basis of which some adequate notions of translation and truth may be defined. Both of the latter notions may be shown to be indeterminate. The third part is devoted to an application of what we have learnt in the first two sections: I will have a look at some well-known semantical paradoxes (e.g. the Liar paradox) and suggest that their truth values should be considered as being indeterminate; this indeterminacy is a consequence of the indeterminacy of truth and has nothing to do with three-valued logic or with the Kripkean truth theory. I conclude by stating some existence results supporting thesis (ii) which relate my approach to other recent results on truth.