

HENRIK SOVA

The Structure of  
a Consistent Global Pragmatism





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18

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The Structure of  
a Consistent Global Pragmatism



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## LIST OF ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

1. Sova, H. (2017). The Dilemma Imposed on the Realist by Putnam's and Kripkensteinian Argument. *Studia Philosophica Estonica*, 10.1, 62–82.
2. Sova, H. (2019). A Non-substantial Meta-semantics for Global Expressivism. *Acta Analytica*, 34(4), 505–514.
3. Sova, H. (2021). Assessment relativism and the truth-predicate. *Acta Baltica Historiae et Philosophiae Scientiarum*, 9(1).

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. The central aim

The central aim of this dissertation is to put forth a version of pragmatism – more specifically, a logically consistent structure for a global kind of pragmatism. Pragmatism, as it is understood here, is an approach in philosophy of language that aims to provide an account of meanings of expressions in terms of how the expressions are used in a linguistic community, and not in terms of how they represent the mind- and language-independent world. Global pragmatism seeks to extend, or globalize, this non-representational stance to all discourses. This amounts to a rejection of the representationalist conviction that there are at least some expressions in some discourses that refer to some aspect of an objective external reality. For global pragmatists, no discourse provides this kind of a privileged representation of how things are in a discourse-independent world. In their view, there are simply a range of different language games, each fit for its own aims. This kind of approach has been advanced by pragmatist thinkers like Ludwig Wittgenstein, Richard Rorty, Wilfrid Sellars, Robert Brandom and Huw Price.

Global pragmatists reject representationalism because they think that it is based on a false hope of some independent and objective access to reality. Pragmatists take seriously our human condition in which all our inquiries are bound up with different contingent contexts – our practices, aims, sensory and technological capacities, etc. Pragmatists emphasize that although we cannot observe how things really are, we can observe the various ways in which we talk about things. Thus, we should always proceed from the fact that we find ourselves using certain expressions embedded in certain discursive practices. That is to say, global pragmatists commit to discourse priority. In this way pragmatists invite us to restrain our metaphysical urges – our desire to have a one true account of how things really are. These urges, exemplified by representationalism, give rise to all sorts of recurrent metaphysical problems, like questions about the place of mind, meaning and morality in the natural world, or about what kinds of things really exist. Instead of doing metaphysics, we should aim to construct discourse-dependent narratives of how and why we came to talk about meanings, moral properties, values, coffee mugs, elementary particles, minds, numbers, etc.

In sum, two defining commitments of contemporary global pragmatism are global non-representationalism and discourse priority (cf. Macarthur and Price 2007: 95–97, Williams 2009: xiv–xv, Williams 2013: 128). The focus of my dissertation is global non-representationalism. Global pragmatists endorse a worldview according to which there are no substantially representational discourses. However, this view threatens to render the project of global pragmatism inconsistent. To begin with, if no discourse represents anything at all, in what sense can we say of a statement that it is true or false? And in what sense can we say of an expression that it means something? In response, pragmatists offer alternative non-representational use-theoretical accounts of how expressions get their

meanings, and of the role of truth-predicate in our language. However, these global non-representationalist accounts, which take every discourse, including semantics itself, to be non-representational, lead to a further problem. In these accounts, semantic notions (truth, meaning, representation, reference) are themselves deflated in the sense that they do not correspond to any aspect of the purported mind- and language-independent world. But given this deflated sense – in which the concept of representation itself does not represent in any substantial way – every sufficiently structured discourse automatically turns out to be representational. How can global pragmatists then deny that there are representational discourses? It seems that this very denial itself implies a more substantial concept of representation than non-representational semantics would allow for. If so, then global pragmatism as global non-representationalism turns out to be inconsistent. This leads to a question as to how global pragmatists should state their commitment to global non-representationalism.

The central point of my dissertation is to suggest the following solution for global pragmatists. First, global pragmatists should adopt a two-fold conception of truth (representational and non-representational truth) as well as a bifurcation of other semantic notions. And second, global pragmatists should regard the discourse about semantics itself as apt for merely non-representational treatment. In other words, they should regard meta-semantics as non-representational. Meta-semantics is the discourse about the truth and meaning of semantic statements (which include some semantic notions), just as semantic statements form a discourse about the truth and meaning of ordinary, non-semantic statements (which do not include any semantic notions). According to the proposed meta-semantic assumption, sentences that ascribe semantic predicates (such as “is true”, “represents”, “refers”, “has a truth condition”, “means”) themselves do not represent any aspect of a language-independent reality. This meta-semantic assumption and a pluralistic conception of truth and meaning provide global pragmatists with sufficient conceptual and structural resources to deny the representational truth for semantic claims and still allow other discourses to be apt for representational truth. As I will argue, this approach secures the logical consistency of global pragmatism while enabling them to maintain a global non-representationalist stance. It is a structural solution in the sense that it does not prescribe any specific non-representational account. Indeed, several options remain open for global pragmatists.

In sum, I think that the non-representationalism of global pragmatists is best understood as a combination of meta-semantic non-representationalism and bifurcated object-level semantics. The two defining commitments of global pragmatism should thus be rephrased as discourse priority and *meta-semantic* non-representationalism. By contrast, representationalism commits to meta-semantic representationalism, which goes hand-in-hand with a metaphysics-first attitude.

The remainder of this section will introduce representationalism in further detail and outline some versions of non-representationalist semantics that the global pragmatist can work with. In section 2, I explain how the arguments presented in the three research articles of my dissertation pertain to my central thesis. In

section 3, I explicate how Hilary Putnam's and Saul Kripke's skeptical arguments reveal a potential hidden inconsistency in the accounts that seek to reject representationalism. In section 4, I elaborate on this potential inconsistency of global pragmatism and offer a meta-semantic solution that secures the logical consistency. Furthermore, I explain how to apply this solution to other so-called global views like global relativism, and why this solution is better than the quietist alternative.

## 1.2. Background

Our attempts to reflect on the relation between language and the world are quite commonly governed by representationalist intuitions. According to representationalism, there is a substantial relationship between our expressions and the external world such that at least some expressions (e.g., the term "coffee mug") objectively stand for or refer to some external, language- and mind-independent reality (e.g., coffee mugs). These substantial relations are established by extralinguistic meaning-determining facts, as described by, for example, causal theories of reference. Thus, the essential core of representationalism is a referential approach that explains semantic properties (truth, meaning, representation, reference) in terms of the referential relations to extralinguistic things. In the case of language, proper names are taken to refer or correspond to the objects that cause the tokening of those proper names, predicates refer or correspond to properties that the objects have, and so forth. Descriptive sentences and theories present us with a picture of the world, to echo a metaphor from early Wittgenstein. Representationalism is naturally accompanied by the correspondence theory of truth, which states that in order for a statement to be true, it has to correspond to, map onto or represent a mind- and language-independent reality.

On this view of the relation between language and reality, true descriptive sentences come with corresponding metaphysical commitments. For example, according to representationalism, the term "coffee mug" in the sentence "the coffee mug is on the table" refers to the coffee mug, and "table" refers to the table. Thus, if this sentence is taken to be true, it commits us to the existence of a coffee mug and a table in the external world. Similarly and more alarmingly, if we take the sentences "murder is wrong" and "Mona Lisa is beautiful" to be true descriptions of some aspects of the world, then it would seem that we are committed to the existence of entities such as wrongness and beauty in the external world. Representationalists who want to refrain from committing to such dubious entities have to provide some non-representational account of the meaning of these particular kinds of sentences. For example, they might endorse an emotivist or expressivist theory of ethics – i.e., a local non-representational account of one particular discourse – while remaining representationalists about the discourse on ordinary objects.

Historically, one of the central motifs of pragmatism has been the rejection of representationalism and the correspondence theory of truth in order to avoid

metaphysical commitments of the aforementioned kind (see Bernstein 2010, Misak 2016). A notable contemporary global version of that rejection is Huw Price's global expressivism, which globalizes expressivism to all discourses and rejects representationalism tout court (Price 2011, 2013). In his case, the term 'expressivism' does not allude to our statements expressing psychological states as in expressivist theories of ethics, but has a broader meaning of theorizing about the use of language without relying on representationalist semantic notions. Other notable contemporary pragmatists pushing for a global rejection of representationalism include Richard Rorty (1979), Robert Brandom (2008), Michael Williams (2010, 2013) and also Paul Horwich (1998) who does not explicitly call himself a pragmatist, but is one of the central thinkers in the non-representationalist camp.

In general, pragmatists aspire to replace the representational approach to semantics with a use-theoretic one. According to the latter, the meaning of an item – linguistic or other – is given by the way discursive community uses it, especially as a basis for action. To possess or to understand a concept is to know how to use a word. Pragmatists sometimes put the point metaphorically – language is better understood as a set of tools, rather than a mirror of nature.

Use theories of meaning differ over which aspect of language use is the most important one. A prominent class of use theories gives the central role to inferential relations between meaningful items. Such theories are collectively known as inferential role semantics or inferentialism. The general idea of inferentialism is that semantic features of expressions are exhaustively determined by their place in communally accepted inference patterns.

The inferentialist approach has been quite common among eminent pragmatists. It has been explicitly endorsed by Wilfrid Sellars, Richard Rorty, Robert Brandom and Huw Price. Sellars (2007) was the first to situate inferential relations explicitly and systematically at the center of the theory of meaning. Perhaps the most developed contemporary account of inferentialism has been put forth by Brandom (1994, 2000). Both Sellars and Brandom emphasize that descriptive use of vocabulary is meaningful only in an inferentially articulated space of reasons or implications. For example, in order to meaningfully assert, "the coffee mug is on the table", I undertake a series of inferentially articulated commitments: I put the sentence forward as a premise for further inferences and commit myself practically to statements like "the mug is on the table", "there is a table", "the table is solid enough to hold a coffee mug", etc. I also put myself forth as being entitled to assert such a statement. Depending on the context, this might commit me to various further statements – say, the description of me being in a perceptual state of seeing a coffee cup on a table. Only in such a space of implications can a vocabulary attain meanings. In order to understand a sentence, the language user must be able to notice what follows from it, and the evidence for or against it, in the space of implications provided by the language game at hand.

This view of semantics is coherent with the classical logical positivist slogan that the meaning of a statement is its method of verification. Inferentialists approve of this slogan in its general form – for them, the meaning of a statement

is given by its verification by other statements in a web of inferences. However, the crucial difference is that logical positivists were empiricist foundationalists, for whom sense experience was the ultimate basis of justification. Thus, they granted a special status to one particular vocabulary – i.e., the vocabulary of observational reports – which was then supposed to serve as a basis for the meanings of other sentences. Global pragmatists, by contrast, are non-foundationalist neo-positivists – instead of some purportedly foundational source of justification, they look to, say, community’s standards for what counts as evidence (see Rorty 1999: 151–155). In their view, reports of sense experience are not autonomous of such (non-universal and shifting) standards. Brandom explains the inferentialists’ take on the matter as follows:

[T]he proposed empiricist base vocabulary is not *pragmatically* autonomous, and hence not *semantically* autonomous. Observational vocabulary is not a vocabulary one could use though one used no other. Noninferential reports of the results of observation do not form an autonomous stratum of language. In particular, when we look at what one must *do* to count as making a noninferential report, we see that that is not a practice one could engage in except in the context of *inferential* practices of using those observations as *premises* from which to draw inferential *conclusions*, as *reasons* for making judgments and undertaking commitments that are *not* themselves observations. (Brandom 2015: 124)

For example, in order for an allegedly autonomous empirical report such as “I see a coffee mug on the table” to be meaningful, there has to be a community of speakers engaged in a practice where words such as “cup”, “table” and “see” are regularly used and linked to other words like “objects”, “drinking”, “eyes”, etc. Furthermore, this sentence must figure as a knot in a web of inferential relations – it must serve as a premise or conclusion of various practical entailments. Hence, the statement “I see a coffee mug on the table” is not an autonomous non-inferential report.

Global pragmatists, endorsing some non-representational semantics like inferentialism, are semantic holists. For them, the smallest autonomous unit of meaning is not a word or a sentence, nor even an observation sentence, but the whole constellation of sentences held true or false in a community’s language game. By contrast, representationalists are semantic atomists. In their view, a sentence can be meaningful even if we do not assume a wider practice of language users in the background. A single word could have a meaning without there even being any other words, for it suffices that there is a substantial reference relation between the word and the world. In that case, it would just be an objective semantic fact that “mug”, for example, refers to mugs, regardless of whether there happens to be a community who uses this term in playing a certain language game.

Along with representational semantics, global pragmatists reject the correspondence theory of truth. They have several alternatives. According to the simplest forms of classical pragmatist views on truth, a statement is true if acting according to it helps the community to achieve its aims. However, instead of such a classical pragmatist theory, the global pragmatist could also adopt a deflationary or

minimal view of truth (e.g., Horwich 1998). Deflationary views are likewise non-representational, in the sense that according to these views, the truth-predicate does not refer to any substantive property in the world that we could investigate or discover. Everything there is to say about truth is captured by a trivial equivalence schema: “ $\langle p \rangle$  is true iff  $p$ ”. Following Horwich, Amy Thomasson has suggested combining the deflationary approach to truth with a use theory of meaning:

We can now see that there is good reason for pairing the deflationary approach to truth with a use theory of meaning: for then we may treat the meaning of ‘... is true’ as constituted by the core rule of use captured by the trivial equivalence schema /---/ – and yet do so without abandoning the core deflationary idea that there is no substantive property of truth with a nature to be uncovered by scientific or philosophical investigation. (Thomasson 2014: 194–195)

So, global pragmatists can adopt the position that the concept of truth does not have any deep metaphysical content for us to investigate. Among self-avowed pragmatists, this kind of view has been expressed by Richard Rorty (see Rorty 1995, 1999). Rorty thinks that what really matters instead of truth is the process of justifying one’s beliefs to an audience:

We are inclined to say that truth is the aim of inquiry. But I think we pragmatists must grasp the nettle and say that this claim is either empty or false. Inquiry and justification have lots of mutual aims, but they do not have an overarching aim called truth. Inquiry and justification are activities we language-users cannot help engaging in; we do not need a goal called ‘truth’ to help us do so, any more than our digestive organs need a goal called health to set them to work. (Rorty 1999: 37–38)

An intuitive counterargument to this is that a statement can be true – in the sense of capturing how things really are – even when it is not justified to any audience. Yet, this intuitive counterargument is intelligible only on the assumption of a representationalist framework. Pragmatists reject that kind of framework. They offer alternative stories about the diverse roles of the truth-predicate in our language. For example, we use it to endorse statements or in situations where we want to express our fallibility or a need to reconsider our justifications in the light of some possible new information. It is useful to have a predicate to express such a need. In our language, in that case we can say: “It might be justified, but is it true?”

Thus, there are several combinations of views available for global pragmatists. For example, they can combine some use theory of meaning with either a pragmatist or a deflationary theory of truth. In what follows, I refer to all of these combinations simply as non-representational semantics.

## 2. OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH ARTICLES

My dissertation is comprised of three articles: “The Dilemma Imposed on the Realist by Putnam’s and Kripkensteinian Argument” (Sova 2017), “A Non-substantial Meta-semantics for Global Expressivism” (Sova 2019) and “Assessment relativism and the truth-predicate” (Sova 2021). The central thesis of the project – i.e., that global pragmatists should work with two truth-predicates and postulate that meta-semantics is apt for only non-representational truth – is most fully explicated in (Sova 2019) in the context of global expressivism, that is, Huw Price’s version of global pragmatism. In this section, I explain how the arguments pursued in the other two articles (Sova 2017 and 2021) support the central thesis.

In (Sova 2017), I show that certain arguments of Hilary Putnam (1977, 1980, 1981) and Saul Kripke (1982) set certain constraints on the semantic facts suitable for representationalism. Representationalists have namely no choice but to go robust – that is, they must postulate unobservable meaning-determining semantic facts. I claim that these arguments also show that if one wants to reject robust representationalism, as global pragmatists do, then they have to accept meaning-minimalism – the view that there are no representational truth-conditions for ascribing a meaning to something (meaning-ascriptions). This amounts to saying that there is no fact of the matter, in the representationalist sense, what any purportedly meaningful item means. Hence, in my interpretation, these arguments are effectively theoretical mechanisms that force us to choose between two views – meaning-minimalism and robust representationalism – each of which faces its own problems (see section 3). This is relevant to global pragmatists – given that they want to reject representationalism, these arguments force them to bear the consequences of meaning-minimalism.

Crispin Wright (1984, 1992) and Paul Boghossian (1989, 1990) have pursued two lines of argument for the conclusion that meaning-minimalism is inconsistent (see also Hale 2017: 626–628). The first one claims that meaning-minimalism automatically globalizes beyond meaning-ascriptions to include all sentences, with the result that there are no sentences with truth-conditions (Wright 1992: 214–217). This proliferation of minimalism renders the position self-refuting. The other line of argument states that meaning-minimalism entails inconsistent claims about the truth-predicate (Boghossian 1989: 525–526).

Without a consistent formulation of meaning-minimalism, it would seem that the arguments of Putnam and Kripke force us to abandon global pragmatism and accept representationalism with its robust semantic facts. However, in (Sova 2017: 77–78) and (Sova 2019: 508–510) I argue that these arguments fail to show that meaning-minimalism leads to a contradiction. For this purpose, I rely on Wright’s suggestions on how to solve the potential inconsistencies of meaning-minimalism (see Wright 1992: 231–236). I generalize his suggestions and apply them in the service of global pragmatism. The upshot of the resulting solution is that global pragmatists should work with a bifurcated object-level semantics – i.e., representational and non-representational – while regarding meta-semantics as strictly non-representational (see Sova 2019: 508–511). This secures the

logical consistency of global pragmatism and is a central feature of global pragmatism, in addition to discourse priority.

The proposed structure allows global pragmatists to regard some non-semantic statements (i.e., statements that do not include semantic notions) representationally true while still maintaining a global non-representationalist stance. This is made possible by the meta-semantic conviction that sentences which ascribe representational truth are themselves apt for merely non-representational truth (see section 4.1 for further elaboration). However, there is a potential counterargument to that solution from the equivalence schema for truth (see section 4.4). In (Sova 2021), I discuss the counterargument in the context of John MacFarlane's (2014) assessment-relativism, but the argument could be just as well summoned against global pragmatism. The argument claims that ascription of one kind of truth (e.g., representational truth) entails that the same kind of truth should be applied to that ascription itself. Thus, concludes the argument, global pragmatists cannot ascribe representational truth to non-semantic expressions without spreading it also to the meta-level. However, I argue that the argument is not valid. I conclude that there is no general counterargument from the equivalence schema to the structural solution that I propose.

### 3. PUTNAM'S AND KRIPKE'S ARGUMENTS

In (Sova 2017) I argue for the conclusion that Hilary Putnam's model-theoretic indeterminacy argument (1977, 1980, 1981) and Saul Kripke's so-called Kripkensteinian argument (1982) present the representationalist with a dilemma that forces them either to give up representationalism or adopt a robust semantic realism. In this section, I provide a general overview of these arguments, starting with Putnam's model-theoretic argument.

Putnam's model-theoretic argument was originally designed to rebut external realists (or, in Putnam's terminology, metaphysical realists). However, external realists are also representationalists – one essential feature of their view is that true sentences correspond to or represent a mind- and language-independent reality (Sova 2017: 64). This is the feature that Putnam's argument intends to exploit.

The gist of Putnam's case against realism is an argument from indeterminacy. If we assume the representationalists' correspondence theory of truth, then even for an epistemically and empirically ideal theory of the world (i.e., one that is maximally elegant, simple, makes exclusively correct predictions and retrodictions) there is an infinite amount of different models that make the theory true. In other words, even an epistemically and empirically ideal theory might not give us the true account of the real world, for there are countless possible permutations of objects that render exactly the same claims of the theory true. Our theories leave the external world indeterminate.

The problem for representationalists (and external realists) is that this skeptical possibility is not just another innocuous thought exercise, but threatens to render their whole position inconsistent. In order to explicate the issue, I begin with Tim Button's (2013) novel reconstruction of Putnam's arguments (see Sova 2017: 64–68). One essential feature of both external realism and representationalism is a distinction between the truth of a theory and empirical adequacy of a theory (Button 2013: ch 6, Sova 2017: 66–67). Representationalists assume that there exists a mind-, theory- and language-independent external world that our mental states, theories and statements must represent in order to be true. A corollary of this assumption is that empirical adequacy does not by itself suffice for the truth of a theory. For truth, the theory must also represent how things really are, regardless of the state of our cognitive capacities. According to representationalists, even an epistemically and empirically ideal theory can present us a false picture of what is metaphysically real. Thus, representationalism presupposes some sort of distinction between what is given to us in observation and the external world that contains the relevant truth-makers required by the correspondence theory. We can think of it as there being a *veil* that separates us from the real world (Button 2013: 40–41). The precise nature of the veil – whether it is said to consist in sensations, phenomena, observables, etc. – does not matter. Putnam's argument exploits namely the structural dichotomy between our cognitive capacities and the objective world.

Now we can explain the representationalist's predicament as follows. According to representationalists, semantic postulates have certain truth-conditions of the kind required by the correspondence theory of truth – in other words, there are certain states of the external world in the case of which it is true to say that a certain word has a certain reference or that a meaning-bearing item has a certain meaning. The question now becomes, in what terms can the representationalist express these truth-conditions? Remember that for the representationalist, semantic postulates must, in order to be true, correspond to how things really are on the other side of the veil. Thus, if the representationalist expresses the truth-conditions of their semantic postulates in terms of what is given to us in observation – in terms of what lies on our side of the veil, so to speak – then we can apply Putnam's argument against them. Explicating the truth-conditions in terms of what lies on our side of the veil opens up the possibility of permutations on the other side of the veil, such that there are always countless mutually incompatible interpretations of the real world available for the same empirical truth-conditions. For example, the very same empirical truth-conditions could be consistently held for both the sentence “‘the mug is on the table’ means that in the real world, there is a mug on a table” and the sentence “‘the mug is on the table’ means that in the real world, there is a mug in a cupboard”. All we need to do is permute the relevant reference relations accordingly.

This kind of semantic skepticism is not just another innocuous whimsy about how our theory of the world might be false. This potentially renders their position inconsistent. Both representationalists and pragmatists agree that our expressions and thoughts mean something. In representationalists' view, meaning something is possible only if meaningful items somehow reach or refer to the other side of the veil. Putnam's argument shows that there is no coherent empirical route to the other side. Thus, the representationalist is forced to concede that meaning-ascriptions have non-empirical truth-conditions, i.e., conditions given in terms of states of affairs on the other side of the veil. This amounts to accepting that these semantic facts must be robust – that they are unobservable, non-empirical postulates.

In (Sova 2017: 71–76) I show how the Kripkensteinian argument has the same conclusion as Putnam's model-theoretic one. The Kripkensteinian skeptical point is precisely that for whatever empirical truth-conditions we might assume for the meaning of a sign (e.g., how the sign has been used in the past), there are always deviant meaning-ascriptions available such that the empirical truth-conditions remain the same. Hence the dilemma for the representationalist – meaning-ascriptions must either have non-empirical truth-conditions or no truth-conditions at all (the view known as meaning-minimalism).

In sum, what these arguments properly show is not that representationalism and external realism are inherently inconsistent, but rather that the adherents of these positions must concede that their worldview is perhaps more extreme than they would like – they have to commit to robust semantic facts. The same conclusion with regard to the significance of Putnam's argument has been drawn by Hale and Wright (2017), and what they say applies just as well to the Kripkensteinian argument:

That leaves the metaphysical realist the options of faulting the detail of the stages of the argument, or living with its conclusion: that to conceive of the world in a certain kind of robustly autonomous fashion is to consign the relation between the vehicles of our thought and the taxonomy of the world to unaccountability. Putnam effectively ridicules such an upshot. But ridicule, it may be countered, is no substitute for argument. Any broad philosophical system will have its primitive notions and theses. Further argument may be demanded as to why metaphysical realism may not legitimately go primitive at the interface between language and the world. (Hale and Wright 2017: 721)

Indeed, it is logically legitimate for external realists and representationalists to go primitive, however, global pragmatists invite us to consider reasons not to. Pragmatists believe that representationalist thinking produces unsolvable and frankly unnecessary metaphysical problems. Pragmatists keep reminding us about the condition we as humans find ourselves in – namely that we do not have some objective access to how things really are, independent of our contingent contexts of inquiry. This skeptical point is exploited by Putnam and Kripke to show that representationalists have no choice but to go robust. Robust semantic facts, however, place an additional metaphysical burden on representationalists. If there is an alternative account available that does not need to postulate unobservable semantic facts, then it seems that the burden of proof lies on the representationalists to explain why we should prefer their metaphysically more promiscuous account instead.

However, the dilemma set up by Putnam and Kripke also shows that if global pragmatists want to reject representationalism, they have to accept meaning-minimalism – i.e., the view that meaning-ascriptions do not have truth-conditions. This poses a potential problem for pragmatists, for Wright (1984, 1992) and Boghossian (1989, 1990) have argued that meaning-minimalism is logically inconsistent. So, global pragmatists have to respond to these arguments, or else suffer from this inconsistency too. I examine Wright's and Boghossian's arguments in (Sova 2017: 77–78) and (Sova 2019: 507–511), respectively, and conclude that they fail to establish the inconsistency of meaning-minimalism. In what follows, I will not go over the specifics of Wright's and Boghossian's arguments, but introduce the general worry that they raise (and the solution) more directly in terms of global pragmatism.

## 4. THE STRUCTURE OF A CONSISTENT GLOBAL PRAGMATISM

### 4.1. The consistency of global pragmatism

Global pragmatists qua global non-representationalists hold that all semantic claims are non-representational. This amounts to saying that no semantic predicate (truth, meaning, representation, reference) or semantic sentence (ascription of such a predicate to an object) represents any aspect of some mind- and language-independent reality. Let us label this position as semantic-minimalism and define it as follows:

- (1) Semantic sentences do not have a representational function.

From (1) it follows that semantic sentences do not have truth-conditions in the representationalist sense. If we assumed that the only truth-predicate available is the representationalist one that marks correspondence, then (1) would be quite obviously self-refuting. For (1) is itself a semantic sentence – it includes the semantic predicate “has a representational function”. Thus, in the representationalist framework, (1) cannot represent anything, and therefore is not truth-conditional, and therefore cannot be true. Pragmatists, however, can easily sidestep this problem by noting that (1) rules out only the representationalist truth-conditions, but does not imply anything about truth-conditions in the sense of some non-representational theory of truth. In a non-representational framework, (1) is something that can be true.

And yet, this pragmatist maneuver gives rise to another, more subtle problem. (1) deflates all semantic notions so that they end up not corresponding to any aspect of the purported mind- and language-independent world. Thus, the notion of representation itself is also deflated so that any sufficiently structured discourse automatically counts as representational. So the question remains as to how could global pragmatist consistently deny representational truth for any meaningful discourse. In other words, in what sense can they describe themselves as global *non-representationalists*?

In my view, the best response available to global pragmatists is the following (see Sova 2019: 508–513). Global pragmatists should work with two distinct truth-predicates – a representational one and non-representational (e.g., pragmatic) one. In other words, global pragmatists should accept that there are two kinds of roles that a truth-predicate might play in our language. One kind of role comes up in language games where our intention is to claim something about the extra-linguistic world. The other, non-representational role comprises the endorsement of statements, commending of statements as fit for achieving the community’s aims, contrasting current justifications with possible future rebuttals, etc. Along with the two truth-predicates, pragmatists should endorse a more general bifurcation of semantics into a representational and non-representational one. Having

assumed such a diversity of the roles for semantic predicates, global pragmatists should further assume that meta-semantics is apt for non-representational treatment only. That is, the discourse of ascribing truth and meaning to expressions is itself apt for merely non-representational truth and meaning.

In this framework, (1) and global pragmatism are not self-refuting. Since global pragmatists are armed with two truth-predicates, they have a notion of representational truth in their arsenal, which could be either affirmed or denied of any non-semantic discourse (a discourse that does not include semantic notions). Yet, on the assumption of non-representational meta-semantics, this representational truth is deflated so that, on the one hand, such an affirmation or denial does not result in an inconsistency and, on the other hand, it nevertheless makes sense to describe the pragmatist as a global non-representationalist. Pragmatists do not have to accept their opponents' claim that in deflated meta-semantics, every meaningful discourse turns out to be representational. With a pluralist conception of object-level semantics and a non-representational meta-semantics, pragmatists have the necessary semantic resources for distinguishing between representational and non-representational discourses, and making the respective denials on their own terms. In this set-up, pragmatists can consistently deny representational truth for any discourse, because the semantics of their denial is given in their meta-semantic framework, not in the representationalist one.

Thus, as I said, global pragmatists can affirm the representational truth of non-semantic statements. For example, global pragmatists can accept that the sentence "the mug is on the table" is representationally true. This would amount to making the following semantic claim: "The sentence 'the mug is on the table' represents the external world such that there is a mug on a table." Since meta-semantics is apt for merely non-representational truth, this semantic claim might be true, but only in a non-representational sense. Depending on our choice of the non-representational theory of truth, we could interpret this as the semantic claim having a certain location in the web of inferential relations, or perhaps having proven useful for our aims, etc. The main point is that the semantic sentence itself is not held to represent some objective aspect of the world, but that its meaning and truth-value are a function of how this particular set of words is used in a language game. Non-representational meta-semantics stipulates that the talk about how sentences represent some extralinguistic reality gets its meaning only due to being part of a language game. The same meta-semantic stance applies to any meaningful items we might want to consider, e.g. thoughts. Our meta-thoughts about having thoughts about the external world have the content that they do only due to being part of certain discursive practices. This meta-semantic stance captures the global pragmatists' commitment to global non-representationalism.

Thus, the disagreement between representationalists and global pragmatists is not over whether there are representational discourses or not. Rather, the disagreement concerns how to interpret representational discourses – or, in other words, the disagreement concerns meta-semantics. In the representationalists' view, semantic sentences have to represent an aspect of the objective world –

namely certain objective, discourse-independent semantic facts. These purported facts should guarantee that at least some expressions latch on to a reality outside the limits of human contingencies and practices. By contrast, global pragmatists qua global non-representationalists claim that no expressions are capable of referring to states of affairs independently of our current discursive practices. This human predicament is accounted for by non-representational meta-semantics. At first, descriptive non-semantic sentences might seem to capture how things are in a discourse-independent world. However, their discourse-dependence is established by the non-representationality of semantic sentences that state what these object-level sentences mean and when they are true. This establishes global pragmatists' global non-representationalism – i.e., the conviction that there is no ultimate interpretation of sentences that could capture how things really are in a discourse-independent world.

## **4.2. The consistency of other global positions**

The solution proposed here has applications beyond pragmatism. Similar arguments from self-refutation have been applied against various other globalizations, such as global relativism or global social constructivism. Let us take the example of relativism. Global relativists want to claim, roughly, that everything is relative. This naturally leads to the question, how should we regard this very claim itself – is it also merely relatively true, as opposed to absolutely true? If global relativists allowed for this contrast to be considered in the first place, then it would seem that they are faced with a choice between sounding whimsical and conceding inconsistently that there are some absolute facts after all.

Relativists can help themselves to a solution structurally similar to the one that we outlined for global pragmatists. If they want to go global, they should begin by postulating that meta-semantics is non-representational. Next, they can elaborate on what this non-representationality consists in, depending on the details of their position. For global relativists, it consists in holding that meta-semantics is relative. Global relativists should thus qualify their position semantically and state that all semantic distinctions are only relatively true. Declaring meta-semantics non-representational eliminates the possibility of a contrast with some absolute truth. This is something that a non-relativist cannot accept, because they want to maintain that certain discourses are apt for absolute truth in a non-relativized sense. So when global relativists are questioned whether their relativism is true absolutely or relatively, their answer should be that since meta-semantics is relative, global relativism can only be relatively true – but not “only” in the unfortunate sense that it fails to grasp some more substantial truth out there, but in the sense that this is the only kind of truth to be had on a meta-semantic level. If this feels a bit too thin for the opponent, it is merely because the opponent already assumes a representational or non-relativized meta-semantic framework.

### 4.3. Advantages of the meta-semantic approach over quietism

Classic global pragmatist Richard Rorty and contemporary global pragmatist Huw Price have addressed the self-refutation problem arising from (1) in a slightly different way, giving what I call the quietist response. Price (2009, 2013: 12) suggests that global pragmatists should say nothing in their theoretical voice about whether the terms or statements of some target discourse have or lack some semantic feature – whether they are, for example, representational or not. Price suggests that global pragmatists (or, in his terminology, global expressivists) should simply abandon any pro- or anti-representational claims. Abandoning or not endorsing semantic claims does not entail denying them. Global expressivists want to simply offer an expressivist account of language use without employing semantic properties in their theoretical ontology. In this way, they can refrain from endorsing (1) and are not vulnerable to the threat of inconsistency that it brings.

Rorty makes the same quietist point in more general terms. He advises global pragmatists not to go along with their opponents' vocabulary and refuse to answer questions that presuppose their opponents' distinctions:

I think it is important that we who are accused of relativism stop using the distinctions between finding and making, discovery and invention, objective and subjective /---/ We must repudiate the vocabulary our opponents use, and not let them impose it upon us. [This means] that we must avoid Platonism and metaphysics, in that wide sense of metaphysics in which Heidegger said that metaphysics *is* Platonism. (Rorty 1999: xviii)

Rorty insists that we abandon the distinction between representational and non-representational truth along with other Platonistic contrasts. Thus, analogously to Price, Rorty would dismiss (1) as a statement forced upon the global pragmatists by their opponents' ways of speaking.

However, my alternative meta-semantic solution comes with at least two advantages over the quietist response (see Sova 2019: 511–513). First, my solution enables to state explicitly and consistently what global pragmatism is. Global pragmatism is defined namely by two commitments: discourse priority and non-representational meta-semantics. Quietists abandon the second commitment. But if so, then how could they state the difference between global pragmatism and representationalism? If representationalists hold on to their semantics and global pragmatists simply say nothing about it, it might appear as if their projects are mutually compatible. If the pragmatist position would be limited to the claim that terms do not represent or refer, and the only semantic framework available was the representationalist one, then the representationalist could legitimately accuse the pragmatist of being inconsistent. The structure that I propose in my dissertation provides a straightforward solution to these issues.

The second advantage is that with my solution, the global pragmatist can accept representational discourses on the non-semantic object level. This feature allows global pragmatists to accommodate the correspondence intuition – i.e., the intuition that important parts of our language seem to represent how things are in the world. It seems useful for communities to engage in language games that are best described as representational – games in which we act as if there is a world out there, waiting to be captured by our true sentences. Also, the distinctions between finding and making, discovery and invention, objective and subjective that Rorty urges us to abandon could likewise be useful for various purposes. By retaining these distinctions, however, global pragmatists who adhere to non-representational meta-semantics are not suggesting that they have some hold on how things really are beyond our current discursive practices.

#### **4.4. Counterargument from the equivalence schema for truth**

There is a potential counterargument to the structural solution that I propose. I discuss the argument in the context of assessment-relativism in (Sova 2021). In this section, I consider the argument in the context of global pragmatism. For a more elaborate treatment of the argument we would have to consider it in the context of a specific non-representational semantics that is endorsed by some particular version of global pragmatism. However, the following outline nevertheless shows that there is no general counterargument from the equivalence schema to the meta-semantic structure that I am proposing.

The meta-semantic solution for global pragmatists presupposes that we do not have to apply the representational truth-predicate to semantic sentences that ascribe the representational truth-predicate to non-semantic statements. However, consider the propositional equivalence schema, which the truth-predicate is standardly subject to:

$$(ES) \langle p \rangle \text{ is true iff } p$$

The problem stems from the observation that if the proposition on the right-hand side of ES gets one type of semantic interpretation, then the left side must get the same type of interpretation (see (Kölbel 2011: 17–20) and (MacFarlane 2014: 93) for the argument in the context of relativism). For example, if the proposition on the right is interpreted representationally, then the left-hand side must be interpreted representationally as well. It might seem that this forces us to accept the representational reading of the truth-predicate on the left-hand side. This would pose a problem for the solution advanced here, for in that case, any ascription of the representational truth-predicate to any proposition would entail, per the equivalence schema, that this ascription itself must be apt for the representational truth-predicate. If so, then the global pragmatist could not consider any non-semantic statements as apt for representational truth.

However, I argue that these observations do not entail that the interpretation of the truth-predicate is forced by the interpretation of the proposition on the right. In order to satisfy the equivalence, it suffices that only the *proposition* on the left is given the same kind semantic interpretation as the proposition on the right, while the interpretation of the predicate predicated to that proposition is up for grabs. Thus, the equivalence does not determine the interpretation of the truth-predicate on the left side and we are free to interpret it either representationally or non-representationally. This might in turn affect how we understand the proposition that the truth-predicate is predicated to, but in that case the proposition on the right gets re-interpreted accordingly as well. For example, let us suppose that the proposition on the right is interpreted representationally. Then the required representational interpretation of the left-hand side is imposed by the proposition itself. In that case, for global pragmatists, applying the truth-predicate on the proposition effectively says the following: the representationally interpreted proposition is non-representationally true. For representationalists, however, the left-hand side as a whole says the following: the representationally interpreted proposition is representationally true. The equivalence is then established by the fact that the proposition on the right gets the same meta-semantic interpretation. In any case, the meta-semantic interpretation of the truth-predicate is a choice that both representationalists and global pragmatists can freely make.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Representationalism and global pragmatism are two opposing worldviews or general ways of thought. Their opposition captures two antithetical tendencies (both philosophical and pre-philosophical) in how we see the relation between meaning and the world. Representationalists give priority to our intuition that there is an independent world out there that we can objectively investigate. Global pragmatists warn us not to indulge in such metaphysical urges, for there is no access to this purported world (or anything else, for that matter) except via our discursive practices. Not only do these urges lead to unnecessary metaphysical problems, but they also meddle with our reflections on how our ends change in time and thus hinder our capabilities as a community to adjust our practices accordingly. For this reason, global pragmatists invite us to concentrate on how we make use of various meaningful expressions for various purposes instead.

Skeptical arguments by Putnam and Kripke force us to look for a consistent formulation for each of these opposing ways of thought. Representationalists need to make room for robust semantic facts and global pragmatists need to address the troubles with meaning-minimalism. As I have explained, the best way around these worries for pragmatists is adopting a bifurcated semantics together with the postulate that meta-semantics is non-representational. With this solution at hand, we can see that the best way to describe the difference between the representationalist and global pragmatist position is not in terms of whether some non-semantic sentence represents reality, but precisely whether semantic sentences represent reality. Representationalists think that they do, global pragmatists think that they do not.

Although this structure allows global pragmatists to accept representational non-semantic discourses, it would still be a metaphysically modest position suitable for a pragmatist – the object-level representationalism gets deflated in meta-semantics. In this way, global pragmatism accommodates the intuition that our statements and thoughts sometimes seem to capture how things are in the external world, and also accounts for the inevitable discourse-dependency of our understanding of the world.

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## SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

### Globaalse pragmatismi loogiliselt kooskõlaline struktuur

Väitekirja peamine eesmärk on kirjeldada globaalse pragmatismi loogiliselt kooskõlalist struktuuri. Pragmatismi all pean silmas keelefilosoofilist vaadet, mille järgi lausete tähendus ja tõesus tuleneb sellest, kuidas keelekõnelejate kogukond kasutab keelt oma eesmärkide saavutamiseks. Sellega vastanduvad pragmatistid representatsioonistlikule arusaamale, et keel mingis mõttes esitab keelest ja vaimust sõltumatut maailma. Globaalne pragmatism on nüüdisaegne pragmatismi vool, kus representatsioonistlik vaade lükatakse tagasi kogu tähendusliku keelemängu ulatuses. Oma väitekirjas esitan struktuuri, kuidas globaalsed pragmatistid saaksid seda loogiliselt kooskõnaliselt teha.

Väitekirja koosneb ülevaateartiklist ja kolmest eelretsenseeritud artiklist, mis on ilmunud rahvusvahelistes teadusajakirjades. Ülevaateartikli sissejuhatavas osas selgitan globaalset pragmatismi, väitekirja põhiväidet ja tähendusteoreetilist konteksti, millesse väitekirja asetub. Globaalne pragmatism on määratletud kahe sidumuse kaudu: diskursuse prioriteetsus ja globaalne mitte-representatsioonism. Esimene tähendab seda, et filosoofiliste küsimuste üle juurdlemisel – mis asjad on olemas? mis on moraal, tähendus, vaim jne? – ei peaks me keskenduma mitte metafüüsikale, vaid diskursusele, kus need küsimused kerkivad. Metafüüsika asemel tuleks uurida seda, kuidas ja milleks kogukonnad kasutavad erinevaid tähenduslikke üksusi nagu väited, teooriad, mõtted ja uskumused. Teine sidumus – globaalne mitte-representatsioonism – tähendab seda, et pole olemas väiteid, diskursusi ega keelemänge, mis suudaksid esitada inimestest sõltumatut maailma, nii nagu see mingis metafüüsilises mõttes päriselt on. Globaalseteks pragmatistideks võib 20. saj teises pooles pidada selliseid filosoofe nagu Ludwig Wittgenstein (hilisel perioodil), Richard Rorty, Robert Brandom ja Huw Price.

Pragmatistid toovad oma maailmavaate toetuseks välja mitmeid põhjendusi. Representatsioonistlik arusaam keele ja maailma vahekorra eeldab, justkui pääseksime kuidagi ligi objektiivsele reaalsusele. Pragmatistid rõhutavad, et see pole võimalik, sest kõik meie maailma-uuringud on alati piiratud inimlike sattumuslike asjaoludega, nagu näiteks meie meeled, tehnoloogiad, eesmärgid ja praktikad. Selle paratamatusega tuleb ka tähendusteoorias arvestada. Järelduseks on, et laused saavad tähenduslikuks üksnes kehtestatud keelemängu raames, kus ühed väited on süstemaatiliselt seotud teiste väidetega ja nii tekkinud semantilise võrgustiku eesmärgipärasel rakendamisel sünnib ka üksiku semantilise üksuse tähendus. Sellisest diskursiivsest praktikast ei pääse tähenduslikult välja, tabamaks maailma oletatavat loomust. Niisiis pragmatistid leiavad, et parem oleks vaibutada selliseid metafüüsilisi tunde, mis panevad meid arvama, et esiteks on mingi kindel viis, kuidas maailmas asjad on, ja teiseks, et meie väljendusvahendid tabavad seda.

Väitekirja ülevaateartikli teises osas annan lühikese ülevaate kolmest teadusartiklist ja sellest, kuidas nad on väitekirja keskse ideega seotud.

**I artikkelis**, „The Dilemma Imposed on the Realist by Putnam’s and Kripkensteinian Argument“, mis ilmus ajakirjas „Studia Philosophica Estonica“ (2017, nr 10.1), käsitleb Hilary Putnami ja Saul Kripke (nn Kripkensteini argument) vastuargumenti representatsioonismile. Need argumendid ekspuuteerivad loogiliselt järjekindlalt pragmatistide rõhutatud kimbatust, et meil tegelikult puudub objektiivne ligipääs metafüüsiliselt sõltumatule reaalsusele. Artiklis argumenteerin, et need skeptilised argumendid sunnivad meid tegema valiku. Ühelt poolt on nii, et kui soovitakse jääda representatsioonistiks, siis tuleb tunnistada mitte-empiriilisi semantilisi fakte (robustne representatsioonism). Teiselt poolt aga, kui soovitakse representatsioonism tagasi lükata, siis tuleb omaks võtta seisukoht, et tähendusomistustel pole representatsioonistlike tõetingimusi (täendusminimalism). Globaalsed pragmatistid soovivad representatsioonismi tõrjuda ja seega paljastavad Putnami ja Kripke argumendid, et globaalsed pragmatismid peavad tegelema tähendusminimalismist võrsuvate probleemidega. Nimelt on Crispin Wright ja Paul Boghossian esitanud argumente, mille järelduseks paistab olevat, et tähendusminimalism on loogiliselt vasturääkiv. Ma jällegi leian, et neid argumente saab tõrjuda. Nendele argumentidele vastamise kontekstis võrsubki globaalse pragmatismi kooskõlaline struktuur. Selle artikli lõpuosas käsitleb Wrighti argumenti, Boghossiani argumendiga tegelen II artikkelis.

**II artikkelis** – „A Non-substantial Meta-semantics for Global Expressivism“, mis ilmus ajakirjas „Acta Analytica“ (2019, nr 34) – esitan globaalse pragmatismi loogiliselt kooskõlalise struktuuri. Käsitleb Paul Boghossiani argumenti tähendusminimalismi vastu Huw Price’i globaalse pragmatismi versiooni globaalse ekspressivismi kontekstis. Crispin Wrighti ettepanekute eeskujul pakun tähendusminimalismile välja metasemantilise lahenduse, mida saab siis rakendada globaalse pragmatismi kooskõlalise tagamiseks. Globaalsed pragmatistid peaksid keelemängude kirjeldamisel lähtuma dualistlikust semantikast (representatsioonistlik ja mitte-representatsioonistlik, artikkelis olen kasutanud selle eristuse tegemiseks mõisteid *substantsiaalne* ja *mitte-substantsiaalne* semantika) ja eeldama, et metasemantika on mitte-representatsioonistlik.

**III artikkelis** „Assessment relativism and the truth-predicate“, mis ilmub ajakirjas „Acta Baltica Historiae et Philosophiae Scientiarum“ (2021) käsitleb argumenti, et John MacFarlane’i relativismi-versioonis toob relativism ükskõik millise väite osas kaasa ka relativismi tõepredikaadi osas. Argumenteerin, et seda ei juhtu propositsioonilise tõepredikaadi korral. See arutluskäik on väitekirja põhiväite suhtes oluline, sest argumenti saab rakendada ka globaalsele pragmatismile. Kui argument kehtiks, tähendaks see seda, et globaalsed pragmatistid, tunnistades mõne mitte-semantilise väite korral representatsioonistlikku tõepredikaati, peaksid ka tõepredikaati ennast käsitlema representatsioonistlikult. See tähendaks, et nad ei saa anda mõnele väitele representatsioonistlikku tõlgendust ja ikkagi pidada metasemantikat mitte-representatsioonistlikuks. Argument aga ei kehti ja ma selgitan seda globaalse pragmatismi kontekstis ülevaateartikli peatükis 4.4.

Ülevaateartikli 3. osas kirjeldan I artiklis käsitletud Putnami mudel-teoreetilist ja Kripke nn Kripkensteini argumente representatsioonismi vastu. Kokkuvõttes sunnivad need argumendid meid otsima kooskõlalist vormi kahele vastandlikule arusaamale keele ja maailma vahekorras – representatsioonismile ja globaalsele pragmatismile. Tulemuseks on, et representatsioonistid peavad tunnistama mitte-empiriilisi semantilisi fakte, mis teeb nende maailmavaate mõnevõrra müstiliseks. Globaalsed pragmatistid aga on sunnitud otsima lahendust tähendus-minimalismi võimalikule ennastkummutavusele ja tulemuseks on minu väitekirjas välja pakutud metasemantiline lahendus.

Ülevaateartikli 4. osas selgitangi loogiliselt kooskõlalise globaalse pragmatismi struktuuri. Probleemi olemus seisneb lühidalt selles, et globaalne pragmatist tahab esitada semantilise väite, et mitte üheski diskursuses ei representeerita tähenduslikud üksused keelevälist sõltumatut ja metafüüsiliselt objektiivset maailma. Vastuolu kerkib sellest, et samasugust mitte-representatsioonistlikku hoiakut peavad nad rakendama ka semantikale enesele. Vastasel juhul ei oleks tegemist globaalse pragmatismiga ja ikkagi leiduks representatsioonistlik keelemäng, semantika ise. Kui nüüd aga semantilised mõisted nagu representatsioon, osutus, tõde ja tähendus ise on mitte-representatsioonistlikud, siis näib, et neid mõisteid saab triviaalselt rakendada ükskõik millisele keelemängule. Kui metasemantika on mitte-representatsioonistlik, siis näib, et pragmatistidel ei jää muud üle kui tunnistada, et iga tähenduslik lause ja sõna automaatselt representeerib midagi või osutab millelegi. Kui see aga nii on, siis mis mõttes saavad globaalsed pragmatistid olla globaalsed mitte-representatsioonistid? Kuidas nad peaksid oma positsiooni võrreldes representatsioonistidega määratlema?

Crispin Wrighti ettepanekutest inspireerituna pakun globaalsele pragmatismile välja järgmise struktuuralse lahenduse. Globaalsed pragmatistid peaksid esmalt tunnistama, et keelt kasutavad kogukonnad mängivad semantiliselt vähe-malt kahte liiki keelemänge. Ühtedes mängudes tähendab tõene väide seda, et see ütleb, kuidas asjad maailmas meist sõltumata on. Nii võiks tõlgendada näiteks loodusteaduslikke väiteid või igapäevaseid lauseid meid ümbritsevate objektide koha. Sellega käib kaasas ka representatsioonistlik tähendusteooria üldisemalt. Lisaks sellele on aga ka keelemängud, kus rakendub pragmatistlik mitte-representatsioonistlik tähendusteooria. Nendes mängudes tähendab väite tõesus pigem seda, et see klappib mingisuguse omaksvõetud õigustustriga või et see aitab eesmärke saavutada. Sellised diskursused on näiteks eetika, esteetika, matemaatika ja mitmesugused keelemängud humanitaarteadustes. Sellise kaheks jaotunud semantika kontekstis saavad globaalsed pragmatistid kooskõnaliselt postuleerida, et meta-semantika on ainult mitte-representatsioonistlik. See tähendab, et semantilised laused ise – laused, mis sisaldavad mõnda semantilist terminit, nt „väide, et kohvitass on laual, on tõene ja esitab objektiivselt asjade seis maailmas” – saavad olla tõesed või väärad ainult pragmatistlikus mõttes. Need pole tõesed ega väärad selles mõttes, et need esitavad mingi pildi metafüüsiliselt objektiivsetest semantilistest faktidest.

See struktuur tagab globaalse pragmatismi kooskõllalisuse. Pragmatistid ei pea tunnistama, et mitte-representatsioonistlikus metasemantikas on iga diskursus automaatselt representatiivne. Nad saavad teha eristusi representatsioonistlike ja mitte-representatsioonistlike keelemängude vahel pragmatistlikus, mitte-representatsioonistlikus taustsüsteemis. Samas aga mingi keelemängu kohta representatsioonismi kinnitades ei lähe pragmatistid iseendaga vastuollu, sest mitte-representatsioonistlikus metasemantikas on representatsioonismi mõiste siiski päris representatsioonistidele sobimatult õhuke. Vastuolu tekib siis, kui eeldada representatsioonistlikku taustsüsteemi – pragmatistid aga ei pea selle eeldusega kaasa minema.

See struktuur kehtestab globaalsete pragmatistide globaalset mitte-representatsioonismi, sest mitte-representatsioonistlikus meta-semantikas ei ulatu tähenduslikud väited diskursuse raamidest välja, et tabada maailma metafüüsiliselt objektiivset loomust. Objekt-tasandi representatsioonism tühistatakse meta-semantikas ja see struktuur võimaldab globaalsetel pragmatistidel representatsioonismi kõikjal kooskõllaliselt tõrjuda. Sellest võib mõelda ka nii, et mu mõtted igapäevaste mind ümbritsevate objektide kohta justkui tabaksid maailma nii nagu see on, aga meta-mõte selle objektiivse tabamise enda kohta on alati ainult tõene mingis pragmatistlikus mõttes. See meta-tasandi metafüüsiline tagasihoidlikkus aitab meil kogukonnana paremini kohaneda kontekstide ja eesmärkide pideva ümberseadistamisega. Nii saavad metafüüsilised tungid mõistlikult kammitsetud.

Sissejuhatava ülevaateartikli alapeatükis 4.2 käsitlen lühidalt seda, kuidas väitekirjas välja pakutud struktuuri saab rakendada ka muude globaliseerivate seisukohtade kooskõllalisuse tagamiseks, näiteks globaalsele relativismile. Alapeatükis 4.3 toon põhjendusi, miks minu lahendus on parem Huw Price'i ja Richard Rorty lahendusest. Nad pakuvad välja, et peaksime oma teoreetilises keeles loobuma sellistest eristustest nagu representatsioonism ja mitte-representatsioonism, mis näib olevat platonistliku mõtlemise jäänuk. Probleemiks seejuures jääb, kuidas siis globaalset pragmatismi üldse määratleda. Minu lahendus aitab selgelt välja tuua, mis on globaalne pragmatism ja kuidas see erineb representatsioonismist. Globaalset pragmatismi kaks sidumust saavad nüüd täpsemalt sellise määratluse: diskursuse prioriteetsus ja mitte-representatsioonistlik metasemantika. Teiseks aitab minu lahendus hallata representatsioonistlike intuitsioone: näib, et suur osa meie keelest on üles ehitatud nii, et see kirjeldab objektiivset maailma. Mitte-semantiliste väidete korral võime võtta hoiaku, et mingis mõttes nii ongi. Globaalsed pragmatistid aga rõhutavad, et ainult selles mõttes, et seda objektiivset maailma kirjeldamist ennast kirjeldavad laused on tõesed või väärad ainult mitte-representatsioonistlikus mõttes. Nii tühistavad pragmatistid representatsioonismi metasemantilisel tasandil.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

# CURRICULUM VITAE

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## Education

2013–2020 University of Tartu, PhD studies in philosophy  
PhD thesis: “The Structure of a Consistent Global Pragmatism”  
Supervisors Daniel Cohnitz, Juhani Yli-Vakkuri, Bruno Mölder

2010–2011 Participation in the educational program Noored Kooli

2007–2009 University of Tartu, Master of Arts in Humanities (Philosophy)  
Master’s Thesis: “The Problems of Defining Causal Direction  
between Transcendent Relata”  
Supervisor Piret Kuusk

2002–2007 University of Tartu, Bachelor of Arts in Humanities  
Main fields: Philosophy  
BA Thesis: “The Problems of David Owens’ Causation Theory”  
Supervisor Piret Kuusk

## Research Interests

Pragmatism, semantics, metaphysics

## Academic Employment

2018–2019 Researcher, Institute of Philosophy and Semiotics, University of Tartu

## Courses Taught

2018/19 Philosophy Master’s Seminar supervisor, University of Tartu

2015–... “Introduction to Philosophy” and “Theory of Knowledge” in  
Miina Härma High School.

2010 Lector of Ethics in Tallinn University of Technology Tartu  
College

## Publications

Peer-reviewed scholarly articles

1. Assessment relativism and the truth-predicate. *Acta Baltica Historiae et Philosophiae Scientiarum*, 9(1), 2021.
2. Semantiline pragmatism Ene Mihkelsoni proosas. *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 7, 2020, 555–570.
3. A Non-substantial Meta-semantics for Global Expressivism. *Acta Analytica*, 34(4), 2019, 505–514.

4. The Dilemma Imposed on the Realist by Putnam's and Kripkensteinian Argument. *Studia Philosophica Estonica*, 10(1), 2017, 62–82.
5. The unattainability of the true world: the Putnamian and Kripkensteinian interpretation of Nietzsche's The History of an Error. *Studia Philosophica Estonica*, 9(2), 2016, 1–19.
6. Ometi-algoritm Madis Kõivu ainetel. *Võro Instituudi toimõndusõq*, 29, 2015, 11–28.

#### Other scholarly articles

1. Religioosne agnostitsism ja Trumpi maailm. *Vikerkaar*, 4–5, 2018, 132–143.
2. Kunsti võluruumid kui suhtlemismängude antiteesid. *Vikerkaar*, 9, 2015, 38–45.

#### Other publications on philosophy

1. Küsimus määrab maailma, milles elame. *Sirp*, 27, 2020, 11.
2. Tervitused keeleverest. *Keel ja kirjandus*, 1–2, 2019, 130–136.
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4. Runnel kui nihilist? *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 7, 2017, 555–558.
5. Metafüüsiliste tungide vaibutamise. *Sirp*, 34, 2017, 19–20.
6. Meie vaatepunkti mõeldamatus. *Sirp*, 19, 2017, 11–12.
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8. Moore'i valgustusseisundid ja hiline Wittgenstein. *Sirp*, 10, 2016, 28–29.
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10. Schrödingeri „Mis on elu?“. *Sirp*, 16, 2015, 38–39.
11. Nelson Goodmani maailmaversioon. *Sirp*, 46, 2014, 8–9.

#### Conference presentations

1. “Ülbus kosmilisel skaalal,” XV Estonian Annual Philosophy Conference, Tallinn, TalTech, August 30–31, 2019.
2. “Truth-value assessment relativism entails content-relativism”, EECF (European Early Career Philosophers Network) Workshop, Bratislava, Slovak Academy of Sciences, May 13–15, 2019.
3. “The phenomenology of cyberembodiment”, Feminist Philosophy: Rethinking Public Space, Oslo, University of Oslo, March 8–10, 2018.
4. “A Coherent Semantic Minimalism for Global Expressivism”, The Third European Pragmatism Conference, Helsinki, University of Helsinki, June 13–15, 2018.
5. “Globaalne ekspressivism ja valetaja paradoks”, XIV Estonian Annual Philosophy Conference, Tallinn, Tallinn University, October 5–6, 2018.
6. “Tõejärgse ja religioosse agnostitsismi kimbatused”, XIII Estonian Annual Philosophy Conference, Kääriku, Estonia, Tartu University, May 11–13, 2017.
7. “The Dilemma Imposed on the Realist by Putnam's and the Kripkensteinian Argument – Meaning minimalism for Huw Price's global expressivism”, 9th

- European Congress of Analytic Philosophy (ECAP 9), München, August 21–26, 2017.
8. “Nagel’i “Vaade eikusagilt” vs Moore’i “Lõpmatus”,” XII Estonian Annual Philosophy Conference, Tallinn, June 3–4, 2016.
  9. “The Dialectics of H. Putnam’s model-theoretic arguments“, Nordic Network for Philosophy of Science Annual Meeting, Pärnu, April 21–23, 2016.
  10. “Kvietistlik patiseis debatis realism vs. anti-realism: avarate horisontidega kõrb, sumbunud horisondiga padrikus rabistamine või luhta-minek?” XI Estonian Annual Philosophy Conference, Tallinn, May 8–9, 2015.
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2018–2019 Filosoofia magistriseminari juhendaja, Tartu Ülikool  
2015–... Ainete “Sissejuhatus filosoofiasse” ja “Teadmisteooria” õpetaja  
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2010 Lektor, Tallinna Tehnikaülikooli Tartu Kolledž (eetika)

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Eelretsenseeritud teadusartiklid

1. Assessment relativism and the truth-predicate. *Acta Baltica Historiae et Philosophiae Scientiarum*, 9(1), 2021.
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#### Muud teadusartiklid

1. Religioosne agnostitsism ja Trumpi maailm. *Vikerkaar*, 4–5, 2018, 132–143.
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#### Filosoofiakonverentside ettekanded

1. “Ülbus kosmilisel skaalal”, XV Estonian Annual Philosophy Conference, Tallinn, TalTech, August 30–31, 2019.
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