Minimal Disagreement

Abstract: In the recent debate about the semantics of perspectival expressions (predicates of taste, aesthetic adjectives, moral terms, epistemic modals, epistemic terms etc.), disagreement has played a crucial role. In a nutshell, what I call "the challenge from disagreement" is the objection that certain views on the market (i.e., contextualism) cannot account for the intuition of disagreement present in ordinary exchanges involving perspectival expressions like "Licorice is tasty./No, it's not." Various contextualist answers to this challenge have been proposed, and this has led to a proliferation of notions of disagreement. It is now accepted in the debate that there are many notions of disagreement and that the search for a common, basic notion is misguided. In this paper I attempt to find such a basic notion underneath this diversity. The main aim of the paper is to motivate, forge and defend a notion of "minimal disagreement" that has beneficial effects for the debate over the semantics of perspectival expressions.

1 Background

Disagreement has played an important role in contemporary semantics, especially in connection with "perspectival expressions" – predicates of taste like 'tasty', 'fun', 'disgusting', aesthetic adjectives like 'beautiful', 'ugly', 'balanced', moral terms like 'good', 'bad', (moral) 'ought', epistemic modals like 'might' and 'must', epistemic terms like 'know', 'justified' etc. The main characteristic of such expressions is that a perspective needs to be provided for their semantic interpretation. The sense of "perspective" relevant in each case is, of course, different (amounting to a standard of taste in the case of predicates of taste, to an aesthetic standard in the case of aesthetic adjectives etc.), but here I will use it as a umbrella term covering all those more specific senses.

In the current literature, three main views are in dispute over the semantics of perspectival expressions. The first is *contextualism*, according to which utterances of sentences containing the expressions in question have propositional perspective-specific semantic contents. A propositional perspective-specific content is one that has a perspective as its part. For example, under a certain version of contextualism that takes the speaker's perspective to be relevant, the proposition expressed by Lisa's utterance of

        (1) Licorice is tasty

is that *licorice is tasty for Lisa/from Lisa's perspective*.[1] The second view is *relativism*, according to which utterances of sentences containing the expressions in question have propositional perspective-neutral semantic contents. A propositional perspective-neutral content is one from which a perspective is lacking; instead, perspectives are contributed to the semantic machinery as part of the "circumstances of evaluation" (Kaplan 1989)). For example, under a certain version of relativism that takes the speaker's perspective to be relevant, the proposition expressed by Lisa's utterance of (1) is simply that *licorice is tasty*; the perspective is contributed by the circumstance against which such an utterance is to be evaluated. Finally, the third main view in the debate is *expressivism*, according to which utterances of sentences containing the expressions in question express the states of mind or the attitudes of the speaker. Pure versions of expressivism differ from hybrid versions in that according to the former, the only role of utterances of sentences like (1) is that of expressing the speaker's states of mind/attitudes, whereas according to the latter, utterances of sentences like (1) also have propositional semantic contents, besides expressing the states of mind/attitudes of speakers.[2]

One of the most discussed objections in the current debate between the three views involves disagreement. More precisely, the objection is that some of the views in the debate cannot account for the intuition of faultless disagreement in ordinary exchanges involving perspectival expressions such as

Lisa: Licorice is tasty.

Bart: No, licorice is not tasty. (…)[3],

which are claimed to elicit both the intuition that Lisa and Bart disagree and the intuition that they are not at fault (in the relevant sense). This is a challenge that mostly relativists (Kölbel (2004b); Lasersohn (2005, 2016); MacFarlane (2014) etc.) have leveled against contextualist views.

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[1] There are other versions of contextualism as well. For example, one can take the perspective to be that of the group Lisa belongs to, or a generic perspective etc. This variation will not affect the main points of the paper. The same applies to relativism as well.

[2] Absolutist, or invariantist, views about perspectival expressions are also present in the literature. They are, however, a minority. In addition, the focus in this paper is on accounting for disagreement, and absolutist views are not problematic in this respect – although there is some variety in the way disagreement is construed within the absolutist camp. See Wyatt (2018) for a recent non-orthodox absolutist approach to disagreement involving predicates of taste.

[3] The parentheses are meant to signify that the data need not be as simple as the exchange between Bart and Lisa above. Disagreement, faultless or not, can appear as part of longer exchanges, or can stretch over longer periods of time etc. However, I take it to be quite intuitive that the part of an exchange that prompts the intuition of disagreement is something similar to the simple exchange (the word "No" being usually a reliable indication of disagreement). See Kinzel & Kusch (2018) for a recent view on the methodological effect of focusing on simple exchanges like the one above. It is also customary to distinguish between *disagreement in state* and *disagreement in act* (Cappelen & Hawthorne (2009)): the latter requires some interaction between the disagreeing parties, while the former doesn't. Disagreement in state is taken to be the more fundamental notion (see, among others, MacFarlane (2014)); however, since I focus here on exchanges, I will take disagreement in act as the relevant notion – which is, of course, compatible with disagreement in state having explanatory priority.

One thing worth noting in connection to the contemporary form taken by this objection is that the notion of disagreement initially assumed is *doxastic disagreement*. Take, for example, the following definition of "faultless disagreement" proposed by Kölbel in the early stages of the debate:

> A faultless disagreement is a situation where there is a thinker A, a thinker B, and a proposition (a content of judgment) p such that
> (a) A believes (judges) that p and B believes (judges) that not-p
> (b) Neither A nor B has made a mistake (is at fault). (Kölbel 2004a: 53-54)

Clause (b) spells out faultlessness, but clause (a) focuses on disagreement, which is conceived in terms of doxastic attitudes (belief, judgment) towards propositions. I will leave faultlessness aside in this paper and focus entirely on disagreement. What I call "the challenge from disagreement" is the challenge for contextualism (but also for the other views in the debate) to account for the intuition of disagreement present in exchanges like the one above, where disagreement is taken to be doxastic.

Various answers to the challenge from disagreement have surfaced in recent literature. The many ways in which the challenge has been answered can be grouped in three categories. In the first belong responses that downplay the intuition of disagreement in the cases put forward by relativists. Thus, several authors have complained that the exchanges usually presented are too skeletal to give rise to intuitions of disagreement and that, once the exchanges are properly fleshed out, the intuitions of disagreement vanishes (Stojanovic (2007); Glanzberg (2007); Cappelen & Hawthorne (2009); Moltmann (2010); Schaffer (2011) etc.). A second type of answer consists in conceiving disagreement in exchanges involving perspectival expressions as pragmatic and not semantic. Given the multitude of phenomena that can be deemed pragmatic, this answer takes multiple forms. Thus, certain authors (e.g., Finlay (2005)) have taken the disagreement to be not at the level of semantic content, but at the level of implicatures, on the model of disagreements like 'A: Todd has four kids./B: No, he has five.', where what is disagreed about is whether Todd has exactly four kids. Further, other authors (López de Sa (2007, 2008, 2015); Parsons (2013); Zakkou (2019)) have taken disagreement to arise at the level of presuppositions or be made possible by certain presuppositions being in place, as in 'A: John has stopped smoking./B: No, he never smoked.', where the disagreement is about whether John has smoked, not about whether he has stopped smoking. Other contextualists (Sundell (2011); Plunkett & Sundell (2013); Ludlow (2014); Plunkett (2015)) have taken disagreement in exchanges like the above to be metalinguistic, on the model of exchanges like 'A: Feynman is tall./B: No, he's not tall.', where Feynman's height is not the issue, but rather what

counts (or what should count) as tall in the context. Finally, disagreement has been cashed out in discursive terms: in the example 'A: Everyone can vote./B: No, women still cannot vote.' (Silk (2016)), A and B disagree by proposing different conversational moves (A to take the range of the quantifier to consist only of men, B to take it to consist of all human beings of the right age and nationality etc.). The third and last type of answer to the challenge was to take disagreement to be conative rather than cognitive/doxastic (Huvenes (2012, 2014); Stojanovic (2012); Marques & García-Carpintero (2014); Marques (2015, 2016)). Here the model followed are expressivist theories of, e.g., moral terms: as many early expressivist have contended, in an exchange like 'A: Stealing is wrong./B: No, stealing is not wrong.', the moral term 'wrong' is meant to express the speakers' attitudes towards stealing – thus, a "disagreement in attitude" rather than in belief (Stevenson (1963)).[4]

This plethora of answers has led to a proliferation of notions of disagreement. That there is more than one notion of disagreement seems to be accepted by all parties to the debate. MacFarlane (2014, chapter 6), for example, goes as far as claiming that the question of what *real* disagreement is might not be the right one to ask; rather, we should ask what type of disagreement is suitable for a given area of discourse.[5] Given the multifaceted nature of the phenomenon, diversity in this respect might be a good idea. However, my aim in this paper is to see if there is a basic notion of disagreement to be found underneath this diversity that can play a useful role in the debate.[6] I will show that such a notion does indeed exist, that it can play several important roles, that it can be easily forged and that it can be defended from objections. I call such a notion "minimal disagreement". Thus, in what follows I will motivate the need to propose such a notion (section 2), then proceed to forge it (section 3) and finally defend it from several natural, but ultimately unconvincing, objections (section 4).

2 Motivating minimal disagreement

Before putting forward the notion of minimal disagreement that I think can play an important role in the debate over the semantic treatment of perspectival expressions, let me present several motivations for having such a notion in the first place. I take each of the following to constitute a good motivation in itself, but as strength is in numbers, a battery of motivations makes for a more solid case for putting it forward.

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[4] See Zeman (2017) for more details on the various recent contextualist strategies.
[5] Whether this way of framing pluralism about disagreement is ultimately successful is not clear. See Zeman (2020) for some doubts about MacFarlane's pluralist approach. This issue, however, is not my present concern.
[6] Among previous attempts at putting forward or discussions of such a notion the following works can be counted: Belleri & Palmira (2013), Baker (2014), Belleri (2014), Coliva & Moruzzi (2014) and, more recently, Worsnip (2019). It will become clear in due course how the notion I propose differs from theirs.

First, I think a notion of minimal disagreement can capture the "folk notion" of disagreement that people employ. Whether there is such a folk notion, or one that is consistent, is obviously a contentious issue. However, I think that the following question can nevertheless be asked: what do all exchanges intuitively judged as disagreement have in common? One way to answer this question is to point towards a notion that is minimal in the sense of underscoring peoples' judgments about whether a certain exchange is a disagreement or not. Such a take on the "folk notion" of disagreement seems to me quite reasonable and with good chances to lead to a philosophically interesting notion of disagreement. (Exactly how interesting and what its precise role is remains to be seen below.)

A natural question that arises at this juncture is: what are the types of exchanges that people judge to be disagreement – or, as I will call it, the "intuitive base" of the phenomenon? The status of intuitions in philosophy is highly debated, and it's not my intention to enter the debate over it here. However, I'll take it to be unobjectionable that exchanges like (1) elicit an intuition of disagreement – regardless of how this disagreement is going to be spelled out. I take it to be equally unobjectionable that similar exchanges involving other perspectival expressions – aesthetic adjectives, moral terms, epistemic modals, 'know' and its ilk – elicit that intuition as well. In fact, I'm happy to accept most (or even all) exchanges that have been proposed in the literature as eliciting an intuition of disagreement, including potentially objectionable ones like

> Lisa: I like licorice.
> Bart: Well, I don't.

(uttered perhaps with stress on the second 'I'), or

> Lisa: I like this chili.
> Bart: I disagree, it's too hot for me. (Adapted from Huvenes, 2011: 1)

My attitude here is to be as lax as possible with respect to what constitutes the intuitive base of the phenomenon. Of course, here one should eventually defer to the findings of empirical studies. But since so far such (conclusive) studies are missing, intuition is all we have to rely on – perhaps counterbalanced by theoretical considerations, in a reflective equilibrium (as Worsnip (2019), for example, suggests). Following this method, it might turn out that certain exchanges, like the ones above, will be ruled out as disagreements according to the theory, even if (presumably) there is an

intuition of disagreement. The important part is that the theory captures core cases of disagreement, like our initial exchange between Lisa and Bart.[7]

A second, related motivation is linguistic: words like 'disagree' and 'disagreement', as ordinarily used by most of us, don't seem to be ambiguous – at least not according to the standard tests for ambiguity.[8] Thus, according to the conjunction reduction test, someone can felicitously report two disagreements, even perceived as being over different issues and possibly of different kinds, with a sentence like 'Lisa and Bart as well as Marge and Homer disagree/are in disagreement'. Ellipsis is felicitous too: 'I saw Lisa and Bart disagree/in disagreement and Marge and Homer, too.' Further, according to the contradiction test, one cannot felicitously utter a sentence like 'Lisa and Bart disagree but they don't disagree' or 'Lisa and Bart are in disagreement but they are not in disagreement' (at least not without some strong emphasis on the last word of each sentence). While none of these tests are bullet proof (see Sennet (2016) for a comprehensive study), *prima facie* 'disagree' and 'disagreement' don't seem to be ambiguous. A unique (and, given the multiplicity of the data, minimal) notion of disagreement is in line with this result.

A third motivation for putting forward a notion of minimal disagreement is that it helps avoid the threat to those involved in the semantic debate focused on here to talk past each other. Given the large number of notions of disagreement proposed in the debate (some of them illustrated in section 1) and the equally large number of types of exchanges that intuitively count as disagreement (some of them illustrated above), there is a significant risk that semanticists will end up talking about different phenomena. Having a single notion of disagreement that underscores all the exchanges that form the intuitive base of the phenomenon of disagreement would make this possibility less likely. In all likelihood, such a notion would be minimal, rather than substantial.

A fourth motivation for a notion of minimal disagreement is economy: having one basic notion to rely on when arguing about semantic matters instead of several (a list of which has been given in section 1) simply makes for a more parsimonious account. Again, given the complexity of the debate illustrated at the end of section 1, that unique notion has good chances to be minimal.

Last but not least, there is a very good motivation that is strictly internal to the debate over the role of disagreement in the semantics of perspectival expressions – namely, that the way in which disagreement is conceived by the parties to the debate has important methodological

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[7] Having said that, I take the indeterminacy of the disagreement data to stem from our current limitation of gathering or interpreting it, and I'm moderately optimistic about the possibility of ultimately coming up, by empirical means, with a definite set of exchanges that should be counted as disagreement. Thus, I take the indeterminacy of the data to be rather temporary. This contrasts with the indeterminacy of the notion of minimal disagreement, which comes, so to speak, by design. See the discussion in section 4.3.

[8] As I mentioned, in the literature there is a commonly accepted distinction between disagreement in act and disagreement in state (Cappelen & Hawthorne (2009)). Assuming that this distinction is accepted by the folk, the claim here is that there is no ambiguity left once we fix on one of the two senses. I thank a referee for bringing this motivation to my attention.

consequences for the semantic treatment of perspectival expressions. As many authors have noted, if one builds into the notion of disagreement theory-internal assumptions (e.g., concerning a certain type of semantic content), one begs the question against proponents of alternative theories with respect to accounting for disagreement. Thus, a notion of minimal disagreement is needed in order to keep the debate fair. This idea is neatly expressed by Baker, who says that what we need is "an account of the phenomenon which is independent of the assumptions and apparatus of any particular semantic theory" (2014: 41), while Palmira puts the point as follows:

> To my mind, this neutrality is crucial since, in order for faultless disagreement to be of any significance for debates in semantics, the phenomenon must be conceived of as a neutral field of battle on which different semantic theories confront each other. It would be dialectically ineffective, let alone question-begging, to maintain that faultless disagreement is evidence in favour of, say, Relativism rather than Contextualism, if the phenomenon were described in a relativist-loaded way in the first place. (2014: 351)

While I take the remarks quoted above to be on the right track, I think that most of the authors engaged in the project of finding a minimal (or basic) notion of disagreement (besides the two works quoted, see also Belleri & Palmira (2013) and Coliva & Moruzzi (2014)) are not going far enough.[9] These authors have been concerned with the debate between contextualism and relativism about perspectival expressions exclusively. Yet, even a quick look at the current literature shows that expressivism, either in itself or as a part of certain contextualist answers, has become a viable position in the debate (see, for example, Buekens (2011); Clapp (2014); Gutzmann (2016)) and thus cannot be left aside. My aim in proposing the specific notion of minimal disagreement that I do is to rectify this mistake by allowing expressivism (in whatever form) to be part of the debate over the semantics of perspectival expressions.[10]

To conclude this section, I submit that a notion of minimal disagreement can help with most of, if not all, the issues mentioned above – which provides a good motivation for its postulation. It

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[9] Worsnip's (2019) view is not objectionable on this score, as it is one of his declared aims to include "disagreement in attitude" (expressivists' favorite notion of disagreement) among the types of disagreement that his notion of "wide disagreement" is supposed to cover. My aim in this paper and Worsnip's in the paper referred to are very similar. I will briefly engage with his proposal below (section 4.3., footnote 23).

[10] Of course, this assumes that allowing expressivism in the debate is desirable. Doubts about this come from taking expressivism to be a theory about mental states, rather than about the semantic content of utterances like (1). Two things can be said to quell this worry. First, taking expressivism to be a theory about mental states is compatible with taking it to be a theory of semantic contents of utterances, with presumably most of the work to be done being spelling out the connection between these two aspects of the theory. Second, the expressivist authors cited do take themselves to engage with views about the semantic content of utterances like (1) (i.e., contextualism, relativism etc.), precisely in connection to disagreement – which indicates that they take their theory to account for the same phenomenon.

is a notion well suited to play an important role (or roles) in the semantic debate about perspectival expressions sketched at the outset.

3 Forging minimal disagreement

It is one thing to have good motivation to postulate a notion of minimal disagreement, but how would one go ahead to forge one? I think the notion of disagreement we are after can be easily arrived at by abstracting away from all the notions found in the literature and postulate their "neutral" counterpart (i.e., a schema).[11]

If we look at the various notions of disagreement proposed, their fundamental differences consist in the types of attitudes postulated, the types of content postulated and the level at which disagreement is said to arise. Consequently, we can abstract away from i) the type of content postulated; ii) the type of conflicting attitudes postulated; iii) the "level of discourse" (semantic, pragmatic, discursive moves, implications etc.) at which the conflict arises. Abstracting away from all these elements gives us the following definition of minimal disagreement:

> (**MD**) Two people minimally disagree iff there is an A, a B and a C such that
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> a) they have conflicting attitudes of type A towards
>
> b) the same content of type B, at
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> c) level of discourse C.[12, 13]

Before moving on to defending the notion proposed, let me illustrate in detail how various proposals in the literature conform to the (**MD**) schema. That they do so is not surprising, given that we abstracted away from them to arrive at the minimal notion, but it is nevertheless instructive to show how easy the transition from the minimal notion to the more substantive notions can be made. This shows how the notion put forward can be used to systematize the various notions in the debate.

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[11] The aim of providing a schema or template for disagreement is also that of Belleri & Palmira (2013), whose lead I follow.

[12] This comes close to Plunkett & Sundell's (2013) definition "Disagreement Requires Conflict in Content (DRCC): If two subjects A and B disagree with each other, then there are some objects p and q (propositions, plans, etc.) such that A accepts p and B accepts q, and p is such that the demands placed on a subject in virtue of accepting it are rationally incompatible with the demands placed on a subject in virtue of accepting q." (11). (**MD**) differs from their definition in that demands placed on subjects are missing, and is thus a more minimal definition.

[13] In what follows, the domain of the variables A, B and C will be quite restricted, for reasons having to do with the nature of the debate I'm concerned with. Thus, the attitudes in conflict to be considered are of two broad types – cognitive and conative, with very few varieties of each (acceptance and rejection on the cognitive side; a general positive and a general negative attitude on the conative side). While more specific attitudes will be considered in section 4.4., this is far from exhausting all the possibilities of conflicting attitudes. Similarly, the types of contents considered are propositional perspective-neutral contents, propositional perspective-specific contents and objects, while the levels of discourse are the semantic, the pragmatic and the implied. No doubt, a more complete project will involve a study of more varieties of disagreement involving more types of each of these elements. I leave pursuing this project for another occasion.

A word about notation: I will take ACCEPT and REJECT to be conflicting doxastic attitudes, PRO and CON to be conflicting conative attitudes and I will assume, at least for the time being, that ACCEPT (not-p) = REJECT (p) and that PRO (not-p) = CON (p).

Thus, relativists such as Kölbel (2004b), Lasersohn (2005, 2016) or MacFarlane (2014) take the type of attitude involved in disagreement to be doxastic, the type of content to be perspective-neutral propositions, and the level at which the disagreement takes place the level of semantic content. Thus, the exchange between Lisa and Bart will be rendered by relativists as follows:

Relativism + Doxastic disagreement:

Lisa: ACCEPT (Licorice is tasty)

Bart: REJECT (Licorice is tasty)

It can be easily seen that this rendering corresponds to the schema, thus counting as minimal disagreement: as conceived by the relativist, the disagreement involves opposite attitudes (ACCEPT and REJECT), directed towards the same propositional semantic content (the perspective-neutral proposition that *licorice is tasty*). (As mentioned at the outset, their semantic apparatus also contains "circumstances of evaluation", but they play no role in accounting for disagreement – at least on the simple view on disagreement presented here.)

Next, take expressivists about 'tasty'. On a pure version of the view (which, to my knowledge, no one currently holds, but it is nevertheless a possible position in logical space), the type of attitude involved in disagreement is conative (disagreement is "in attitude"), the type of content is sheer objects, and the level at which the disagreement takes place is also the level of semantic content. Our exchange will thus be rendered as follows:

Pure expressivism + Conative disagreement:

Lisa: PRO (licorice)

Bart: CON (licorice)

On a hybrid version (proposed for example by Huvenes (2012, 2014); Buekens (2011); Gutzmann (2016); Marques (2016)), there will be two tiers of meaning: the proposition asserted and the attitude expressed. Disagreement, according to the hybrid expressivist, is conceived in terms of conative attitudes towards objects, and is said to take place still at the semantic level, but at the second tier, of the attitude expressed, and not at the first, of the proposition asserted. Our exchange will be thus rendered as

Hybrid expressivism + Conative disagreement

Lisa: ACCEPT (Licorice is tasty/Licorice is tasty for Lisa)

PRO (licorice)

Bart: REJECT (Licorice is tasty/Licorice is tasty for Bart)

CON (licorice)

It is interesting to note that at the level of the asserted proposition,[14] there can be two versions of hybrid expressivism: one employing perspective neutral contents like *licorice is tasty*, and the other employing perspective-specific contents like *licorice is tasty for Lisa*. This makes hybrid expressivism amenable to both a relativist interpretation (first option) and a contextualist one (second option). The merger between expressivism and contextualism has been more popular recently, with several contextualists adopting the "clash of attitudes" notion of disagreement. However, what is important is that, no matter how the semantic content is specified, disagreement is located at the level of the attitudes expressed, not at that of the asserted proposition. Even more importantly for our purposes, it is easy to see that both renderings (by pure expressivism, on the one hand, and by hybrid expressivism, on the other) conform to (**MD**), in that they employ conflicting attitudes (of a conative nature) directed towards the same content (an object), at (the second tier) of the semantic content.

Moving on to other contextualist views, namely those that take disagreement to arise not at the semantic level, but at the pragmatic one, we get various renderings of our initial exchange, depending on the precise pragmatic mechanism said to be responsible for disagreement. Below are the renderings of the exchange between Lisa and Bart on a contextualist view that takes disagreement to be possible if a "presupposition of commonality" is in place (López de Sa (2007, 2008, 2015); Kölbel (2007)); a contextualist view that takes disagreement to consist in the interlocutors accepting different "presuppositions of superiority" (Zakkou (2019)); one according to which disagreement arises at the level of implicatures (e.g., Finlay (2005)); another which takes disagreement to be metalinguistic (about what words do/should mean or what standards do/should prevail in a context – see Sundell (2011); Plunkett & Sundell (2013); Plunkett (2015)); finally, a contextualist view that treats disagreement as consisting in opposite discourse moves (Silk (2016)). In what follows, 'PC' stands for 'presupposed content', 'Imp' for 'implicature', 'MC' for 'metalinguistic content' and 'DM' for discursive move.

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[14] I'm assuming here (alongside expressivists and most of the authors in the debate) that there is no rift between the semantic content of an utterance and the proposition asserted by that utterance. This is, of course, a controversial assumption, but one that I don't think is harmful in this context.

Contextualism + "Presupposition of commonality" disagreement:

Lisa: ACCEPT (Licorice is tasty for Lisa)

        ACCEPT PC (Lisa and Bart have the same taste)

Bart: REJECT (Licorice is tasty for Bart)

        ACCEPT PC (Lisa and Bart have the same taste)[15]

Contextualism + "Presupposition of superiority" disagreement

Lisa: ACCEPT (Licorice is tasty for Lisa)

        ACCEPT PC (Lisa is superior in taste to Bart)

Bart: REJECT (Licorice is tasty for Bart)

        REJECT PC (Lisa is superior in taste to Bart)

Contextualism + Implicature disagreement:

Lisa: ACCEPT (Licorice is tasty for Lisa)

        ACCEPT Imp (Everyone should appreciate licorice)

Bart: REJECT (Licorice is tasty for Bart)

        REJECT Imp (Everyone should appreciate licorice)

Contextualism + Metalinguistic disagreement:

Lisa: ACCEPT (Licorice is tasty for Lisa)

        ACCEPT MC (The right standard in this context is/should be Lisa's)

Bart: REJECT (Licorice is tasty for Bart)

        REJECT MC (The right standard in this context is/should be Lisa's)

Contextualism + Discursive disagreement:

Lisa: ACCEPT (Licorice is tasty for Lisa)

        ACCEPT DM (The standard in this context is Lisa's)

Bart: REJECT (Licorice is tasty for Bart)

        REJECT DM (The standard in this context is Lisa's)

While differences between the various views are quite significant, all these versions of contextualism have in common the fact that disagreement involves doxastic attitudes directed

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[15] López de Sa's rendering of the dialogue isn't straightforwardly similar the other positions mentioned, given that at the level of presuppositions no disagreement arises. However, due to the uniformizing effect of the presupposition of commonality, disagreement is made possible at the semantic level – that is, Lisa and Bart end up having conflicting attitudes towards the same content (since Lisa and Bart's standard of taste is the same). This disagreement, at the level of asserted content, conforms to (**MD**).

towards propositional contents and arises at the level of pragmatics.[16] They all fit the (**MD**) schema, and thus count as minimal disagreement, by employing two conflicting attitudes (of a doxastic type) towards the same content (propositions), at a certain level of discourse (pragmatic).[17]

Finally, it might be useful to clarify in what sense I take (**MD**) to be a notion that all participants in the debate could assent to, even in the absence of a specific understanding of the notion of conflict involved. I hold that they can do so in the sense that, when pressed about their more substantial notions begging the question against rival semantics views, each party to the debate can fall back on (**MD**). That is, when asked what makes their substantive notion one *of disagreement*, each participant can point to (**MD**). In this sense I think (**MD**) is something that all parties in the debate would agree that captures disagreement, and, if a previous referee for this paper is right, something that "everyone who's acquainted with the debate would more or less

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[16] The attitudes in conflict need not be doxastic. As Worsnip (2019) argues, all the contextualist attempts to account for disagreement exemplified above can be put in terms of doxastic disagreement, but they need not be. However, this is not problematic for (**MD**). If you think that, for example, metalinguistic disagreement doesn't involve doxastic attitudes towards propositions but rather conative attitudes, simply replace ACCEPT and REJECT with PRO and CON. What is important is that they are attitudes in conflict, directed towards the same content.

Also, I have taken some liberty with rendering the non-semantic, second layer content posited by various strategies. If you think that the way I render it in is inaccurate, please replace it with what you think is a better fit for the strategies in question. This shouldn't affect he points I'm making in this paper. (For a nice discussion of the choices pertaining to at least some of these strategies, see Finlay (2017).)

Finally, I note that some of the authors mentioned above are undecided about the pragmatic strategy they ultimately follow, and therefore categorizing their views might be more complicated than I suggested. For example, Zakkou (2019) situates the pragmatically conveyed content either at the level of presuppositions or at the level of implicatures; Marques (2016) is similarly ambivalent; etc.

[17] Using the same model, disagreement can be seen as arising at the level of *implied content* as well. The disagreement between Lisa and Bart in our main exchange could thus be seen as arising at the level of the contents implied by each utterance. What those contents are I take to be a highly contextual matter. For example, if we assume that Lisa and Bart have the common goal of buying sweets that they both like, a contextualist rendering of the exchange would be the following (with 'IC' standing for 'implied content'):

Contextualism + Implication disagreement:
Lisa: ACCEPT (Licorice is tasty for Lisa)
        ACCEPT IC (Lisa and Bart should buy licorice)
Bart: REJECT (Licorice is tasty for Bart)
        REJECT IC (Lisa and Bart should buy licorice).

This type of disagreement also conforms to (**MD**), since it involves conflicting doxastic attitudes directed towards the same implied propositional content. In the same vein, one can render the exchange between Lisa and Bart in which they use the 'I like' phrase (section 2) as arising at the level of implied content. Finally, let me note that there is a recent view proposed by Zouhar (2019), according to which disagreement is also (partially) explained in terms of implied content.

Moreover, a similar strategy can be adopted in the case in which disagreement seems to appear with contents that are not contradictory, but nevertheless cannot be both true (in a certain context). For example, if Lisa utters 'Licorice is tasty' and Bart answers 'Nothing here is tasty', the contents expressed by the two utterances are not strictly speaking contradictory, but the truth of the other precludes the truth of the other (if nothing is tasty, then neither licorice is). The strategy applies in that the disagreement can be seen as arising between the content of Lisa's utterance and the relevant content implied by Bart's utterance; we thus get the following rendering:

Lisa: ACCEPT (Licorice is tasty)
        ACCEPT IC (Licorice is tasty)
Bart: ACCEPT (Nothing in the relevant location is tasty)
        REJECT IC (Licorice is tasty).

Again, this fits with (**MD**), in that the disagreement consists in conflicting doxastic attitudes directed towards the same implied propositional content.

spontaneously come up".[18] I think such an agreed-upon notion has value and should be theorized about explicitly. That is precisely the point of this paper.

4 Defending minimal disagreement

The notion of minimal disagreement put forward above is very simple, but does it hold water? In this section, I consider several natural worries one might have vis-à-vis the notion proposed and show that they are either easily put to rest or that the modifications required threaten neither the prospect of working it out nor its usefulness. During the discussion, several aspects of providing such a notion will come to the fore, further illuminating my endeavor.

4.1. The worry about the neutrality of the attitudes/contents involved

A key claim I made in showing how a notion of minimal disagreement can be forged was that it should start from extant notions found in the literature and abstract away, thus replacing the types of attitudes and types of content by their "neutral" counterparts. But what does this neutrality amount to? What kind of attitudes/contents is the schema employing? Aren't we just multiplying types of attitude/content beyond necessity in forging this notion of minimal disagreement?

This is a legitimate worry, but one that need not preoccupy us much. As mentioned above, (**MD**) is merely a schema. When I proposed replacing the types of attitude/content employed by current semantic theories with their "neutral" counterparts, I did not mean to imply that such counterparts are different, sui-generis attitudes towards different, sui-generis contents. What was meant is simply that the variables in the schema have to be filled in, in accordance with each semantic theory's commitments. So proposing a notion of "minimal disagreement" like (**MD**) does not postulate further types of attitude/content and is thus conservative in this respect.[19]

4.2. The overgeneration worry

Another worry that might beset the notion of minimal disagreement proposed above is that it might overgenerate, predicting more cases of disagreement than is intuitive. The force of this objection can best be seen by considering a related argument against relativism taken from the literature. The argument, found in works like MacFarlane (2007) and Marques (2014), is leveled against the

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[18] Another route might be to provide notion of "minimal conflict" that all participants could agree on. Embarking on this route, however, will most likely lead to a replication of the issues already discussed. I thank a referee for requesting clarification on this point.

[19] As an example of new, sui-generis types of attitudes, consider Schroeder's (2008) attitude of "being for". While being in essence an expressivist type of attitude, its role is to cover both and thus serve as a common ground between cognitive and conative attitudes. On the other hand, as an example of new, sui-generis type of content consider Gibbard's (2003) world-plan states. Crucially, *neither of these* should be taken as a model for the attitudes/contents figuring in (**MD**). As already made clear, the latter are mere abstractions to be fleshed out by giving values to the variables and not substantial attitudes/contents.

combination of relativism with a construal of disagreement as doxastic. It starts from the observation that in an exchange about meteorological events like

Lisa (in New York):   It's raining.

Bart (in Paris):   No, it's not,

given that Lisa and Bart are in different locations, there is no intuition of disagreement. Yet, according to the relativist that embraces doxastic disagreement (across the board), the exchange should come out as disagreement.

Now, the same kind of argument can be raised against the combination of relativism and (**MD**), thus showing that (**MD**) overgenerates disagreements. The problem is here that (**MD**) should be compatible with all the positions in the debate, and that none of the ways in which it is fleshed out should lead to unwanted disagreements. Yet – the exchange above shows – when combined with relativism, (**MD**) overgenerates by counting more disagreement than intuitively is the case.

There are essentially two ways to deal with this problem. The first is simply to reject the application of relativism to meteorological expressions. While the position does have some contemporary adherents (e.g., Recanati (2007)), it has not been very popular among relativists themselves. The more important point is that the relativist about, say, predicates of taste, need not be committed to relativism about meteorological expressions; there is no tension in upholding one and rejecting the other. Thus, a relativist about predicates of taste can concede that meteorological sentences like "It is raining" express location-specific contents (that is, she can be a contextualist about meteorological expressions). If so, then the lack of intuition of disagreement in the case above is not problematic: indeed, it is what we should expect. Obviously, the good outcome for us is that by this maneuver (**MD**) has been shown not to overgenerate disagreements: no disagreement is predicted in the case above, while disagreement *is* predicted in the case of predicates of taste – in perfect conformity with our disagreement intuitions.

However, while this reply is enough to address the data involving meteorological expressions, it has limited dialectical power. For, as several authors have noted (e.g., MacFarlane (2007, 2014), Marques (2014)), the overgeneration point can be brought to the fore by using factual claims made in different possible worlds where the relevant facts are different. Thus, assume that Lisa inhabits a world in which Jupiter has 63 moons and Bart inhabits a world in which Jupiter has 64 moons. Bracketing issues about inter-world communication, in an exchange like

Lisa (in world w_1):   Jupiter has 63 moons.

Bart (in world w_2):   No, it doesn't. Jupiter has 64 moons.

the intuition of disagreement is lacking, as Lisa and Bart make claims that correspond to the facts as they are in their respective worlds. The question of whether counterparts in different worlds can disagree is vexed, but if one takes the intuitive point at face value, it is clear that the contextualist route is, as before, open to the relativist in dealing with this case. It is important to note, however, that taking the contextualist route leads to serious further complications. For what the contextualist route would amount to in such a case is the postulation of world-specific contents – that is, contents that contain a possible world as their part. The worry is not that such a view is unheard of – Schaffer's (2012) necessitarianism is precisely such a view; the worry is that adopting such a view puts a much greater burden on the relativist. To be clear, there is no tension between being, say, a relativist about predicates of taste and a necessitarianist; the complications incurred by adopting this kind of position, however, are much more serious and require a lot of additional theoretical footwork. One very pertinent question that arises here is whether that additional theoretical footwork is warranted by the advantage relativists take themselves to have in accounting for the intuition of disagreement involving perspectival expressions (see also Schaffer (2018)).[20]

The second way to approach the problem is also the way in which most relativists have dealt with it: namely, by modifying the notion of disagreement. Usually, this is done by imposing the condition that the disagreement has to arise with utterances whose contents are evaluated relative to the same circumstances of evaluation, either those of the context of utterance or those of the context of assessment (see, most prominently, MacFarlane (2007, 2014)). This is a significant departure from (**MD**), since the schema as proposed above makes no reference to circumstances of evaluation.[21] Yet, there are several ways to incorporate this further condition. One is to simply add it as a separate entry in (**MD**), thus in effect transforming the notion of minimal disagreement. What would make this new notion minimal is the hope that all the parties to the debate would assent to it.

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[20] Moreover, the relativist who adopts (**MD**) will have problems with utterances said to have *de se* contents – for example, utterances of sentences containing the first person pronoun 'I'. The intuition of disagreement involving exchanges with 'I' is also lacking ('A: I'm a doctor./B: No, I'm not a doctor.'), and while the contextualist route is open here as well, taking it leads to rejecting *de se* contents for 'I'. The more general worry is that, by following that route, all the advantages brought about the postulation of *de se* contents will be lost.

Let me also note that another type of exchanges used to make the overgeneration point involves the present tense (as well as other tenses and temporal expressions): in exchanges like 'A (at time t_1): Socrates is sitting./B (at time t_2): No, Socrates is not sitting.', the intuition of disagreement is lacking, since A and B consider Socrates as sitting at different times. However, while contemporary temporalists agree with this, they also argue that the intuition of disagreement *is* present with other (more complex) examples involving the present tense: see, for example, Brogaard's (2012) firefighter example.

[21] In this, it differs from recent attempts at defining (minimal) disagreement. Authors like Belleri & Palmira (2013), Belleri (2014) and Coliva & Moruzzi (2014) are happy to include relativity to circumstances in their notion of (minimal) disagreement. Also, the first two authors define disagreement in terms of the "accuracy" of acts of acceptance, which makes for a more theoretically sophisticated definition than the austere one proposed in this paper. My notion of disagreement can also be seen as minimal in that it uses very simple tools from the semanticist's toolkit (notions like content, attitude and semantic level, but not accuracy, circumstance etc.).

I'm not entirely sure that such a hope can easily be fulfilled: circumstances are unlikely to play any role for the (pure) expressivist, for example.

A second way to incorporate circumstances into the definition of minimal disagreement – the one I prefer – is the following: allow appeal to circumstances, but make it part of the notion of *conflict* involved in the definition of disagreement (as part of clause a) of (**MD**)) rather than putting it directly in the definition. This allows us to say that what conflict amounts to can vary – for example, with the type of attitudes that are in play. In other words, when (**MD**) is fleshed out by the relativist (that is, as involving doxastic attitudes towards propositions, at the semantic level), it becomes part of the notion of conflicting attitudes that the contents of interlocutors' utterances are evaluated at the same circumstance. This is compatible with (**MD**) being fleshed out in different ways by other participants in the debate, for which the notion of conflict doesn't involve circumstances at all, or involves a notion of circumstance that has fewer elements than the relativists fancies. In yet other words, this solution arrives at the notion of minimal disagreement by abstracting away not only from the type of attitudes, contents and levels of discourse, but also from what is meant by conflict. This move makes the notion of disagreement (via the notion of conflict involved) even more flexible and amenable to various views, while keeping it equally minimal.[22]

4.3. The underdetermination/philosophical insignificance/lack of predictions worry

At this point, especially given the second solution to the overgeneration problem evinced above, another worry arises: namely, that the notion of disagreement proposed is too indefinite to serve any theoretical role – too underdetermined. While I take the great flexibility of the notion to be an advantage, it might strike some readers as a shortcoming, for the reason just given. Stated a bit more precisely, the problem is that, conceived in this way, (**MD**) does not give rise to an informative notion of disagreement in the absence of a robust notion of conflict. This, in turn, makes the proposal less apt to compete with more philosophically substantive views in the literature, such as Belleri's, Palmira's or Worsnip's.

I understand how this might be deemed unsatisfactory, but I think there are at least two routes open here. One way to reply to the objection is to deny that my endeavor here amounts to a *bona fide* philosophical analysis or a full explication of the notion of disagreement, and thus that it

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[22] To be clear, my aim in the above discussion was not to save relativism (or any view, for that matter) from the objection that it cannot account for disagreement. That it cannot, despite this being one of the main motivations brought in its favor, has been claimed many times in the literature (for a very recent expression of this claim, see Baghramian & Coliva (2020)). I myself am sympathetic to the claim that the more substantial notion of disagreement relativists adopt undermines their own case. For the purposes of this paper, this is not a troublesome result. Generalizing the discussion, it merits stressing that the aim of the paper is not to defend any semantic view about perspectival expressions (so that if one such view is problematic, that is fine for the purpose of this paper), but something more basic: to make it possible for the views on the table to be able to have a meaningful debate about disagreement, with (**MD**) ensuring that none of them is excluded just because of their theoretical commitments and their adherence to a more substantial notion of disagreement.

is not exactly on a par with that of Belleri, Palmira, Worsnip and the other authors. In fact, in the list of motivations I gave for proposing a notion of minimal disagreement, providing a philosophical analysis of the notion of disagreement is missing. My endeavor can be taken as a purely practical one: to provide a notion that is *useful* for the semantic debate I'm concerned with. If so, evaluating the proposal should primarily take into consideration its usefulness – that is, one should take an instrumentalist stance here. Now, I do take myself to have shown that (**MD**) is useful along several dimensions. For example, I have shown that it provides a good way to systematize and generate the many notions of disagreement found in the recent literature, that it offers a more comprehensive basic notion of disagreement than some of the previous attempts and that it makes for a more parsimonious account. These achievements strike me as significant enough to deem the notion valuable. Of course, this opens up the further issue of what the relation between (**MD**) and the notion of disagreement arrived at at the end of a full philosophical analysis is. Rather than speculating about this issue, let me note instead that from the minimal notion I propose, it is quite easy to arrive at philosophically more substantive notions of minimal disagreement. For example, from (**MD**) one can easily arrive at Worsnip's (2019) notion of disagreement by understanding the notion of conflict as interpersonal incoherence, while other possible minimal notions might be derivable too. If so, (**MD**) can also serve as a meta-theoretical template from which particular proposals of minimal notions of disagreement can be derived.

However, I think that a stronger answer is available, which doesn't involve denying that my endeavor amounts to a full philosophical analysis and thus that it is not on a par with extant accounts of disagreements. Bluntly put, the answer consists in claiming that what I have offered is indeed a full philosophical analysis of the notion of disagreement, but a "shallow" one: shallow in the sense that, in explicating the target notion (disagreement) it relies on notions that are themselves not fully explicated (e.g., conflict). While one might want to know more about the notions the analysis relies on, it is nevertheless a *full* philosophical analysis simply because it does offer an explication of the target notion. Such a strategy is not unheard of in philosophy. Take, for example, King's (2007) view on propositions. King takes propositions to be complex facts about expressions standing in syntactical relations to each other, with their components standing in certain propositional relations that inherit their significance from syntax. As such, his analysis of propositions relies heavily on syntactic facts. Yet, while it is important to know what syntactic facts are, it is not incumbent on King to provide an analysis of syntactic facts in his attempt to provide an analysis of propositions. In fact, King's analysis is compatible with various syntactic theories, which gives it a desirable pluralistic flavor. It is this shallow kind of analysis that I propose in the case of disagreement, too. Additionally, this shallow character of my analysis of the notion of disagreement is easier to square with the pluralistic attitude towards disagreement that many authors

in the debate exhibit (e.g, MacFarlane). (**MD**) can thus stand scrutiny alongside the other full-blown theories of disagreement on the market.[23]

Now, even if one agrees that what I have provided is a full-blown (albeit shallow) analysis of disagreement, there is another aspect of the notion put forward that might be problematic. I have stressed several times that (**MD**) is no more than a schema, with the variables it contains having to be given values, operation which in turn leads to more specific, and more substantial, notions of disagreement. Supposedly, a substantial notion of disagreement would be able to make predictions about which exchanges should and which should not come out as disagreements. The question that arises is whether (**MD**), *taken in itself*, is able to do that. Without being able to make such predictions, the notion is very close not only to failing as an analysis of disagreement, but also to being useless.

I certainly agree that the number and accuracy of the predictions made by the more substantial notions arrived at starting from (**MD**) are greater than those made by (**MD**) itself. However, it seems to me clear that, even as minimal as it is, (**MD**) is able to make the required predictions. Take, for example, the following exchange:

Lisa: Licorice is tasty.
Bart: Jupiter doesn't have 63 moons.

On the face of it, this exchange is as far from eliciting an intuition of disagreement as any exchange can be. Using (**MD**), this can be easily explained by the fact that no conflicting attitudes towards the same content can be found, at any level. Therefore, (**MD**) rules this exchange out as a case of disagreement, and thus predicts that this and other exchanges of the same type are not cases

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[23] This is perhaps the right place to discuss Worsnip's (2019) proposal of a notion of minimal disagreement (the "wide" notion, as he calls it) as interpersonal incoherence. While I'm largely sympathetic to the proposal, I think this view is unsatisfactory for at least two reasons. First, his notion excludes disagreement involving centered contents (in fact, he takes his view on disagreement to be a reduction of the claim that we need centered contents). Worsnip trades here on the idea that there is no intuition of disagreement when the contents of certain utterances are centered – for example, in the case of the pronoun 'I'. However, there is at least one view on the market (Kindermann (2019)) that treats sentences containing predicates of taste (which paradigmatically exhibit the intuition of disagreement) as expressing (multi-) centered contents. So, Worsnip's view excludes a clear case of disagreement, thus running contrary to (accepted) intuition.

Second, Worsnip's notion makes no mention of levels of discourse where disagreement takes place. One consequence of this is the possibility of misplacing disagreement. As I mentioned in section 2, several of the contextualist strategies to fend off the challenge from disagreement appeal to pragmatic factors. For example, according to a view like Zakkou's (2019), when Lisa argues with Bart about licorice, her use of 'tasty' triggers a presupposition of superiority to the effect that Lisa's taste is superior to Bart's. According to Worsnip's account, for Lisa and Bart to disagree, they should have attitudes towards contents that neither of them could have compatible attitudes towards. But it is really important that these incompatible attitudes are towards presuppositions, and not towards the semantic content; it wouldn't do, for example, to take the inconsistency to be between Lisa's beliefs that licorice is tasty and that Bart's taste is superior to hers (because, as such, these beliefs are not inconsistent). What this shows is that the level at which disagreement arises needs to be made explicit. This might be very easy to fix, but it requires a fix nevertheless. In contrast, (**MD**) has the level of discourse build-in in one of the clauses.

disagreement. Hence, the notion is able to make predictions.[24] Let me also note that from the mere fact that the notion put forward has a certain structure (three clauses that use notions that stand in certain relations etc.) and thus that it has a certain profile that makes it differ from other notions of (minimal) disagreement, it follows that the prediction it yields are different than those made by (at least some of) those other notions. A notion of disagreement from which, say, the third clause of (**MD**) is missing would make different predictions than (**MD**) (according to such a notion, pragmatic disagreements will not come out as disagreements).

There is perhaps yet another way to understand the underdetermination worry, in connection with my claim that (**MD**) captures the "folk notion" of disagreement – namely, that the notion is too thin to be grasped or entertained by anyone. Given that capturing the "folk notion" of disagreement is one of the roles I claimed this notion has, the worry in this interpretation is pressing.

This worry is answerable, too. First, it is quite reasonable to think that, given the large variety found in the intuitive base of the phenomenon, the folk notion of disagreement itself might be quite underdetermined and multifaceted.[25] (**MD**) surely reflects that indeterminacy, but grasping it shouldn't be problematic. To see this, perhaps an analogy might help. Take the word 'jade'. Relatively few people know that 'jade' is used to refer to two distinct kinds of mineral – what the scientists call 'nephrite' and 'jadeite'. Although only scientists are able to discern which of the two types of mineral a particular use of 'jade' refers to, it seems reasonable to say that laypeople have the notion of jade, even if it is indeterminate between the two types of mineral. Moreover, such a notion is far from being useless: people employing it are able to distinguish jade from, say, sapphire, they are able to buy the right things etc. Similarly, the folk use an equally underdeterminate notion of disagreement (conflicting attitudes of *some* kind towards the same content of some *kind* etc.) when judging what exchanges are part of the intuitive base of the phenomenon, even if only philosophers are able to discern the more substantive notions of disagreement that (**MD**) gives rise to. The thinness of the notion is no obstacle for its being grasped by the folk.

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[24] It might be argued that, with enough ingenuity, the context could be manipulated in such a way that the exchange elicits the intuition of disagreement: for example, if both Lisa and Bart speak in code, or if enough information regarding the linguistic behavior of the interlocutors is packed in etc. As far as I can tell, this is not problematic for my proposal: if an exchange can be made to elicit the notion of disagreement by manipulating the context in such ways, then that means that there *will* be conflicting attitudes towards the same content at a certain level of discourse, which is what (**MD**) predicts. Whether this can be done for *any* exchange is an empirical matter, one that the proponent of (**MD**) needs not commit to. It is also worth noting that some issues in this vicinity could perhaps be solved by making (**MD**) sensitive to context (by claiming, for example, that two interlocutors minimally disagree *in a context* if such and such conditions apply).

[25] See also Jenkins (2014), who takes the same line regarding verbal disputes in metaphysics.

4.4. Worries about the types of attitude involved and the generation of conflict

Finally, another worry related to the notion of minimal disagreement proposed (perhaps latent in the discussion at the end of the previous section) is encapsulated in the question: does the scheme fit all and only the attitudes conflict of which leads to disagreement? On the one hand, there seem to be more attitudes that can be said to be in conflict than the ones considered here; on the other hand, for some of the attitudes considered, conflict arises only if certain conditions are in place. I will illustrate each type of worry by discussing two cases, one involving doxastic attitudes, the other conative ones.

As it has been argued recently (Ferrari (ms)), not only do the believer and the atheist disagree with each other, but they also disagree with the agnostic as well. Agnosticism can be defined as the suspension of belief/disbelief in a significant religious proposition, such as that *God exists*. Suspension is taken to be a sui-generis doxastic attitude, on a par with ACCEPT and REJECT. But if one agrees that the disagreement mentioned exists, then my assumption that ACCEPT (not-p) = REJECT (p) fails (because for the agnostic a reason to reject that God exists is not a reason to accept that God doesn't exist). Thus, a different way of spelling out the conflicting attitudes, and thus of generating disagreement, is needed.

I am not entirely sure I have the intuition that the believer and the atheist, on the one hand, and the agnostic, on the other, disagree. But regardless, here is a possible fix that would incorporate the new doxastic attitude (call is SUSPEND) in the schema: instead of using ACCEPT and REJECT as genuine conflicting doxastic attitudes, one can use the attitude of acceptance of a proposition and that of *considered non-acceptance* (for lack of a better name) of the same proposition.[26] This latter attitude should not be taken to be a different, sui-generis doxastic attitude (for the reasons spelled out in 4.1.), but as comprising both REJECT and SUSPEND as possible ways to be spelled out. By using this more comprehensive (albeit underdetermined) attitude, one can capture the disagreement between the believer and the atheist, on one hand, and the agnostic on the other, as well as the previous, more mundane type of disagreement.[27]

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[26] This is meant to exclude both cases in which one doesn't accept a proposition because they haven't considered it or don't entertain it anymore, where I don't think any disagreement is present. Other cognitive attitudes, like imagining, assuming, conjecturing etc., which assume entertaining a proposition, don't seem to be in tension with acceptance of that proposition either, so the issue of disagreement involving those, on one hand, and ACCEPT, on the other, doesn't arise.

[27] Another problematic case might come from taking doxasic attitudes to be credences, rather than full-fledged beliefs. Thus, if Lisa has credence 0.6 in a proposition while Bart has credence 0.9 in the same proposition, they disagree. Yet, this disagreement doesn't involve conflicting attitudes (they are both beliefs, albeit of different degrees). I don't pretend to have a worked out answer here, but here's a thought: different degrees of belief count as different attitudes. Thus, Lisa's attitude is of the type CREDENCE 0.6, which is in conflict with the attitude-type CREDENCE NON-0.6 that comprises all credences different from 0.6, including Bart's attitude of type CREDENCE 0.9 (with the same proviso as before, that CREDENCE NON-0.6 is not a sui-generis attitude, lending itself to various ways of being fleshed out). This being said, I'm happy to concede that more work needs to be done to adapt the model of disagreement proposed here to disagreement in credence.

Moving on to the conative case, let me start by drawing attention to an observation made by Marques (2015, 2016) about the conditions under which certain conative attitudes generate conflict. Marques notes that, in a sense, one person liking/wishing/desiring something and a person not liking/desiring/wishing the same thing need not amount to conflict. If Lisa likes licorice and Bart doesn't, such attitudes will manifest in behavior that can happily coexist: Lisa will go on eating licorice, Bart will go on avoiding it. However, she also notes that things are different when a certain practical matter, in the solving of which both interlocutors are involved, is at stake. For example, if Lisa and Bart want to buy something sweet that they both like, one liking licorice and the other not liking it is very likely to lead to an impasse. Here having different attitudes towards the same content generates conflict, and thus leads to disagreement.

I concede that in the case of such attitudes the practical aspect should be taken into consideration. As before, I think the easiest way to introduce this in (**MD**) is not as a separate condition on disagreement, but as a specification of what it means for a certain type of attitudes (here, conative ones) to be in conflict. If what it takes for conative attitudes towards the same object to be in conflict is the presence of a practical issue that needs solving, then we should understand disagreement with conative attitudes as presupposing such a practical issue. Generally speaking, and as we've seen above in the case of incorporating circumstances into (**MD**), if a clash of attitudes of a certain type needs the specification of further conditions in which the clash amounts to conflict, then such conditions should be part of what conflict consists in with respect to the attitudes in question. To drive the point home: if certain ways of fleshing out (**MD**) come with additional conditions on when the types of attitudes at stake generate conflict, then these conditions should be accommodated by making them part of the definition of conflict for the attitudes in question. The important point is that such an accommodation does not make (**MD**) lose its status as the more basic notion of disagreement.

5 Summary and conclusion

In this paper, I motivated, forged and defended the postulation of a notion of minimal disagreement. I started by motivating the view by pointing to considerations related to the debate over the semantics of perspectival expressions between relativism, contextualism and expressivism. I then spelled it out by abstracting away from the various notions used by the parties to the debate mentioned. The result was a schema, (**MD**), that I took to specify three necessary and sufficient conditions for disagreement. Finally, I defended the proposed notion from four types of objections – one having to do with the neutrality of the attitudes/contents appealed to, one with overgeneration, one with the notion being underdetermined/philosophically insignificant, and the last pertaining to the issue of how conflict is generated when various types of attitudes (both cognitive and conative)

are considered. In a nutshell, I proposed a coherent notion of minimal disagreement that holds scrutiny, has good chances to amount to a full (albeit shallow) philosophical analysis of disagreement and is useful in that:

- it accounts for all the cases that we intuitively take as disagreement – i.e., explicates the "folk notion" of disagreement;

- it provides a useful way of systematizing and generating the many notions of disagreement recently put forward in the literature about the semantics of perspectival expressions, while ensuring that authors involved in this debate don't talk past each other;

- it leads to a parsimonious account (postulating one basic notion from which others can be derived rather than a multiplicity of notions); and, finally,

- it offers a better basic notion of disagreement than the ones previously proposed in relation to the semantic debate about perspectival expressions by including all the views on the market (relativism, contextualism *and* expressivism).

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