Fictional Characters as Hyperintensions

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Outline

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Motivations

- Both pure realism & pure antirealism face many problems:
  - Realism: nonexistence claims, queer metaphysics, instantiation, authorial creation, identity conditions, co-identification, attitudes
  - Antirealism: no plausible semantics, wrong psychology, non-seriousness of literary criticism, authorial creation, quantification, co-identification, attitudes
- My aim is to avoid these problems by offering two hyperintensional analyses which opt for a middle way (realism for sense of fictional names & antirealism for reference of fictional names)

Preliminaries: Fictional Names

- Purely fictional names as names of purely fictional characters

- Sherlock Holmes as a paradigmatic example

- Controversial cases: Napoleon, Kurt and Adele Gödel, Peaky boys, our children…

- Are fictional names proper names? (see Currie 1990, Predelli 2017)

Sense of Fictional Names

- A hyperintensional role realism (Currie 1990, Lamarque 2009, 2010, Wolterstorff 1980; Tichý 1988 & 2004, Duží, Jespersen, Materna 2010, Jespersen 2018 ms., Glavaničová 2017 & 2018; cf. also Kosterec 2018)

- The sense of fictional names is modelled in terms of individual concepts associated with sets of requisites (roles of role realism). This concept is (usually) introduced into the language by an author of the given fiction. Which particular concept is chosen is relative to interests (Lamarque: interest sensitivity of character identity).

Reference of Fictional Names

- Antirealism: There is (necessarily!) no reference, no full-blooded Sherlock Holmes (cf. Vacek 2018, Glavaničová 2018). In other words, these fictional names are necessarily empty expressions.

- What makes them so? Possible solutions:
  - Essential incompleteness (possible counterexamples)
  - A specific requisite, for instance, *being the person Conan Doyle was writing about*: "The mere discovery that there was indeed a detective with exploits like those of Sherlock Holmes would not show that Doyle was writing about this man." (Kripke 1972)

Analysis I

- **Hyperintensional occurrences**: *Holmes*^{H} stands for a hyperintension: an individual concept of Sherlock Holmes. Examples:

- Sherlock Holmes is a fictional character. / *FictChar*(*Holmes*^{H})

- Dada likes Sherlock Holmes. / *Like*(*Dada*, *Holmes*^{H})

- **Intensional occurrences**: *Holmes*^{I} stands for an intension: a function from possible worlds (and times) to individuals. Examples:

- Sherlock Holmes does not exist. / ¬*Exist*(*Holmes*^{I})

- Sherlock Holmes is a detective. / *Req*(*detective*, *Holmes*^{I})

- **Extensional occurrences**: *Holmes*^{E} stands for an extension: an individual, were there such individual. Examples:

- Holmes is a detective. / *Detective*(*Holmes*^{E})

- Watson is a detective. / *Detective*(*Watson*^{E})

Analysis I (TIL)

- **Hyperintensional occurrences**:

- Sherlock Holmes is a fictional character. / $\lambda w \lambda t \ [^0FictChar_{wt} \ ^0Holmes]$

- Dada likes Sherlock Holmes. / $\lambda w \lambda t \ [^0Like*_{wt} \ ^0Dada \ ^0Holmes]$

- **Intensional occurrences**:

- Sherlock Holmes does not exist. / $\lambda w \lambda t \ \neg [^0Exist_{wt} \ Holmes]$

- Sherlock Holmes is a detective. / $[^0Req_3 \ ^0Det \ Holmes]$

- **Extensional occurrences**:

- Holmes is a detective. / $\lambda w \lambda t \ [^0Det_{wt} \ Holmes_{wt}]$

- Watson is a detective. / $\lambda w \lambda t \ [^0Det_{wt} \ Watson_{wt}]$
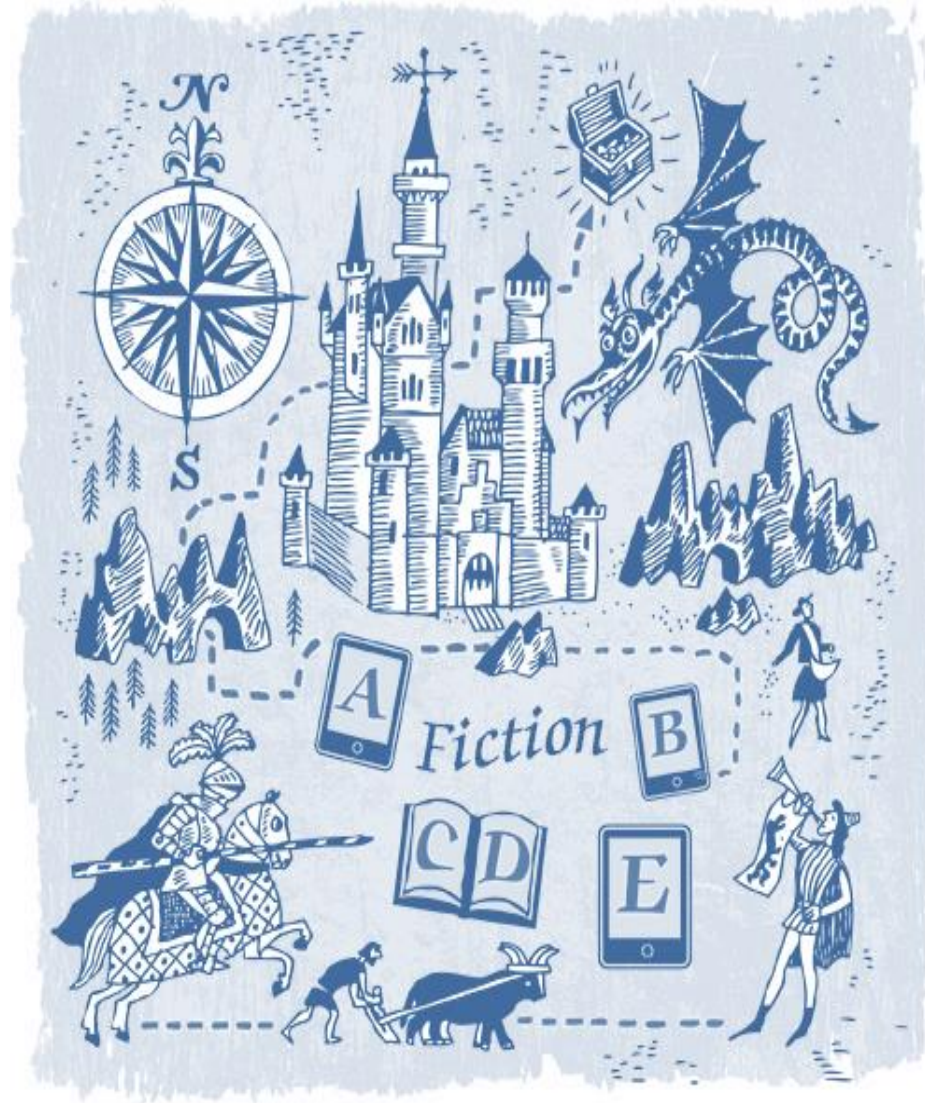
Analysis II

- One level disappears, what means that the work done on this level should be moved upwards (hyperintensionality) or downwards (extensionality). My suggestion is to move upwards. The work previously done by intensions will thus be done by hyperintensions.

- **Hyperintensional occurrences**: *Holmes^H* stands for a hyperintension, an individual concept. Examples are the same as in Analysis I, but also:

- Sherlock Holmes does not exist. / *¬Exist*(Holmes^H)*

- Sherlock Holmes is a detective. / *Req*(detective, Holmes^H)*

- ***Extensional* occurrences** = extensional occurrences of Analysis I

Analysis II (TIL)

- **Hyperintensional occurrences**:

- hyperintensional occurrences of analysis I, but also:

- Sherlock Holmes does not exist. / $\lambda w \lambda t \, \neg[^0Exist^*_{wt} \, {^0Holmes}]$

- Sherlock Holmes is a detective. / $[^0Req^* \, {^0Det} \, {^0Holmes}]$

- *Extensional* **occurrences** = extensional occurrences of Analysis I

A comparison

- The Analysis II differs mainly w.r.t. examples which were listed as intensional in the Analysis I, but are listed as hyperintensional in the Analysis II.

- Analysis II contains hyperintensional properties/relations (*Exist**, *Req**).

A comparison (cont.)

- A hyperintension has the property *Exist** if it has an extension (if it is a non-empty concept).

- *Req** is more tricky (the formal notion of requisites is intensional & fails for impossible entities).

- The Analysis II treats nonexistence in the empirical discourse in exactly the same way as nonexistence in the non-empirical discourse. In comparison, intensional analysis would be inappropriate for non-empirical discourse (e.g. nonexistence of an object satisfying a mathematical description). A hyperintensional analysis works well for both.

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Thanks for your attention!