

MR3330775 (Review) 03A05 03B65

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How to unify Russellian and Strawsonian definite descriptions. (English summary)

*Recent trends in philosophical logic*, 85–101, *Trends Log. Stud. Log. Libr.*, 41, Springer, Cham, 2014.

This is an interesting paper on the controversial issue of the ambiguity of definite descriptions in natural language and how to deal with it using Tichý's Transparent Intensional Logic. By analysis of sentences that differ as to their topic-focus articulation, the author proposes a solution to the 100-year-old dispute over Strawson's versus Russell's account of definite descriptions.

According to the author, the ambiguity stems from different topic-focus articulations of such sentences. Her analysis assumes that whereas articulating the topic of a sentence activates a pre-supposition, it is frequently the case that articulating the focus merely yields an entailment. "... there is no incompatibility between Strawson's and Russell's positions, because they simply do not talk about one and the same meaning of the sentence 'The King of France is bald'. My novel *contribution* is to point out this *ambiguity* that yielded the false dilemma. Russell argued for attributive use of 'the King of France' whereas Strawson for its referential use. In this paper I will propose a logical analysis of both Russellian and Strawsonian reading of sentences of the form 'The  $F$  is a  $G$ .'

The author does not take account of Kripke's pragmatic factors, like the intentions of the speaker, "for they are irrelevant to a *logical semantic theory*".

The paper has the following sections: (1) Introduction; (2) Russell Versus Strawson on Definite Descriptions; (3) Foundations of T[ransparent] I[n]tentional L[ogic]; (4) Definite Descriptions: Strawsonian or Russellian?; (5) Conclusion.

{For the collection containing this paper see [MR3307685](#)}

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