Cross-Cultural Surveys and Intuition-Based Methodologies in Philosophy

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1 Introduction

In analytical philosophy, intuitions, or assentions to a proposition without further, non-immediate, reasoning, have been generally used as a key source of philosophical information in order for philosophers to find the truth about things. While the exact nature of what intuitions are may vary wildly amongst individual analytic philosophers, as a whole analytic philosophy shares three tenants about intuition, according to Alexander et. al. (2010). First, intuitions serve as a useful and important source of philosophical information. Second, intuitions are stable and shared across cultures. Third, the intuitions of professional philosophers are reflective of how competent users of some systems, such as language or knowledge, judge things to be.

However, recently these concepts about how philosophy should approach intuition have been criticized by various other philosophers. These philosophers agree with the first tenant that intuitions are a useful and important source of philosophical information, but either partially or completely reject the second and third tenants. A large body of this criticism of analytic philosophy has come from the recent field of experimental philosophy, especially cross-cultural experimental philosophy, as epitomized by works such as Machery et. al. (2004) and Knobe (2003). Experimental philosophers generally find that the third tenant of analytical intuitions is inadequate for

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philosophy's purposes, as it fails to adequately answer the question of "Whose intuitions should we be concerned with?". In addition, experimental philosophers find that traditional analytical philosophy is easy to perceive as elitist, given the recent emphasis on philosophy's diversity problem. From the discussion of diversity in philosophy, such as that in Jay L. Garfield and Bryan W. Van Norden's New York Times piece on intellectual diversity in philosophy (Garfield and Van Norden, 2016), and recent membership surveys by the American Philosophical Association showing an astounding lack of people of color in their membership (Member Demographics, 2017), then it could be argued that in reality, the intuitive framework used to do "good" philosophy is entrenched in the mindset of white, heterosexual, cisgender men who have a background in only Western philosophy. Thus, experimental philosophers push for analytic philosophy to open up the domain of its intuitive framework to include people who aren't professional philosophers and who aren't part of the traditional demographic of philosophy, such as people of color, queer and trans persons, and those with a background in Eastern and other philosophies.

To do this, experimental philosophy largely relies on empirical survey methodology to supplement the standard uses of intuitions and determine what exactly the intuition in a certain case is. By examining a broader range of people, experimental philosophers attempt to demonstrate that individual intuitions do vary between individuals, and, in turn, the intuition used by analytic philosophy may not actually be reflective of how competent users of some system, like language, judge things. For example, a survey examining Kripkean Gödel cases may find that competent speakers of English favor the referent that aligns with the Descriptive Theory of Names[1] and think that "Gödel" refers to the actual author of the Incompleteness Theorem,[2] rather than the intuitions that align with Causal Theory[3] widely accepted by analytic philosophy. These state that "Gödel" refers to the person who published and is commonly attributed as the author of the Incompleteness Theorem, but did not actually write it in Kripke's example.

From some these surveys, some experimental philosophers, like Machery et. al. (2004) have claimed to have found empirical evidence of cross-cultural variation in intuitions that would nullify the second tenant of analytic philosophy's intuitive methodology (Machery et. al. 2004 p. B8).

However, there is much controversy about the aforementioned surveys, and experimental philosophy has split into two groups according to their views on the stability and sharedness of intuitions, as identified by Alexander et. al. (2010). The first group, the positive experimental philosophers, endorse the first and second tenants of analytic intuitive methodology, argue that supposed variations in intuitions can be accounted for in other ways and do not represent actual cross-cultural variation in intuition, but reject the third stating that intuitions are stable and shared across individuals, thus their emphasis on survey methodology. The second group, the negative experimental philosophers, hold the more radical view and endorse only the first tenant.[4] Thus, the three groups, the traditional, or armchair, analytic philosophers, the positive experimental philosophers, and the negative experimental philosophers, have vastly different opinions on the place of intuitions within philosophy.

I argue that the armchair analytic philosophers face fatal problems to their views, namely their assertion that professional philisophical intuitions are reflective of competent users of some system, and instead one should endorse the positive experimentalist view. I argue that armchair analytic philosophy cannot be reflective on demographic grounds, and that there is non way to determine in

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[3]For those unfamiliar with the philosophy of language, the Descriptive Theory holds that an object is the reference of a proper name if and only if it *uniquely* or *best satisfies* the description associated with it. An object uniquely satisfies a description when the description is true of it and only it. If no object entirely satisfies the description, then it can be said that the proper name refers to the unique individual that satisfies most of the description. If the description is not satisfied at all or if many individuals satisfy it, the name does not refer.

[3]That is, any system of mathemetical logic containing arthimetic operators cannot be both consistent and represent all natural numbers.

[3]Per Kripke and Evans, the Causal Theory holds that a name is introduced into a linguistic community for the purpose of referring to an individual. It continues to refer to that individual as long as its uses are linked to the individual *via a causal chain* of successive user: every user of the name acquired it from another user, who acquired it in turn from someone else, and so on, up to the first user who introduced the name to refer to a specific individual. Speakers may associate descriptions with names. After a name is introduced, the associated description does not play any role in the fixation of the referent. The referent may *entirely* fail to satisfy the description.

[4]A third group, not discussed by Alexander et. al. (2010), holds the most radical position and rejects the first tenant altogether, and do not see intuitions as important to philosophical methodology. For my purposes, however, this group is a bit far from what exactly I wish to discuss, namely, groups that do think intuitions are an important part of the methodology. Therefore, I will only discuss groups that presuppose the first tenant, and note that this itself is still controversial.

the first place whether or not their intuitions are reflective in the first place without surveys. Next, I outline what our new methodology should look like if we wish to still have the goals of general analytic philosophy in mind, and what tenants are more necessary than others. After, I walk through the benefits of positive experimental philosophy, and the mechanics of each of its four modes. I then argue that positive experimental philosophy's semantic mentalism mode adequately satisfies our needs.

2   Background and Definitions

Before I continue, however, I wish to clarify some potentially troublesome terms, namely, what intuition is, and clearly define the intuitive methodologies of the three sides to this argument. In the overall case of these philosophical methodologies, I believe Alexander et. al. (2010) to have the best sketch of the structure of the field of experimental philosophy, in addition to the best formulation of the armchair analytic intuitive tenants. I rely on their framing to bring clarity and structure to this discussion, and their view of the constitutions of both negative experimental philosophy and positive experimental philosophy.

2.1   Armchair Analytical Philosophy (AAP)

It is important to note the difference between AAP and analytic philosophy in general, as, depending on the taxonomy used, some forms of experimental philosophy may be classified as analytical philosophy. An easy distinction is that analytic philosophy in general assents to tenant one, and so both positive experimental philosophy and negative experimental philosophy can be classified under this umbrella. This is a good enough distinction for the purposes of my argument, since I am concerned with discussing groups that do think intuition is important methodologically. Thus, I wish to emphasize the distinction between these two terms.

The following are the methodological tenants in traditional, or "armchair"[5], analytic philoso-

phy, abbreviated as AAP from here on out.

1. Intuitions are a worthwhile source of philosophical information.

2. Intuitions are stable and shared.

3. The intuitions of professional philosophers are reflective of how competent users of some system (such as language and knowledge) judge things to be. (Alexander et. al 2010, p. 300-301)

2.2 Negative Experimental Philosophy (NEP)

The following are the methodological tenants in the negative program of experimental philosophy, abbreviated as NEP from here on out.

1. Intuitions are a worthwhile source of philosophical information.

2′. Intuitions are not stable nor shared.

3′. The intuitions of many people are required to determine what the intuition is in a particular situation. (Alexander et. al 2010, p. 300-301)

2.3 Positive Experimental Philosophy (PEP)

The following are the methodological tenants in the positive program of experimental philosophy, abbreviated as PEP from here on out.

1. Intuitions are a worthwhile source of philosophical information.

2. Intuitions are stable and shared.

3′. The intuitions of many people are required to determine what the intuition is in a particular situation. (Alexander et. al 2010, p. 300-301)

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[5]Often called this because of the common derisive association with merely theoretical, rather than practical or empirical, practice of something, if the person referred to has competence of this practice at all, such as in the term "armchair quarterback"

2.4   Intuition

Finally, for intuition itself, I turn to Sosa (2007), who presents the following formulation of what exactly it is to intuiti something.

1. To intuiti a proposition p is to be attracted to assent simply through entertaining that representational content.

2. The intuition is rational if and only if it derives from a competence, and the content is explicitly rational or modal. (Sosa 2007, p. 101)

That is, to intuiti p is to assent to p without further reasoning; agreement with p occurs on immediate contemplation of p, and not further thinking. By modal, Sosa means the intuition attributes necessity or possibility. Sosa predicts two attacks on this model: the calibration objection, and the cultural divergence objection. Sosa writes that, while there is no very deep reason that intuitions must deal with modal propositions only, this seems to be the proper domain for the kinds of intuitions used in philosophy. Sosa admits contingent intuitions might also derive from a competence, but wants to refer to these as empirical intuitions, rather than the rational intuitions used in philosophy. Sosa also says that his model could be criticized as too externalist, from an access standpoint and a control standpoint. For access, Sosa writes that we cannot insist on armchair access to the justifying power of our sources, since it depends on the sources reliability, and this isnt knowable from our competences. For control, Sosa writes that we cannot insist on total control, but must instead rely on epistemic luck. (Sosa 2007, p. 101-102) When we rely on intuitions on philosophy, Sosa thinks, we manifest a competence that allows us to get it right on a certain subject matter.

3   Issues from the Armchair

Analytical philosophy, in its original form, is rather tempting to endorse. We would indeed like to imagine that the intuitive truth of some topic is easily accessible by any one person. This is because, for one, philosophy has more or less worked this way since its inception. Philosophers

have, from the beginning, examined the nature of the intuition of something from their studies or vistas or large clay pots in the marketplace, as Diogenes did. For two, philosophers would widely like to believe that there is a methodological distinction between science and philosophy, and that things of empirical import are not always those of philosophical import. For three, philosophers would like to believe that intuitive truth is accessible to anyone and does not need to be caught with a broad survey net. This principle is rather egalitarian in nature; it could be argued that it is much easier for someone with little wealth to get philosophical training and be able contemplate issues rather than invest time and money into a vast survey, so this armchair access is more equal across socioeconomic status. Because of this, asserting that intuitions are stable and shared and that only your own intuitions on a subject are needed seems attractive.

However, there are issues with this rather comfortable assumption; simply on demographic grounds, it does not seem that the group of professional philosophers can be reflective of competence of a particular system. They are not a representative sample of a population that uses some system; for one, the majority of philosophers are indeed white, cisgender, heterosexual men, and, in the United States at the very least, this is no longer representative of the majority of the populace (Member Demographics, 2017). There are more women then men in the United States, according to the latest Census records, and, in states like California, the most populous, non-Hispanic whites, while the largest individual ethnic group, have minority status (Howden and Meyer, 2011, and QuickFacts: California, 2016) If analytical philosophy wishes to examine what a competent user of a system, such as a competent user of language, would judge in a particular instance, then it seems that it must push beyond one group's intuitions.

A response to this from AAP is to say that the intuitions of professional philosophers are trained in such a way as to reflect what a competent user of some system would intuiti (Alexander et. al., 2010). From this, it is not organic intuitions that armchair analytic philosophy tests; it is highly specialized, competent ones. But it is not entirely clear how armchair analytical philosophy can do this without assuming that the individuals trained and training are a representative sample of competent speakers. In addition, it isn't apparent that the trained intuitions are actually reflective

of the intuitions of competent users at all. In the Knobe (2003) case, individuals were much more likely to ascribe intentionality to actions that are harmful than actions that are helpful, with identical circumstances and language surrounding them. There is, of course, disagreement over what counts as ethically intentional, but most philosophers would agree that the goodness or badness of the action should not effect the intentionality. If ethical alignments do affect intentionality, then we are left with having to explain how this is so, and how the properties of good or bad held by one person affect the mind-states of another. An even stronger example of this is seen in Systma and Machery (2010), in which the authors conducted a survey to determine the intuitions about the conceptions of subjective experiences of non-philosophers. Systma and Machery found that these conceptions differ from those commonly found in the philosophy of mind such as those set forth by Nagel (1974), which hold that "diverse mental states, [such] as seeing red and feeling pain... [have] something in common, namely... that they share the second-order property that there is 'something like it'." (Systma and Machery, 2010, p.299) Instead, they distinguish between states that have a valence and those that do not, and Systma and Machery argue that this conception may utltimately show that there is, in fact, no hard problem of consciousness (Systma and Machery, 2010, p.324). Additionally, without knowing what the intuitions of competent speakers actually are, there is no way to accept that the intuitions of a group are *in reality* reflective of competent users. The assumption that professional philosopher's intuitions are reflective is simply a tautology: professional philosophical intuitions are reflective because they are reflective intuitions. Armchair analytical philosophy, then, is either faced with finding some system of error in order to determine competence, or revise the third tenant. Revising the third tenant seems to be the easier of these two solutions.

In addition, both AAP and PEP seem to suffer from attacks from Machery et. al. (2004, p. B8-B9) and similar surveys that claim to demonstrate variation in intuitions across cultures (Machery et. al. 2004, 2010). In Machery et. al.'s survey, it seems to be the case that empirically, the majority of East Asian speakers of English tend to have intuitions in line with the Descriptive Theory of Names when probed with Gödel cases, whereas the majority of Western speakers of English tend

to have intuitions in line with the Causal Theory in the same circumstances. Both these programs have defenses against these results, which go after the second tenant they share. I will discuss PEP's defense later; for now, I will present AAP's defense.

One attempt to get around this is for AAP to mount a defense against the survey results that show instability in intuitions across various groups. One such defense comes from Sosa (2007, p. 102-103), who argues that the linguistic disagreement found in these surveys need not be substantive. In some cases, such as one person saying the sentence "Tomorrow is Tuesday" today and another saying "Tomorrow is Wednesday" tomorrow, a seeming disagreement turns out to be one that does not posses meaningfulness. Pragmatics could account for at least some of the seeming instability and variation in intuitions. While I agree with this line of thinking, the issue with this in terms of analytical philosophy is that, as Sosa admits, this defense is very highly contextual. It does not shore up the objection to the second tenant as presented by AAP in all circumstances. Nor does this address the issue of Western academic intuitions being evaluated as more representative of the truth, when this seems unlikely to be the case. Analytical philosophy, then, should be reevaluated.

4   Turning to an Alternate Program

There seem to be several things that our new program must accomplish in light of the problems presented by armchair analytical philosophy. First, it must still endorse intuitions as a useful philosophical tool. This is simply because if we are indeed to endorse a program that rejects intuitions entirely, we are then left with having to some other, most likely non-empirical source of information for philosophical decisions. We would like to keep the previous philosophies around, I would think, in addition to having the ability to answer questions outside the domain of science. Thus seems like a major issue that is best avoided if possible. A program of philosophy that doesn't use intuitions is also outside the scope of discussion; we are assuming the first tenant holds, despite its controversy within philosophy broadly. So, intuitions must be kept.

Second, we must be able to account for alleged cross-cultural variation in some way, either by having some mode of the program that utilizes some distinction between meaningful variation and unmeaningful variation or attacks the results directly. This is largely an epistemic issue; if we are to determine the truthfulness of things in the philosophical domain, we must have some ability to determine a singular truth. Endorsing the tenant that intuitions are stable and shared without saying how we determine what these intuitions actually are seems to be unproblematic. So, the second tenant of AAP can be adopted.

Third, we must be able to determine what the intuitions for something are in an accurate way. This way must not rely on the intuitions of only one group or person, but instead be able to locate the intuitions of multiple different groups. Some adoption of survey methodology seems to be needed then. And in turn, we must adopt the obvious tenant that multiple persons are required to determine the intuition behind something.

From this, it seems that positive experimental philosophy should be our first step in turning to an alternate program, in accordance to its formulation above. If we cannot account for cross-cultural variation adequately, then we should turn to negative experimental philosophy. But we should only do this if positive experimental philosophy fails, for the reasons listed before.

5   The Argument for Positive Experimental Philosophy

With the demise of both traditional, so-called "armchair" analytical philosophy, we must either determine the validity of an approach in line with positive experimental philosophy, or give up on using intuitions as a philosophically-valuable tool and reject the entirety of analytical philosophy. The most optimistic route, of course, is to evaluate the PEP approach to intuitions and hope that it can create an adequate view of the use of intuitions in philosophy that resolves the issues caused by both AAP and cross-cultural surveys. PEP seems poised to do this right from the start, as, out of the two approaches previously discussed, takes a comparatively moderate stance that combines the strengths of both armchair analytical philosophy and negative experimental philosophy. PEP

holds, like all methodologies discussed here, that intuitions are a valuable tool in philosophy, and sides with negative experimental philosophy in the scope of the sources of these intuitions; however, it endorse AAP's tenant that intuitions are stable and shared. Nevertheless, outside of the more abstract discussion about the tenants of intuition that these programs of philosophy endorse, there is the issue of how the survey methodology of experimental philosophy and the results thereof demonstrate something of philosophical import. This problem which positive experimental philosophy faces can be surmised by the following question: if positive experimental philosophy's survey results tell us something of philosophical importance, what type of a thing is this supposed to be? In addition, what exactly are we supposed to be concerned with when we approach intuitions from this positive light?

5.1 Modes of Positive Experimental Philosophy

Alexander et. al. (2010) identify four different approaches to this question, divided based on whether they are concerned with what are dubbed "outside-the-head non-psychological entities"[6], such as propositions, or "in-the-head psychological entities"[7], such as concepts or semantics. (Alexander et. al. 2010, p. 299-300). Mentalist views take knowledge of the mental to be at least the immediate payoff of surveying the intuitions of various subjects, and a further subdivision could be made about the role of this knowledge that is outside this discussion. These four approaches are: the direct extramentalist approach; the conceptual mentalist approach; the semantic mentalist approach; and the mechanist mentalist approach. Each take a different approach to how surveys of intuitions relate to philosophically useful information, as follows.

5.1.1 Direct Extramentalism

Projects in the direct extramentalist camp draw conclusions about non-mental entities from premises that include empirical claims about folk intuitions or judgments but do not include premises about

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[7]Or, extramentalist views.
[7]Or, mentalist views.

human psychology arrived at by those claims. Direct extramentalists hold that a proposition's status as intuitive is direct evidence for the truth of the proposition, although perhaps not conclusive evidence. For example, if the vast majority of people have intuitions that align with compatibilism, then direct extramentalists think that that is evidence for compatibilism and that incompatabilists should have the burden of proof in free will debates. (Alexander et. al. 2010, p.299)

5.1.2   Conceptualist Mentalism

Conceptual mentalist projects take an interest in what actual conceptual structure is instantiated in people's heads. These projects examine the intuitions of various concepts as they occur, such as the concept of "intentional" in Knobe (2003). In our compatibilist example, conceptualist mentalist projects would be interested in how people conceive of compatiblism and determine that an intuition that aligns with one concept of compatiblism is evidence of that concept's validity. (Alexander et. al. 2010, p. 300)

5.1.3   Semantic Mentalism

Semantic mentalist projects take an interest in identifying the meaning of our terms or concepts. This mode follows the line of inquiry set forth by David Lewis (1970, 1972) and Frank Jackson (1998), who sought to define new theoretical terms in already-used language. In these projects, some positive experimental philosophers, for example, have insisted that the claim that some proposition is a folk platitude be empirically supported or at least empirically scrutinized. (Alexander et. al. 2010, p. 300)

5.1.4   Mechanist Mentalism

Mechanist mentalist projects take an interest in understanding the psychological structures and processes involved in making judgments in a domain of psychological interest. They attempt to answer the following two questions: "Can our folk psychology be understood in primarily prediction-and-explanation terms, or is it deeply entwined with our moral and evaluative cognition

as well?", as Knobe (2003. p. 193) asked. And, to what extent do affect and rules contribute to the difference between normative evaluations that are moral and those that are not? (Alexander et. al. 2010, p. 300)

5.1.5 Modal Choice

Direct extramentalism seems the most charitable of the modes towards positive experimental philosophy's desire to use intuitions in an empirical manner. Barring any fatal issues with this mode, direct extramentalism should be the preferred mode of PEP practice, as it adopts the strongest relation between intuition and the truth, since intuitions are considered direct evidence and have high epistomological weight, given that direct extramentalist projects ascribe the burden of proof to the side that lacks intuitive backing.

If direct extramentalism fails, however, we should prefer the conceptualist mentalist, semantic mentalist, and mechanist mentalist modes, in this order. Conceptualist mentalism, while not as strong as direct extramentalism, adopts a fairly strong position in relating truth to intuition, by examining conceptual content. This creates a strong propositional link, and cuts away at linguistic and competence factors that may influence survey results. By examining actual structure, i.e. what our conception of "intention" is, we essentially examine the proposition itself.

Semantic mentalism is fairly close to dealing with propositional content, but suffers from the aforementioned linguistic factors, obviously, that may obscure the relation between the intuitions of those surveyed and the truth. Thus, while not ideal, semantic mentalism is a fairly useful and worthwhile mode.

Mechanist mentalism suffers from distinctions of competence, which are difficult to determine. In addition, mechanist mentalism is fairly removed from the propositional content surveyed, as competence has a strenuous relation to the content itself, and issues with competence do not always correspond to issues of meaning.

5.2   The Problems of Cross-Cultural Variation

When introduced to potential cases of cross-cultural variation in intuitions, a problem arises for PEP. According to the tenants of intuition of positive experimental philosophy, intuitions are stable and shared. When faced with evidence that negates this tenant empirically, it seems that there is no hope for positive experimental philosophy. However, it appears that at least some modes of PEP can compensate for this criticism.

One mode that cannot, however, is direct extramentalism. Alexander et. al. (2010, p. 301) argue that findings of cross-cultural variation lethally imperil direct extramentalist projects. This is because they involve inferences from premises of the form "it is intuitive that p", but such premises now seem ill-formed. If there is cross-cultural variation, or the threat of it, saying "it is intuitive that p" leads to more questions, as : Who is it intuitive to? When? In what circumstances? Thus, it seems we must turn to mentalist projects to accommodate.

Conceptualist mentalist approaches are the most common kind of approaches to positive experimental philosophy. Conceptualist mentalist approaches seem to account for the aforementioned criticisms levied at extramentalism as well. Firstly, conceptualist mentalism allows for an explanation of cross-group intuitive variation by arguing that the concepts of what is being determined intuitively differ. Secondly, conceptualist mentalism allows us to disregard some variation and instability as noise in the data that is not reflective of the actual content. The first move is only possible if the second allows us to distinguish empirically what is or is not constitutive of a given concept.

But it does not appear as if this is possible, as Alexander et. al. (2010 p. 302) argue and is shown in Knobe (2003). In Knobe's (2003) paper, Knobe argued that the variation in intuitions over intentionality were because of the structure of the concept "intentionality" as it was instantiated in the heads of the survey subjects. Others disagreed, and thought the difference was caused by our desire to blame a perpetrator of foreseen harm. Machery (2008) pointed out that the debate seemed to rest on the appropriate individuation of the concept "intentionality", and that there was no way to resolve this debate without a specific idea as to how to individuate concepts. So then we

must move on to semantic mentalism.

Upon investigation, it appears that semantic mentalism faces the same problems as conceptual mentalism. Since a common criterion for individuating a concept is semantic, semantic mentalism could account for the cross-cultural criticisms by arguing that the semantics of what is being determined intuitively differ cross-culturally, and not the intuitions themselves. However, this relies on a theory of semantic differentiation, and it isn't clear, as per Quine, what facts are required to adjudicate disputes about meaning. An objection to this is there are at least some instants where scientists have employed machinery meant to distinguish conceptual or semantic sources of behavior from other psychological sources. For example, philosophers of language and linguists employ the semantic/pragmatic distinction. This distinction, then, could account for the variation and instability supposedly recorded by negative experimental philosophy. Alexander et. al. (2010, p. 304) do not think, however, the patterns exhibited by the cross-cultural variation surveys could be sufficiently accounted for by pragmatics.

However, this is where Alexander et. al. (2010) encounter a problem. Since the publishing of their paper, Izumi et. al. (2017, p. 18-19) have demonstrated that at least some of the cross-cultural variation Alexander et. al. (2010) cite can be accounted for sufficiently in a linguistic manner. Izumi et. al. (2017) specifically look at surveys done as responses to criticisms of Machery et. al. (2004) in Machery et. al. (2010, 2015) and Systma et. al. (2015). In these papers, probes designed to test intuitions of the Gödel and Jonah cases from Kripke (1980) were presented in Chinese and Japanese to native Chinese and Japanese speakers in order to eliminate any potential conceptual variations, regardless of if these variations can be measured, or errors arising from competence. The results of these surveys returned evidence of cross-cultural variation of intuitions about these cases.

However, Izumi et. al. (2017, p. 16-17) found that these variations could be sufficiently accounted for by the semantic and pragmatic ambiguity of the specific noun phrases used in the probes. Without a definite article and since nouns in Japanese and Chinese are number-neutral (there is no morphological distinction between singular and plural), there are four different ways

of how a bare noun phrase can be interpreted. The noun phrase can:

1. make an existential claim, e.g. "A dog/dogs barked."

2. be used to refer to a particular and contextually salient object or group of objects (such as one that has been already mentioned previously in the conversation), e.g. "The dog/dogs that was/were barking earlier entered the bar."

3. be clearly concerned with the with the group of all of the objects, e.g. "Dogs went extinct."

4. attribute a specific property to the vast majority of the objects, e.g. "Its obvious that dogs bark." (Izumi et. al. 2017, p. 4)

Thus, these interpretations show that bare noun phrases can play the roles similar to indefinite and definite descriptions, as shown in 1 and 2, or the roles of plural count nouns and mass terms, as shown in 3 and 4. In some instances, it can be clear what sort of interpretation one should use for the bare noun phrases by its predicate, as seen in the example "x entered the bar". Reasonably, we couldnt imagine a interpretation in accordance to 3 or 4 above, such as a whole animal species entering a bar. However, there are instances where all four interpretations are reasonable, such as in "John is talking about x".

   Machery et. al.s (2004) probes rely on the use of definite articles in answers to the Kripkean Gödel probes (regarding whether the respondents feel "Gödel" refers per the Descriptive Theory, or per the Causal Theory). Machery et. al.s answered were phrased in the following form

   When John uses the name Gödel, is he talking about:

   - the person who really discovered the incompleteness of arithmetic? or

   - the person who got hold of the manuscript and claimed credit for the work?

In these forms, the majority of East Asians answered in accordance to the Descriptive Theory, while the majority of Westerners answered in accordance to the Causal Theory.

In these cases, there is ambiguity in the formulation of person as demonstrated by interpretations 1-4 above. Izumi et. al. (2017, p. 5-7) think that it would be unjustifiable to assume that the second formulation is equivalent to the first because of this. One counter may be that the vignettes provided as part of the probe provide enough information and context to give the reader the intended interpretation, so as long as this is given, there is no worry. But Izumi et. al. (2017 p. 5-7) do not think this is the case. By their analysis, the second probe can have both the definite use intended by Machery et. al. (2010) in addition to what they call the 'indefinite narrow scope interpretation. This can be demonstrated by the following phrase i:

John is talking about a perpetual motion machine

In the narrow scope reading of i, John is talking about something as having the property of a perpetual motion machine. Although no such thing exists, the speaker can truly utter this, as they are reporting on Johns speech, according to which there is a perpetual motion machine However, in the indefinite wide scope reading of i, the phrase can be read as "there is a perpetual motion machine such that John is talking about it" In this reading, John doesn't have to be aware that the object has the proper of being a perpetual motion machine According to Izumi et. al. (2017 p. 8), the bare noun phrases have the indefinite narrow scope reading. To Japanese and Chinese speaker, the subject in the probe has in mind the property that "Gödel" is the author of the incompleteness theorem, as this is all that he knows about "Gödel" Thus, it seems wrong to accept the interpretation that corresponds to the Causal Theory. Izumi et. al. (2017 p. 8) also think that the Chinese and Japanese probe used could be interpreted in the kind or species way as well (interpretation 3 from above) Translated in accordance to this interpretation, the probe would look like the following:

When John uses the name 'Gödel', is he talking about:

- the kind of people who really discovered the incompleteness of arithmetic? or

- the kind of people who got hold of the manuscript and claimed credit for the work?

In this translation, the corresponding Descriptive Theory intuition would be reasonable as well, because John seems to be talking about people who could discover the incompleteness of arithmetic, rather than the characteristics of the people stated by the Causal Theory interpretation.   So, the bare noun phrases used in Machery et. al. (2010) are at least two-ways ambiguous, and possibly three-ways: the definite interpretation, the indefinite interpretations, and the kind or species interpretation. Thus, they cannot be described as equivalent and that the same questions were given to the Western and East Asian participants. Additionally, these bare noun phrases would be seen as definitively in correspondence with the Descriptive Theory to East Asian speakers regardless of what "Gödel" refers to.

From this, it seems that semantic mentalism is not in danger after all, and supposed variations in intuitions can be accounted for sufficiently, in at least some cases, by using pragmatics. There then seems to be no reason for giving up on positive experimental philosophy and no reason to move towards negative experimental philosophy, either. If semantic mentalism is flexible enough to compensate for potential intuitive instability, then the tenants of PEP hold true.

6   Conclusion

I argued that positive experimental philosophy should be chosen over both armchair analytical philosophy and negative experimental philosophy. AAP faces several issues arising from cross-cultural variation, such as the issue of assuming universality in intuitions and assuming that they are stable and shared. Defenses against this are only contextual, and cannot work for all cases. In addition, AAP suffers from assuming that the intuitions of Western academics are somehow more valuable and more representative of the truth than other intuitions. This assumption is very problematic. From here, we are faced with finding a new philosophical program. This program must still endorse intuitions as a useful philosophical tool because indeed to endorse a program that rejects intuitions entirely, we are then left with having to some other, most likely non-empirical source of information for philosophical decisions. It must be able to account for cross-cultural

variation in some way because if we are to determine the truthfulness of things in the philosophical domain, we must have some ability to determine a singular truth. It must be able must be able to determine what the intuitions for something are in an accurate way, because Western academic intuitions cannot assumed to be the sole instrument in determining intuitive validity.

Positive experimental philosophy seems to be able to handle these requirements well, through its semantic mentalist camp. The problems that arise from cross-cultural variation are solved in an adequate manner, and intuitions are determined in a representative way.

6.1 Scope of the Intuitive Problem

While the examples discussed here are mainly examples of import and relevance in the philosophy of language, it is important to note that the problem of inuitions is not limited solely to this field. The philosophy of language does indeed rely on intuition largely for deciding between two competing theories with appeals to competent language use, but this is obviously not the only field that projects have applied the experimental methodology to. The aforementioned Systma and Machery (2010) experiment is of import to those interested in the philosophy of mind, and as previously stated has vast implications in the field of consciousness. Other papers, such as Alicke et. al. (2011), have built on Knobe (2003) to examine ordinary intuitions on causation in different contexts relating to beneficial and detrimental behavior. Alcike et. al. argue that empirical evidence supports that norm violations are the basis of ordinary causal determinations when non-human agents are considered, and support what they refer to as a culpable-control model of blame (Alicke et. al. 2011, p.670, 673). Under the culpable-control model, people intuitively support ascribing causation to actions with negative effects, and cite Knobe (2003) as one example of this. This runs contrary to Knobe's own interpretation in Hitchcock and Knobe (2009), the norm-violation view, which holds that an agent is deemed causal if they violate the "normal state of affairs" (Alicke et. al. 2011, p. 672). Similar arguments have been made in the fields of metaethics and epistomology, such as those by Sarkissian et. al. (2011) and Weinberg, Nichols, and Stitch (2001), respectively. Sarkissian et. al. argue that the common belief that people generally reject moral rel-

ativism and endorse moral objectivism in their thinking is false, and appeal to intuitions to do so. On the epistomolgy front, Weinberg, Nichols, and Stitch argue that major camps of epistomology are undermined if several empirical hypotheses about epistomology turn out to be true, and that data so far supports some of these hypotheses, although not definitively. The problem, then, seems to be across disciplines of philosophy, and that these problems are not limited to the philosophy of language. Although, I must admit that these aforementioned arguments are not definitive, and a defense could be mounted against them on AAP's behalf. In addition, non-intuitive methodologies could be employed on these topics, such that they no longer remain succeptible to questions about intuition. However, despite this, if projects are to use intuitions, then they should adopt the methodology of positive experimental philosophy for the reasons argued above.

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