

Problem set #7

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This is due on Monday.

We might describe the character of 'I' informally in something like the following way:

For any context c , the semantic value of 'I' in c is the individual who is speaking in c .

(Technically, characters are functions from contexts to intensions, not from contexts to semantic values; so a more precise description of the character of 'I' would say that for any context c , the intension of 'I' in c is a constant function from every world and time to the individual who is speaking in c . We can ignore that for simplicity for purposes of this exercise.)

Similarly, we might say that

For any context c , the semantic value of 'now' in c is the time of c .

and

For any context c , the semantic value of 'here' in c is the location of c .

We know that the demonstrative 'that' is also context-sensitive. Your assignment is to try to describe the character of 'that.' Remember that we are ignoring uses of 'that' as a complementizer, and uses of 'that' as an anaphoric expression, as in

John bought a new vase, but on the way home that vase broke.

Instead we are interested in uses of 'that' like

That is a big dog.

Is that a poodle or an elegant rat?

So your job is to complete the following sentence:

For any context c , the semantic value of 'that' in c is ...