

PETER W HANKS: *On cancellation*

In (Hanks 2007, 2011, 2013, forthcoming) I defend a theory of propositions that locates the source of propositional unity in acts of predication that people perform in thought and speech. On my account, these acts of predication are assertoric or judgmental in character, and they commit the speaker to things being the way they are represented to be in the act of predication. This leads to a problem about negations, disjunctions, conditionals, and other kinds of embeddings. When you assert that  $a$  is  $F$  or  $b$  is  $G$  you do not assert that  $a$  is  $F$ , nor do you commit yourself to  $a$ 's being  $F$ . According to my theory, however, in uttering the disjunction you predicate  $F$  of  $a$ . What is going on?

I account for these cases using the concept of *cancellation*. In uttering the disjunction, the act of predicating  $F$  of  $a$  is cancelled, and when an act of predication is cancelled it does not count as an assertion and does not commit the speaker to anything. But what is it for an act of predication to be cancelled? One immediate concern is that cancelled predication won't provide a unified proposition to be the input to disjunction. In this paper I answer this and related objections by explaining and defending my concept of cancellation.