

The normativity of the truth predicate

by Gunnar Schumann (FernUni Hagen)

Abstract:

Most truth theorists either take “true” to be a descriptive predicate or as more or less semantically redundant. I argue that both views are incorrect, for “true” is a normative predicate. Extending Richard Hares semantic investigations into the meaning of “good” to “true”, I try to show that truth predications have a primarily prescriptive function. Truth predications are mainly used for epistemic commending, not describing. The resulting account is a moderate non-descriptive theory of truth, for “true” also has a descriptive meaning, although only secondarily so. Arguments are delivered to show the primacy of the prescriptive meaning of the truth predicate.