Peregrin, Jaroslav, *Inferentialism: Why Rules Matter*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillian, 2014, pp. viii + 278, £60.00 (hardback).

Inferentialism encapsulates the idea that meaning should not be given representationally by invoking some sort of objects designated by words, but in terms of the inferences in which propositions containing those words figure. In the first part of his new book, Peregrin develops this idea by reference to the works of Frege, Carnap, Wittgenstein, Sellars and Brandom, with particular emphasis on the idea of inferential rules. He here distances himself from the inferential role semantics of Peacocke and Boghossian (§§1.4, 3.2), arguing that a causal account in terms of dispositions is inadequate, and that rules need to be based in a social context of practice and criticism.

The second half of the book concentrates on logical inferentialism. In response to the challenge that Gödel's results entail that rules of inference must inevitably fall short of truth, he observes that Gödel himself showed that his unprovable sentence (of some system of arithmetic) was true by arguing metatheoretically about the system, implicitly appealing to an infinite rule of proof. In a similar way, Peregrin meets Carnap's categoricity worries, that the rules of propositional logic are consistent with non-standard valuations, by admitting multiple-conclusion inferences. Finally, he responds to Prior's challenge that neither inferentialism nor valuations (truth-conditions) can confer meaning, since each presupposes meaningfulness, by suggesting that truth is no more than what is preserved by correct inference. He employs the same move (p.162) to counter what is essentially Etchemendy's main objection to Tarski's attempted reduction of consequence to quantification over all equiform inferences (though surprisingly there is no mention of Etchemendy in the book).

That anti-realist coda aside, which seems too readily accepted and its consequences little explored, the book is a rich source of ideas and argument for both global and local (*viz* logical) inferentialism. In Part I, Peregrin emphasizes the normativity of inference and its evolutionary basis, and the need to include

non-propositional inference (language-entry and –exit transitions) embracing both response to perception and its leading to action. The dominant theme of Part II is the Brandomian claim that linguistic rules are by their very nature implicit, the role of logic being to make inference explicit. The index could be more helpful: a not untypical example is compositionality, frequently discussed in the book (and yet another challenge to inferentialism which Peregrin addresses), not appearing as such (not even by a cross-reference) but hidden under ‘principle –of compositionality’.

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