Jeffrey C. King has proposed an account of *naturalised propositions* which I will call *NP* (King, 2007; King, 2009; King, 2012). NP proposes to answer two questions: (i) What propositions are. (ii) How propositions come to have representational properties. The answer to question i is that propositions are facts of a certain sort and that these facts are interpreted. That speakers can and do interpret the relevant facts is the basis of NP's answer to question ii. In my paper I criticise the answer to question ii by arguing that the facts identified in the the answer to question i are not suitable for being interpreted in the way appealed to in answering question ii. I then discuss two ways in which NP might be amended in order to meet my objection. I argue that neither solves the problem I raise.

In section 1 I summarise NP. NP relies on two central ideas: *interpreted sentences* and *cognitive access* to facts. Any complex of objects standing in a certain relation is a *fact*. Sentences are facts in this sense, their constituents being atomic expressions. A sentence relative to a context has an interpretation which is also a fact, and has the denotations of the sentence's component expressions as constituents. These constituents stand in what NP terms the *propositional relation*. Their doing so is another fact which is the fact that is interpreted and identified with the proposition expressed by the sentence. Speakers interpret the propositional relation in the same way that they interpret the sentential relation. They are in a position to do so because they have cognitive access to the fact in question. This is explained by saying that the fact that is the sentence is a witness for the interpreted sentence which is in turn a witness for the fact that is the proposition expressed. Speakers have cognitive access to the sentences they utter, and cognitive access is preserved across the witnessing relation.

I present my criticism in section 2. My argument is as follows:

i.   A theory of propositions is acceptable only if it entails that for any utterance U of a sentence S in a context C such that P is the proposition expressed by U then P exists.

ii.   NP entails that the existence of P is guaranteed if and only if P is witnessed by the interpretation of some sentence uttered in some context.

iii. In at least some cases the proposition P expressed by an utterance U of a sentence S in a context C is such that P is not witnessed by the interpretation of S.

iv.   So, NP does not meet the condition set out in premise i and is therefore unacceptable.

Premise iii is the key to my argument, and is the focus of the bulk of my paper. Note that *expression* is supposed to cover the various relations between utterances and conveyed propositions that have been described as *what is said*, *explicature*, and *implicature* by theorists of various persuasions.

I distinguish two versions of the argument: *empirical* and *theoretical* based on different ways of understanding premise iii. The empirical version of the argument relies on the claim, defended by some linguists and philosophers of language, that phenomena such as *unarticulated constituents* (UC) (Recanati, 2002) and *non-sentential assertion* (NSA) (Stainton, 2005) show that the logical form (LF) of an uttered sentence does not necessarily contain an element corresponding to each constituent of the proposition expressed. If either of these claims are true then at least sometimes the interpretation of the sentence uttered is not a witness for the proposition expressed. There will therefore be no guarantee that there is any such proposition to be expressed. This is because there is no guarantee that there has ever been a sentence that is a witness for the proposition expressed. In that case there is no such proposition, and even if there had been no speaker would have had cognitive access to it and therefore it would not have representational properties. Because the proponent of NP is appealing to the very structures that these theorists call LFs she must accept this consequence if she grants the empirical claim that there are UCs and/or NSAs.

The issue is complicated because debates over UCs and NSAs are ongoing and it is dialectically important that King himself rejects UCs (King and Stanley, 2007). He does so largely on empirical grounds, suggesting that the answer will be solved by further investigations into syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. So, if the argument against NP is merely empirical it will dissolve into a controversy over subtle linguistic questions the outcome of which is not clear.

What I call the theoretical argument is an attempt to avoid stalemate. I argue that whether or not one thinks that UCs or NSAs are actual they are both possible. By this I mean, drawing on a line of thought suggested by Stainton, that there is every reason to think that there could be a community of language users who communicate in a way such that the UC and/or NSA hypotheses are true of them. All that is required is for the community to deploy certain linguistic structures, which everybody accepts can be generated by the grammars of human natural languages, with certain completely standard communicative intentions. This claim is

extremely plausible, and, as far as I know, none of those theorists who argue that there are in fact no UCs or NSAs have questioned it. I argue that this shows that NP is inadequate as a general account of the nature of propositions because it cannot accommodate phenomena that are intuitively within the scope of such theories and are, if not actual, merely contingently non-actual. The point is that a theory of propositions such as NP is supposed to be a contribution to the study of communication. If there are possible cases of communication that it cannot allow for then it is inadequate. A defender of NP might deny that the circumstances I describe would count as genuine communication, but this move would be worryingly *ad hoc.*

In the remaining sections of the paper I address two responses, which I call the *Platonism* and *logical form* responses, that might be made to the above argument. They are both amendments to NP that depart from King's own view, but which might appeal to those interested in the naturalising project.

Platonism, in this context, is the view that the structures identified as LFs by King are necessary existents. This view is defended by e.g. Katz and Postal (1991). The idea is that every LF generated by a grammar exists. In that case there is no question that the relevant facts will not exist even if there are UCs and/or NSAs. Even if a sentence is never tokened a corresponding LF will exist. The problem for the proponent of NP is that just because an LF exists it does not follow that speakers have cognitive access to it. One reason for this conclusion is that some LFs that are generated by the grammars of human natural languages are such that they cannot be grasped by the speakers of such languages, e.g. because they are too complex. Unless the proponent of NP can explain how speakers come to have cognitive access to some proper subset of these LFs without relying on the claim that they token sentences with such structures then Platonism offers no advantages for resisting my argument. My argument is against the account of cognitive access as much as against the account of existence offered by NP.

Finally, I discuss the possibility that in cases of UCs and NSAs the mechanism by which the proposition expressed is communicated involves the generation of enriched LFs of a sort that guarantee the existence of suitable facts for NP and allows speakers to have access to them. The upshot of such a proposal, drawn from Martí (2006)'s treatment of UC and discussed in Recanati (2010, ch. 4), would be that whenever a proposition is communicated an LF that expresses it is tokened at some stage. This would avoid my objection by showing that there is always a witness for the proposition expressed to which speakers have cognitive access. Drawing on worries about related proposals made in Collins (2007), I argue that such an idea threatens the claim that LFs are structures which can be taken to exist independently of debates about communicated content. Allowing facts about what is communicated to count as evidence for what is going on in LFs, as opposed to considerations internal to syntactic theory, amounts to denying the kind of independent access to syntactic structures that NP requires. In order to succeed in naturalising propositions the NP theorist must appeal only to structures that are independently motivated. This response to my argument violates that constraint.

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