

# Does Propositional Seeing entail Propositional Knowledge?\*

Craig French

December 19, 2011

## Abstract

In his (2010) John Turri puts forward some powerful considerations which suggest that Williamson's (2000) view of knowledge as the most general factive mental state is false. Turri claims that this view is false since it is false that if  $S$  sees that  $p$ , then  $S$  knows that  $p$ . Turri argues that there are cases in which (A)  $S$  sees that  $p$  but (B)  $S$  doesn't know that  $p$ . In response I offer linguistic evidence to suppose that in propositional contexts 'see' doesn't have the sort of meaning (a purely perceptual meaning) which would sustain Turri's claims about the cases he offers (specifically, the (A) verdicts).

## Introduction

Williamson (2000) puts forward a 'modest positive account of the concept [of knowledge]' (p. 33). On that account 'knowing is the most general stative propositional attitude such that, for all propositions  $p$ , necessarily if one has it to  $p$  then  $p$  is true' (p. 39). In Williamson's view this means that if one is in any factive mental state with the content  $p$ , then one knows that  $p$ . So, for instance, if 'you see that it is raining, then you know that it is raining. If you remember that it was raining, then you know that it was raining' (p. 37).

Williamson formulates his claim in a metalinguistic way too. He does so by introducing the notion of a factive mental state operator (FMSO). He notes that

Syntactically, an FMSO  $\phi$  has the combinatorial properties of a verb. Semantically,  $\phi$  is an unanalysable expression; that is,  $\phi$  is not synonymous with any complex expression whose meaning is composed of the meanings of its parts. A fortiori,  $\phi$  is not itself such an expression.  $\phi$  also meets three further conditions.... First,  $\phi$  typically takes as a

---

\*I am very grateful to the two anonymous referees from *Theoria* for extremely helpful comments and guidance. Thanks to John Turri, Lee Walters and Mike Martin for very helpful comments on earlier drafts. Thanks also to Mark Eli Kalderon, Paul Snowdon, and Tom Avery for helpful discussions.

subject a term for something animate and as object a term consisting of ‘that’ followed by a sentence. Second,  $\phi$  is factive, in the sense that the form of inference from ‘ $S\phi$ s that  $A$ ’ to ‘ $A$ ’ is deductively valid.... Third, ‘ $S\phi$ s that  $A$ ’ attributes a propositional attitude to  $S$  (pp. 34–35).

On this view ‘know’, ‘remember’, ‘hear’, ‘see’, and the like are typical FMSOs (or at least have readings on which they function as FMSOs). With this in place, the metalingusitic way of stating Williamson’s thesis regarding knowledge is that: ‘if  $\phi$  is any FMSO, then, ‘ $S\phi$ s that  $A$ ’ entails ‘ $S$  knows that  $A$ .’ (p. 37). I take it that Williamson’s formulations of his thesis in the material and metalingusitic modes are intended to be different ways of expressing the same thesis.

Here the focus will be on just the factive mental state of propositional seeing (states of seeing that  $p$ ), and so ‘see’ when it functions as an FMSO (or, as I’ll sometimes say, ‘see’ in propositional contexts). Given Williamson’s thesis about knowledge, he is committed to what we can call the (propositional) *seeing entailment thesis*:

(SET) If  $S$  sees (can see) that  $p$ , then  $S$  knows that  $p$  (‘ $S$  sees that  $p$ ’ entails ‘ $S$  knows that  $p$ ’).

My focus here will be on a recent attack on (SET). Turri (2010) argues that (SET) is false, and so Williamson’s account of knowledge is false. Turri’s challenge is important in two ways: one has to address it if one wants to defend Williamson’s modest account of knowledge, but also if one wants to defend (SET) as a standalone thesis. Here I defend (SET) from Turri’s arguments.

## 1 Turri’s Arguments

Turri argues against (SET) by presenting three examples in which it is claimed that a subject  $S$  sees that  $p$ , yet doesn’t know that  $p$  (examples similar to Turri’s are put forward in Jackson (1977), p. 161, and McDowell (2002), p. 277). If Turri’s claims about these examples are correct, then we have counterexamples to (SET), and as Turri concludes: ‘Perception can flourish in an environment where knowledge flounders’ (p. 203). What are Turri’s putative counterexamples? Here are two (I leave out the third for space reasons, but it is structurally similar to the other examples and so what I say in the remainder applies to it too):

### 1.1 LINES

The first example Turri presents involves Turri himself being presented with what looks like an instance of the Müller-Lyer illusion. This illusion involves two lines one of which appears longer than the other, even though they are of equal length. When presented with what seems to be an instance of this illusion, with which he is familiar, Turri forms the belief that the bottom line is not longer than the top line. But, it turns out, the bottom line *is* longer. As Turri describes the situation:

But I'd been had. Those lines are not liars. Things really were as they appeared: the bottom line is longer. I—and possibly you as you read along—*saw that the bottom line was longer* all along. But I—and again possibly you—did not believe that it was. Indeed, I reasonably believed that it was not (p. 199, emphasis added).

Turri's claims about this example are that, in it:

- (A) Turri could see that the bottom line was longer.
- (B) Turri did not know that the bottom line was longer.

## 1.2 BARN

In another example Turri makes use of a familiar scenario:

Henry and his son are driving through the country. Henry pulls over to stretch his legs and while doing so regales his son with a list of currently visible roadside items. “That’s a tractor. That’s a combine. That’s a horse. That’s a silo. And that’s a fine barn,” Henry added, pointing to the nearby roadside barn. And indeed Henry *saw that a barn stood nearby*. But unbeknownst to them the locals recently secretly replaced nearly every barn in the county with papier-mâché fake barns. Henry happens to see the one real barn in the whole county. But had he instead set eyes on any of the numerous nearby fakes, he would have falsely believed it was a barn (Turri, p. 202, emphasis added). The example is adapted from Goldman (see his 1976), who credits Carl Ginet).

Turri's claims about this example are that, in it:

- (A) Henry could see that a barn stood nearby.
- (B) Henry did not know that a barn stood nearby.

## 2 Discussion

For Turri's examples to be counterexamples to (SET) Turri's verdicts (the (A) and (B) claims) have to be correct. Turri is quite sensitive to the reasons there are to offer the (B) verdict in each example, and I agree with these verdicts. So let's grant the (B) verdicts. But what about the (A) verdicts? Turri presents them as if they are obviously correct. Why might it seem obvious that the (A) verdicts are true in Turri's examples? Well, first, let's be clear that in (LINES) Turri *looks right at* the lines, and in (BARN) Henry *looks right at* the barn. Now, since there are no *perceptual malfunctions* in these instances (indeed, we can build into the stories that the relevant individuals have excellent eyesight functioning at its best, in normal conditions, and so on), isn't it just *obvious* that in (LINES) Turri *sees* that the bottom

line is longer, and in (BARN) Henry *sees* that there is a barn nearby? There are *epistemic* deficiencies in Turri's examples, but if one is motivated to deny the (A) verdicts on the basis of these deficiencies (and what else is there?), then it seems as if one is equating *ignorance* with *blindness*, and this is manifestly absurd.

In Turri's examples it is obvious that the subjects visually perceive their environments. But what is not obvious is that the subjects in those cases can see *that* *p* (for the relevant proposition). There are different ways of representing visual perception. It might be that we can represent visual perception with factive propositional seeing vocabulary (ascriptions of the form 'S sees that *p*'). But even if that is true, it is not obvious that *that* way of representing visual perception applies in Turri's cases. Take (LINES), for instance, we can suggest, as Williamson does of similar putative counterexamples, that the subject sees *a situation in which the bottom line is longer*. Or we can say that they see the bottom line *as* longer, or simply that they see *the lines*. None of this amounts to the claim that they can see *that* the bottom line is longer—the former ascriptions can be true of the subject even when it is false of the subject that they see that the bottom line is longer. We can say similar things of (BARN). These representations of the subject's situations capture what we want: that they are not *blind*, that they *see* what is before their eyes (despite their ignorance).

Turri (p. 200) considers the distinction between propositional seeing and this other sort of seeing, which, with Turri, we can call 'simple seeing'. He considers the following passage from Williamson:

There is a distinction between seeing that *A* and seeing a situation in which *A*. One difference is that only the former requires the perceiver to grasp the proposition that *A*. A normal observer in normal conditions who has no concept of chess can see a situation in which Olga is playing chess, by looking in the right direction, but cannot see *that* Olga is playing chess, because he does not know what he sees to be a situation in which Olga is playing chess (Williamson (2000), p. 38).

Turri says that the distinction between propositional seeing and simple seeing does not 'discredit' his examples (p. 200): the subjects in his examples do not 'lack any concept featured in the relevant claims, so we cannot properly conclude that lacking relevant concepts would prevent [them] from propositionally seeing...' (p. 200).

Turri is right that if we want to deny that the relevant subjects propositionally see, it won't do just to appeal to the idea that the relevant subjects lack some required concepts—we can just build it into the cases that there are no such lacks. But I'm not, at this stage, *denying* that the subjects propositionally see in these cases. The point I am making at this stage is not intended to discredit Turri's (A) verdicts. It is rather to ask what *motivates* them. This question is pressing since we can capture what is intuitive and obvious in the examples in a way that doesn't require the (A) verdicts. We can do precisely that with *non-factive* perceptual vocabulary, and simple seeing. So what motivates the appeal to *factive* perceptual vocabulary and propositional seeing in Turri's examples?

This question stands, but we should, I now want to argue, be reluctant to accept Turri's (A) verdicts in any case. For the linguistic evidence suggests that when it functions as a FMSO 'see' has a meaning which doesn't sustain Turri's (A) verdicts—which doesn't sustain the ideas, given the details of the cases, that in (LINES) Turri *sees that* the bottom line is longer, and in (BARN) Henry *sees that* a barn is nearby. The linguistic evidence suggests that 'sees that' ascriptions are *knowledge* ascriptions. I will elaborate, qualify, and defend this idea in the next section.

### 3 The Visuo-Epistemic Model of 'See'

It might at first seem odd to suppose that 'see' can be a verb of knowledge, for the most familiar sense of 'see' is a sense in which it indicates visual perception. But 'see' is a massively polysemous verb (Gisborne (2010), p. 118). In a corpus based study Alm-Arvius (1993) distinguishes nine different senses of 'see', and in a recent book Gisborne distinguishes yet more (see Chapter 4 of his (2010)). Some of these senses are perceptual, but not all are (e.g., the natural reading of 'see' in 'Jane was seeing Jack for a while, and now they are to be married' is a relationship or dating reading, not a perceptual reading). One way we have of talking about visual perception employs the verb 'see' with its *prototypical* sense. In that sense 'see' means something like: *perceive visually*.

When 'see' is used in the prototypical sense, its complement is an expression, such as a noun phrase, or a small clause, which denotes a particular perceptible thing (object, event, or whatever). In the prototypical sense, 'see' ascribes a relation of visual perception, such that whatever is denoted by the subject term is said to stand in a relation of visual perception to whatever is denoted by the complement term. For example:

- (1) I can see Jane on the balcony.
- (2) I saw her walking down the street.

But when 'see' functions as a FMSO does it have its prototypical sense? There is linguistic evidence to suggest not. As Gisborne notes, one way of diagnosing polysemy is to 'exploit evidence from selection restrictions' (p. 120). On this score we find syntactic and semantic differences between 'see' as it is used with its prototypical sense in the likes of (1) and (2), and 'see' when it functions as an FMSO. The complements of 'see' in contexts where it functions as a FMSO are THAT-clauses. They are thus (a) of a different syntactic category to the category of complement which 'see' takes when used in the prototypical sense, and (b) there is a semantic difference, for as Gisborne notes, 'the referents of THAT-clauses belong in a different ontological class from things [objects] and events' (p. 120). The referents of THAT-clauses are propositions. (I am here granting Gisborne his assumption that THAT-clauses have referents, although the same point could be made without this assumption). Moreover, another way of diagnosing

polysemy is to look to the *Aktionsart* of a verb. Gisborne argues that the prototypical sense of ‘see’ is temporally *underspecified* (or neutral): ‘it is [in itself] neither stative nor dynamic’ (p. 127). This contrasts with ‘see’ in propositional contexts, which is strictly stative (see also, Gisborne, pp. 183–192, and Alm-Arvius 1993, pp. 21–24). The linguistic evidence, then, clearly points to the conclusion when it functions as a FMSO ‘see’ has a different sense to its prototypical sense.

But none of this suggests that ‘sees that *p*’ ascribes knowledge. So now consider the following examples:

(3) I can see that Jane’s argument is valid.

(4) Jane saw that Peter was right (Gisborne, p. 122).

The natural readings of these examples are ones on which ‘see’ doesn’t have a visual perception sense. Surely (3) and (4) can both be true even when the relevant subjects are blind; ‘see’ here doesn’t represent perception by sight. Moreover, it seems clear that these examples are such as to represent the relevant subjects as *knowledgeable*. (3), (4), and the like seem to represent their subjects as having achieved some knowledgeable insight or understanding with respect to the proposition in question. This suggests that in these examples ‘see’ has an epistemic sense, a sense which implies that the subject knows the relevant proposition. Paraphrase data bears this out. For instance (3) means, roughly: ‘I realize that Jane’s argument is valid’, and (4) means, roughly: ‘Jane understood that Peter was right’ (see Gisborne, pp. 140–148). We can’t construe ‘realize’ or ‘understand’ here in such a way as the relevant subjects aren’t represented as knowledgeable.

On the basis of this we might try to run the following argument to challenge Turri’s arguments. In Turri’s cases the relevant subjects lack knowledge (all sides can agree—that is, Turri’s (B) verdicts are true). In (LINES) Turri doesn’t *know* that the bottom line is longer, and in (BARN) Henry doesn’t *know* that there is a barn nearby. But when it functions as a FMSO, ‘see’ has a sense which is such that ‘sees that *p*’ ascriptions are *knowledge* ascriptions. Therefore, in (LINES) Turri doesn’t *see that* the bottom line is longer, and in (BARN) Henry doesn’t *see that* there is a barn nearby (though, of course, Turri still *sees* the bottom line, and Henry still *sees* the barn nearby). Thus, Turri’s (A) verdicts are false.

This argument is, I think, along the right lines, but as it stands it is too quick. When we consider more examples where ‘see’ functions as a FMSO we find that we can make a distinction. There are cases which fall into a cognitive/intellectual category, seeing with, so to speak, the *mind’s eye*—*Cartesian* propositional seeing. Clearly, the states picked out in (3) and (4) fall into this category of propositional seeing. But, there can also be states of *perceptual* propositional seeing, and a separate sense of ‘see’ which picks such states out. Not only does this seem to be intuitively correct—for we do employ propositional seeing vocabulary to report on visual perception—there is also a further aspect of the polysemy of ‘see’ even *within* the class of occurrences of ‘see’ in propositional contexts which bears this out.

There are two claims here: first that there are two propositional senses of ‘see’, and second that one of these is perceptual. Regarding the first claim, Gisborne

argues that

there are two stative senses of ['see'] that can have a propositional complement and that there are linguistic ways of differentiating them (p. 146)

Gisborne presents evidence for this in the form of the following examples:

(5) Jane saw through the window that Peter had crossed safely.

(6) !Jane saw through the window that Peter was right.

Some occurrences of 'see' in propositional contexts can be embellished with certain prepositions, yet some can't—the occurrence in (5) is fine, yet (6) is infelicitous. The question is, why is there this difference? Gisborne's answer is that there are distinct senses of 'see' within the class of occurrences of 'see' in propositional contexts. If the sense of 'see' was the same in both cases, we shouldn't get these differences in felicity—that is, given sameness of sense, then if (5) sounds fine then (6) should too, and if (6) sounds odd, then (5) should too. So there is clear evidence that there are distinct senses of 'see' within the class of propositional uses of 'see'.

But what of the second claim, namely, the claim that one of the senses of 'see' in propositional contexts is a *perceptual* sense? The examples help to support this claim too. Visual perception is directional, it involves looking in a certain direction (in the sense that it involves one's eyes pointing in a certain direction). Unsurprisingly then, when we attribute visual perception to a subject, we can embellish such attributions by representing the direction of the subject's gaze. When we use 'see' in its prototypical sense we can do this. For instance we can say things like: 'I was looking through the window and I saw him cross the road' and 'I saw the bird through my binoculars'. Those are non-propositional cases, but in (5) we have a propositional, and so *non-prototypical* occurrence of 'see' which can also be embellished by representing a gaze, or direction of looking. The fact that some propositional occurrences of 'see' can be embellished with *such* directional phrases—phrases which represent a visual perspective or point of view from which one directs a gaze—is evidence that those occurrences are like the prototypical 'see' in that they ascribe visual perception to their subjects. On the basis of this evidence we seem to have two propositional senses of 'see'. Let's call one the *purely epistemic sense* (familiar from examples (3) and (4)), and the other the *perceptual propositional sense* (from example (5)).

So far, then, we have discussed three senses of 'see'

The prototypical sense (examples (1) and (2)).

The purely epistemic sense (examples (3) and (4)).

The perceptual propositional sense (example (5), and many other examples below).

I began this section by suggesting that ‘sees that  $p$ ’ ascriptions are knowledge ascriptions. We have seen how this is true of such ascriptions where the purely epistemic sense of ‘see’ is operative. However, our interest here is in the *perceptual* propositional sense of ‘see’ which, I’ve just argued, is a *distinct* sense. Surely, one might suggest, in *that* sense ‘sees that  $p$ ’ ascriptions are not knowledge ascriptions. If this is so, then the argument given above, for the perceptual cases we are interested in, doesn’t work (for that argument requires that ‘sees that  $p$ ’ ascriptions are knowledge ascriptions).

To block the argument in this way requires us to think of the perceptual propositional sense as a *purely* perceptual sense (and so, in that respect, just like the prototypical sense). But although the perceptual propositional sense *is* a perceptual sense, the evidence suggests that it is not a *purely* perceptual sense. It seems that the perceptual propositional sense of ‘see’ is both a perceptual sense *and* an epistemic sense. How are we to model this?

The way to think of this is in terms of what I’ll call the *visuo-epistemic model*. On the visuo-epistemic model the perceptual propositional sense of ‘see’ has a meaning which, as Gisborne puts it, is subject to conflation. That is, it has a meaning which conflates the meaning associated with the prototypical sense of ‘see’, and the meaning associated with the purely epistemic sense of ‘see’ (p. 146). On the visuo-epistemic model ‘see’ in the perceptual propositional sense is like ‘see’ in the purely epistemic sense, in that it is a verb of knowledge. So ‘ $S$  sees that  $p$ ’ in both of these senses represents  $S$  as knowing that  $p$ , or being in a state where they are knowledgeable with respect to  $p$ . But, on the visuo-epistemic view, the perceptual propositional sense of ‘see’ is also perceptual (it ascribes visual perception). How does this work?

The key to seeing how this works is to realize that ‘see’ in propositional contexts where it has a perceptual sense is *evidential*. That is, it functions to specify the source of the information in the THAT-clause. But this works in such a way as the prototypical sense of ‘see’ gets into the picture, so to speak. For ‘see’ in this sense functions to specify that the source of the information in the THAT-clause is *visual*. There are examples where the visual evidential function of ‘see’ seems to be quite explicit. For instance, Gisborne (p. 146) gives:

(7) Jane saw in the paper that the government is on the ropes.

The natural reading of (7) is one on which it tells us that the information in the THAT-clause has a visual source.

In representing subjects as knowledgeable on the basis of *vision*, on the visuo-epistemic model ‘see’ ascribes visual perception, it is thus a genuinely perceptual sense, if not a *purely* perceptual sense. It doesn’t ascribe perception in the way that the prototypical ‘see’ does, it works, rather, as follows. Consider:

(8) Jane can see that it is raining.

(8) is true if and only if for some state or episode of visual perception,  $v$ , of which Jane is the subject, Jane knows that it is raining on the basis of  $v$ . It is not part of the semantics of (8), on the visuo-epistemic model, that it ascribes a *specific* type

of state or episode of visual perception to Jane. In a context one may *communicate*, with a use of (8), which specific state of visual perception Jane is in. One may use (8) to report that Jane knows that it is raining on the basis of the fact that she sees *the rain*, but also on the basis of the fact that she sees *raindrops on the window* or *the rain falling*, or *John* (who is drenched), and so on. On the visuo-epistemic model, which specific type of state of visual perception (if any) one means to talk about is not semantically encoded. There is no particular thing *x*, such that a use of (8) semantically singles out *x* as the object of Jane's visual perception.

Accordingly, the propositional perceptual sense of 'see' is unlike the prototypical sense, for prototypical seeing ascriptions are typically specific. Consider, a simple example:

(9) Jack saw Jane.

Suppose a use of (9) involves the prototypical sense of 'see', as such (9) ascribes to Jack a state or episode of visual perception. In the relevant context, (9) picks out a state or episode of visual perception of which Jack is the subject and of which Jane is the object. One thus ascribes to Jack a specific type of visual experience.

Putting the pieces together, on the visuo-epistemic model of the perceptual propositional sense of 'see', the relevant sentences of the form '*S* sees (can see) that *p*' represent *S* as *knowledgeable* with respect to *p* on the basis of *vision* (the emphasized elements capture the moving parts of the story, the epistemic, evidential, and prototypical aspects). In this sense 'see' is primarily a verb of knowledge, it is thus not a *purely* perceptual sense. It is, though, a genuinely perceptual sense, for it ascribes visual perception, albeit not quite in the way that the prototypical 'see' does.

This proposal makes good sense of paraphrase data, for instance consider the following examples:

(10) Jane can see that the book is blue.

(11) Jack could see that it was a pigeon.

(12) Jill saw that it was Boris, once he took off his mask.

Where (10), (11) and (12) have the visuo-epistemic sense of 'see' they are like sentences which involve the purely epistemic sense in that they represent their subjects as knowledgeable, but they are also evidential in that they represent the source of that epistemic status as visual. This, I take it, is why we find the following paraphrases natural: For (7): 'Jane knows, by the sense of sight [by visual means, on the basis of vision, etc] that the book is blue', for (8): 'Jack knew, by looking, that it was a pigeon', or, 'Jack recognized, from the way it looked, that it was a pigeon', for (9): 'Jill realized that it was Boris, once he took off his mask'.

The purely epistemic sense is a distinct sense to the perceptual propositional sense. But we should be reluctant to think of these senses as radically different. There are obvious syntactic similarities, and the paraphrase data suggests semantic similarities. The visuo-epistemic model captures the similarity between these

senses well. If we deny that ‘*S* sees that *p*’ (in the perceptual propositional sense) entails ‘*S* knows that *p*’, then we either (a) need to reconcile this with the fact that the perceptual propositional sense is similar to the purely epistemic sense (with a model other than the visuo-epistemic model), or (b) we need to show why we shouldn’t think of the perceptual propositional sense as being so similar to the purely epistemic sense. Thus, one who denies the entailment faces this explanatory challenge.

I haven’t said anything designed to *establish* the visuo-epistemic model of the perceptual propositional sense of ‘see’. But I hope to have presented it in a good light on the basis of supporting linguistic evidence. In summary, there are cases where ‘see’ has a visual evidential function, paraphrase data supports the visuo-epistemic proposal, and the model makes good sense of how the perceptual propositional sense is similar to both the prototypical sense of ‘see’ and the purely epistemic sense of ‘see’. How does this bear on Turri’s arguments against (SET)?

## 4 Turri’s (A) Verdicts

Consider now the following example:

Jack is driving through the country. He knows there is just one barn in the area, and he has to deliver a package to it. He comes up to a point where he sees some rutted tracks which are of the kind (he knows) that inevitably terminate in a barn. At this point, Jack can’t see the barn itself (as it is hidden behind the bushes), but he sees the rutted tracks, and thereby sees that there is a barn there.<sup>1</sup>

In this example we have an utterance of

(13) Jack can see that there is a barn there.

Intuitively, the utterance of (13) involves an epistemic sense of ‘see’; the claim is that Jack knows that there is a barn there. But in this context (13) doesn’t involve the *purely* epistemic sense of ‘see’ (this doesn’t seem to be sufficiently similar to the clear cases of Cartesian propositional seeing, where one can, e.g., see that the argument is valid). What (13) seems to say is that Jack knows, by the sense of sight, that there is a barn there. It is not part of the semantic content of (13) that it ascribes a specific state of visual perception to Jack. But it is clear in the context that the means by which Jack knows that there is a barn there is his visual perception of the rutted tracks. But (13) could just as well have been true if Jack had been in some other state of visual perception, e.g., one in which he saw *the barn*, or the *shadow it cast*, and so on.

But now in Turri’s (BARN) example, we seem to have the same sense of ‘see’ as in the above example:

---

<sup>1</sup>I owe this very helpful example, and many other helpful comments, to a referee for *Theoria*.

(14) Henry could see that a barn stood nearby.

But if (14) involves the same sense of ‘see’ as (13), then what (14) says is that Henry knew (could tell) by the sense of sight that a barn stood nearby. But then, given the details of the case, (14) is false. This is not because Henry fails to *see*—he doesn’t, he sees the barn. It is because what Henry sees doesn’t enable him to *know* that there is a barn nearby—because he is, unknowingly, in a county populated with fake barns.

Turri might suggest that (13) and (14) involve distinct senses of ‘see’, such that (14) comes out true in the case he describes. But this claim would need linguistic evidence. It is not at all clear why we should think that there is an additional perceptual propositional sense of ‘see’ (and as Grice once remarked, we shouldn’t multiply senses beyond necessity). Perhaps instead Turri could deny the visuo-epistemic model, and claim that (13) and (14) involve a single perceptual propositional sense of ‘see’, where that sense is such that (14) comes out true in the case he describes. But then what is that sense, and how is to be modelled if not in terms of the visuo-epistemic model? Moreover, if Turri were to make this move, he would have to undermine the visuo-epistemic model which is, I hope to have shown, at least *prima facie* very plausible.

So the challenge presented to Turri earlier still stands: in Turri’s cases the subjects lack knowledge. However, Turri wants to suggest that in (LINES) Turri *sees that* the bottom line is longer, and in (BARN) Henry *sees that* there is a barn nearby. The sense of ‘see’ operative in these claims is the perceptual propositional sense of ‘see’. But, given the visuo-epistemic model, in these cases ‘see’ has a sense which is such that ‘sees that *p*’ ascriptions are *knowledge* ascriptions. Therefore, in (LINES) Turri doesn’t *see that* the bottom line is longer, and in (BARN) Henry doesn’t *see that* there is a barn nearby (though, of course, Turri still *sees* the bottom line, and Henry still *sees* the barn nearby). Thus, Turri’s (A) verdicts are false.

I offer these considerations in the spirit of challenges to Turri’s arguments against (SET) and Williamson’s view of knowledge. Whether or not one who is sympathetic to Turri’s position is moved by the considerations I have presented, I hope to have at least articulated a form of rational resistance to Turri’s arguments. If we think of the perceptual propositional sense of ‘see’ in terms of the visuo-epistemic model—which is plausible—then we can reject Turri’s (A) verdicts. None of this requires that we deny what is obvious about Turri’s examples. In them, subjects do visually perceive. But they don’t propositionally see, because they don’t *know* on the basis of that visual perception.

I have not argued that there are no such states as the ones Turri suggests. That is, I haven’t argued that there are no states of seeing which satisfy Williamson’s criteria for being factive stative propositional attitudes, yet which don’t entail knowledge. To establish that one would need to go beyond linguistic considerations. I have questioned Turri’s grounds for thinking that there *are* such states. If there are such states, it is not obvious that they are the familiar states in which we see that *p*, contra what Turri suggests.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Thanks to a referee for *Theoria* for helping me to clarify this aspect of my argument.

I suspect that Turri supposes that the perceptual propositional sense of ‘see’ is a purely perceptual sense—a sense which *just* ascribes visual perception—and that propositional seeing is a sort of visual experience (as it is in McDowell (1994)). With these assumptions in place Turri’s (A) verdicts seem plausible. But what I have said here should help us to see that these assumptions are contentious, and so Turri’s (A) verdicts are at least not obviously correct. If the perceptual propositional sense of ‘see’ is the visuo-epistemic sense, then it is *not* a purely perceptual sense, and it denotes not a sort of visual experience (i.e., a factive visual experience with propositional content), but knowledge which is based on visual experience.

## References

- Alm-Arvius, C. (1993). *The English Verb See: A Study in Multiple Meaning*. Gothenburg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis.
- Gisborne, Nikolas (2010). *The Event Structure of Perception Verbs*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Goldman, Alvin (1976). “Discrimination and Perceptual Knowledge”. In: *Journal of Philosophy* 73, pp. 771–791.
- Jackson, Frank (1977). *Perception: A Representative Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McDowell, John (1994). *Mind and World*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- (2002). “Responses”. In: *Reading McDowell on Mind and World*. Ed. by Nicholas H. Smith. London: Routledge, pp. 269–305.
- Turri, John (2010). “Does Perceiving Entail Knowing?” In: *Theoria* 76.3, pp. 197–206.
- Williamson, Timothy (2000). *Knowledge and its Limits*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.