Remarks on Depiction Verbs   Ede Zimmermann

A. Motivation

(1)   John is looking for a unicorn.
(2)   John painted a unicorn.
(i)   both allow for a non-specific construal.
(ii)   both can report relations between existing and (specific) non-existent objects

(i)   x Rs an N
∴   Some (specific) individual is Red by x

(i)   x Rs an N
∴   There exists an N

(ii)   x Rs an N
        Every N is an M
        Every M is an N
∴   x Rs an M

B.   Readings of "paint" (as a transitive verb)

extensional
x paints y <=> x covers y with paint
(<=> PAINT(x,y))

-       creation
x paints a Y <=> x creates a Y by painting
(<=> (Ez) [PAINT(x,z) CAUSE BECOME(Y(z))])

-       depiction
x paints a Y <=> x creates a Y-representation by painting
(<=> (Ez) [PAINT(x,z) CAUSE BECOME(Y-representation(z))])

C. Pictorial Content

[weak Propositionalism: Any content can be defined in terms of propositional content]

(P)   *Strong propositionalism*
Any content is a proposition, i.e. grasping content can always be explained in terms of grasping propositions

Parsons's Hamlet Ellipsis

"x paints a Q" means "x paints* that there is a Q"
(paints* is an underlying predicate holding between x and a proposition p just in case x creates a picture the content of which implies p").

<u>Sceptic's analysis</u>
"x paints a Q means" "x paints* that something looks like a Q"

<u>Larson's Paraphrase:</u>
"x paints a Q" means "x paints* that there is a Q in front of x"

<u>De se analysis</u>
"x paints a Q" means "x paints$^+$ that there is a Q in front of him*"

<u>Counterfactual analysis</u> (tentative)
"x paints a Q" is true iff x creates a picture by painting the content of which is a sub-property of being a z sucht that, for any (normallysighted) y, if a Q were in front of y, then x would be a visual alternative of x"

<u>D. Specific Reading</u>
… by Kaplanian *de re*:
"x paints a Q" means "for some y: Q(y), and x is (suitably) related to y by R, and x paints* that there is a Q in front of him* and related to him by R".

NB: Suitaility implies uniqueness.

<u>Some references</u>
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