Global Expressivism and the Puzzle of Truth-Apt Sentences

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Any good theory of truth and meaning should provide an account of *truth-apt sentences*, that is, the class of sentences that are apt for evaluation as true or false. The classical view, which embraces the force-content distinction (FCD), proposes that truth-apt sentences are *force-less* propositional representations. I argue in §1 that the classical view is untenable. In §2, I outline two alternative views: *(a)* truth-apt sentences are asserted sentences and *(b)* they are utterances defined by certain inferential practices. I argue these conceptions fail. In §3-5, I develop an adequate theory using *global expressivism* (GE). In GE, FCD is repudiated and we formulate a theory of truth-apt sentences using an expressivist treatment of truth and the concept of *proto-assertion*, that is, sentence utterances conceptually dependent on assertion but not assertions.

1. The Classical View

The classical view about truth-apt sentences is built on acceptance of the Force-content distinction (FCD). According to FCD, illocutionary acts, acts like assertions, orders, optatives, etc., are divided into two components. The *content* is the truth-conditional content of the sentence and the *force* corresponds to the *use* to which the speaker U puts that content. On this understanding a standard analysis of assertion looks like this – here *<P>* is an abstract state-of-affairs, viz., a condition about how things might be, which may or may not obtain:

> *Content*: A truth-conditional content *<P>*.
>
> *Force*: A communicative intention to manifest belief that *P*.

Belief-states in turn have a two-part structure. They comprise a representation of *<P>* and a kind of *mental assent* to *<P>*'s obtaining. The belief-attitude has a *direction of fit* contrary to that of desire (Searle 1983). It seems that truth-apt sentences include those that are asserted

but also those that are unasserted and embedded in logical compounds or merely entertained. If so, given FCD, it seems we should accept:

> ***Classical-View***: A truth-apt sentence is a (*force-less*) sentence S that has $<P>$ as its truth-conditions.

This is the classical view of the truth-apt sentence (see Searle 1969).

Although deeply entrenched current semantic theorizing, I now want to show that **Classical-view** is untenable. The problem is what is it for S in the mouth of a particular speaker to have $<P>$ as its truth-conditions? In what follows, I consider five answers to this question. S has $<P>$ as its truth-conditions for speaker U iff:

> M_1: It follows from the basic semantic rules of U's language that S is true iff $<P>$ is the case.

> M_2: It's part of U's language habits to utter S intending that it to be true iff $<P>$ is the case.

> M_3: It's a convention that U produces S in an assertion only if U believes/knows $<P>$ is the case.

> M_4: S *represents* or *pictures* the state of affairs $<P>$ in U's language.

> M_5: U's production of S causally co-varies with the fact that P.

Although M_1-M_5 are a reasonably representative sample of views in the literature, they all face decisive objections.

The problem with M_1 is that it assumes we can stipulate that a certain syntactic string, S, has truth-conditions (and thus is truth-apt). However, we cannot stipulate any such thing. That's because it is a metaphysical fact about meaning that S could only be true/false because S already means $<P>$. Sentences are true/false because reality is a certain way and they mean something. If sentence S is true under any circumstances, it's because some state of affairs $<P>$ obtains, and S has certain truth-conditions. S's having truth-conditions implies that S is

true under a range of circumstances and false under others. But it's having truth-conditions cannot be the result of stipulation that it will be true under such and such circumstances. Rather S's having truth-conditions must be constituted by some real fact about its use.

M_2 assumes that merely intending that something be so can make it so. I can only intend that the chair be sat upon if the chair is capable of being sat upon. Likewise, I cannot intend that S be capable of being true, unless it's the kind of thing that could be true. But that requires that it be truth-apt. M_2 is then untenable.

M_3 has two issues. M_3 is wrong as it stands. Rather, we should say: it's S on a given interpretation that is asserted only if U believes/knows that P. However, S's having a certain interpretation assumes that S is treated as having $<P>$ as its truth-conditions. If so, M_3 is circular. Secondly, from the fact that U has a certain practice of using S in assertion, nothing follows about the content of tokens of S that are not asserted.

M_4 is that S *represents* or *pictures* $<P>$. What is representing/picturing? S is not a referring term picking out a state of affairs, as in 'the state of affairs that P'. Representing/picturing might mean that there is an isomorphism between elements of S and those of $<P>$. So, 'O is F' pictures $<O$ is $F>$ because 'O' denotes O, 'F' denotes F and the concatenation of 'O' with 'F' denotes the combination of O and F in the state of affairs. But this conception implies that 'O is F' is a referring term denoting $<O$ is $F>$, which it isn't.

M_5, over-simplifying somewhat, proposes that production of S, overt or sub-vocal, is a reliable manifestation of the fact that P. We might say it's a *sign* for the fact in the way that a tree's growth rings are signs for the tree's life. If so, given a pattern of causal co-variation of S's production with certain kinds of fact, S can be said to represent that P and so have $<P>$ as its truth-conditions (see Horwich 2005). There are several problems with this causal-co-variation model. First, it's hard to see how the causal co-variation model is generalizable. It's not applicable to mathematical, nomological or logical truths because in these domains there is no co-variation. Secondly, patterns of co-variation in themselves do not seem to determine truth-conditions because of speaker error (see Kripke 1981).

Finally, causal co-variation (M_5) does not deliver truth-conditions even if it constitutes S's representational content, since representation is arguably not sufficient for

truth-conditions. All illocutionary acts involve production of sentences representing how things are in some sense, but they are not thereby truth-apt. In uttering sincerely 'if only Joe would leave', U represents her desire that Joe leave. Or in uttering 'Joe, leave!', U represents her desire that Joe leave straight away. These utterances represent mental states: they are signs for facts (obtaining states of affairs). Why then are these utterances not truth-apt utterances about U's mental states? Clearly, orders and optatives aren't truth-apt. That suggests that acts of representing how-things-are are not truth-apt as such.

There is another dimension to this problem of misplaced truth-aptness. On the classical view, sentences of all moods have truth-conditional content. The imperative, 'Joe, leave!' has a *content* – the truth-conditional content that Joe will leave – and a force – a desire that an audience (Joe) make it true. So, when U utters 'Joe, Leave!', U is producing a truth-apt sentence true just in case Joe leaves since that's the content of the imperative. So, why isn't the imperative truth-apt and true just in case Joe leaves? Orders, questions, optatives, etc., are not truth-apt. So, if orders and questions have representational content, then clearly representing a state-of-affairs cannot be sufficient for truth-aptness. (See Price 1989 and Barker 2004).

If the fact that S is used to represent the obtaining of $<P>$ does not render S truth-apt, we need to find some additional, necessary condition for S to be truth-apt. A sophisticated proposal is that the additional condition is S's *embeddability* (see Wright 1992). All illocutionary acts involve uttering sentences S representing states-of-affairs, but only those where S is also embeddable in certain compounds are truth-apt, summed up:

> **Wright**: A sentence S is truth-apt if S represents a state-of-affairs $<P>$ and S is
>
> embeddable in antecedents of conditionals, negations and belief-attributions.

The sentences we use to produce orders are not embeddable in antecedents of conditionals and cannot appear in belief-attributions. That's why they're not truth-apt. Illocutionary acts involve a commitment to how things are, but only assertions involve such commitments using truth-apt (embeddable) sentences.

Does ***Wright*** provide the classical approach with a tenable theory of truth-aptness? It doesn't. One problem concerns which sentences are in fact embedded in the pattern specified in ***Wright***? Call this pattern ***W***-embeddability. Evidently, we embed 'Joe ought to leave', but not 'Leave (Joe)!'. This suggests that the rule we follow is that sentences with declarative syntax are ***W***-embeddable. But, in fact, this won't work. Take the declarative: 'You will leave on the train tomorrow'. On its non-truth-conditional, imperatival reading, it's not ***W***-embeddable – though it can appear in the consequent of a conditional. Of course, one might respond that it's not ***W***-embeddable on that reading because in its self-standing use it's an order. But this won't help ***Wright***. That's because we want ***Wright*** to tell us what orders are. Orders are meant to be sentences representing speaker's desires that are not ***W***-embeddable. That precludes saying it's not ***W***-embeddable because it's used as an order. Similarly, 'I order Joe to leave' qua performative is not ***W***-embeddable but is embeddable qua description usable in an assertion, as in when I describe a planned set of actions: 'The plan is this. I stand up. I order Joe to leave, etc.'. Again, one cannot say it's not ***W***-embeddable because it has a performative reading since we want to say that it's having a performative reading resides in it's not being ***W***-embeddable.

To conclude, the rule for ***W***-embeddability cannot be declarative syntax. But it's unclear what the rule is. Without a rule, what guides speakers about what to ***W***-embed? The best rule we might come up with is this: truth-apt sentences ***W***-embed. But if that's so, ***Wright*** is circular as an account of truth-aptness.

Another issue with M_5 is that it suggests that belief states are signs for facts and that's why they are truth-apt. However, the mere fact that a state or act is a sign for a fact is insufficient for truth. My shouting 'ouch' is also a sign of a fact, but that does not make the utterance truth-apt. So why are beliefs truth-apt? We might propose that belief states have mentalese truth-apt sentences as their vehicle of content. That's why they are truth-apt. But then they are truth-apt just because the mentalese vehicle of content is. Why can't we say the same thing about desires and hopes, etc.? I can express a hope by uttering 'I hope that S', where S is a truth-apt sentence. So, if beliefs have truth-apt sentences as vehicles of their content, the same seems to hold for hopes. But hopes are not truth-apt.

In the light of these concerns with M_1-M_5 we might make more radical proposals. One is that embedded sentences are only truth-apt because they are interpreted as potential assertions. But again, this won't work. The declarative, 'You will leave on the train' given an imperatival interpretation, has potential for assertion, but it's not truth-apt. Moreover, why should mere potential give us truth-aptness rather than potential truth-aptness?

Another idea is that embedded sentences are meaningful because they represent states-of-affairs, but they are not truth-apt: only asserted-sentences and believed mentalese-sentences are. However, the idea that meaningful, declarative sentences like 'Snow is white' are not truth-apt as such is implausible. Clearly it's a category error to suppose that the phrase 'the whiteness of snow' is truth-apt. We are now supposing something comparable holds for declarative sentences, which are simply the wrong kind of linguistic entity to be true or false. Surely, this is wrong.

2. Acts: Hanks and Brandom

Our reflections on the classical view indicate that it lacks a tenable theory of truth-apt sentences. Where do we go from here? I now look briefly at two positions that at least claim to overthrow the classical view: *(a)* Hanks's (2015) conception that truth-apt sentences are just assertions and *(b)* Brandom's (1996) inferentialist conception. I argue that both are flawed.

Hanks's conception is to cut the guardian knot of FCD. For Hanks there are no acts of unasserted sentences with truth-conditions.

> **Hanks**: Truth-apt sentences are simply asserted sentences. For S to mean that P is just for S to be asserted.

Hanks (2015) seems to embrace **Hanks** for the following reason. For Hanks, assertions are acts of *predication*. Vocabulary aside, his view is essentially that an assertion is the production of S with a commitment to a state-of-affairs obtaining. Moreover, for Hanks, truth is a form of correctness. Correctness only applies to acts with commitments to how things are.

Truth-bearers then must be acts carrying commitments to states-of-affairs obtaining. But the acts that carry such commitments are the assertions. So truth-apt sentences are asserted sentences.

The argument for *Hanks* is open to question. Why should we think of truth as a form of correctness? Clearly correct assertions should be true. That implies that truth is, at the very least, a component of the correctness of assertions. But it does not follow that truth is itself a form of correctness and that truth-apt sentences must be asserted sentences. Suppose one is a minimalist about truth. Then there is simply no implication that only assertions can be true. One might insist (contra minimalism) that truth is successful representation of fact (obtaining states-of-affairs), and that only sentences used with commitments to facts can be deemed successful representations (if the facts represented obtain). But what compelling argument is there that this is the right view of truth?

The idea of truth as successful representation goes with the idea that assertions are acts of commitment to facts. However, we have already seen that such acts cannot be truth-apt as such. All illocutionary acts involve commitments to facts. Hanks also says that assertions are utterances expressing attitudes with mind-to-world direction-of-fit. But direction of fit is entirely mysterious (see Sobel and Copp 2001). Evidently, we want to say assertions are correct just in case they represent facts. We don't count orders correct just in case what they represent is the case. But why? Invoking direction-of-fit labels rather than solves the problem.

Hanks also faces obvious counterexamples. Cannot unasserted, embedded sentences be truth-apt? So how can *Hanks* be right? There are several options for Hanks to address this concern. One might propose – as Hanks (2015, 2019) does – that embedded sentences are asserted but their assertoric force is somehow *cancelled*. The problem with this idea is that for Hanks *force* is just the fact that a sentence is produced with commitment to fact. If that's cancelled, what's left of the assertion, viz., the truth-bearer? There's no wriggle room here. *Hanks* implies that truth-apt sentences, even if embedded, are assertions, viz., acts of commitment to facts. But embedded sentences it seems involve no such commitments.

Another response is that in embedded contexts the speaker U performs pretend assertions and indicates thereby an assertion-type that's truth-apt. The problem with this idea

is that embedded sentences are still only performed in pretense acts and not asserted. If so, by **Hanks**, they lack truth-conditions. Schmitz (manuscript) supposes that compounds are higher-level acts displaying embedded assertions. The embedded sentences are really asserted, and so do involve commitment to facts, but somehow U is not owning the commitments. One might understand this as the idea that U produces the assertion as a proxy for someone else. But what's is performing such a proxy act and how is it truth-apt? If it's only the assertion that's truth-apt, and not the embedded utterance that's the proxy act, then we still don't have truth-apt embedded sentences.

Finally, the **Hanks**-proponent might deny that embedded sentences are ever truth-apt, only self-standing asserted sentences are. But we have already rejected that view in §1. I conclude, that **Hanks** is at the very least deeply problematic.

Brandom

Perhaps the problem is our attempt to explain truth-aptness in terms of representation. Brandom (1996) is well-known as someone who rejects the idea that representing states-of-affairs is the central notion in explaining semantic content. Instead Brandom emphasizes inference. Assertion is linked to reason-giving thus:

> **Brandom**: U asserts that *S* iff *(i)* U undertakes to justify *S*, if asked to and *(ii)* permits speakers to use *S* as a premise in arguments.

The idea is that unasserted sentences in compounds are associated with a practice of assertion and so with inference potentials, and thus truth-apt. So ultimately a truth-apt sentence is a sentence with a prescribed inference potential.

Brandom's **Brandom** looks questionable. All speech-acts arguably meet condition *(i)*. If U issues an order, 'Joe, leave!', U will undertake to justify it if asked to. We don't use orders as premises in formal arguments. Still U's order may lead H to conclude that U doesn't like Joe. We might tweak **Brandom** here. We could propose that assertions are acts in which speakers produce *S with the purpose* of manifesting an inferential disposition. In orders, speakers don't have such a purpose. Theirs is just to express a desire that someone do something. Even if this works, we are left with the question of why acts with this purpose

would be truth-apt. Brandom claims the truth-predicate is just *prosentential*. To assert that *S* is true is just to reissue *S*. But then, why does that not apply to orders? I might say an order is true thereby expressing a commitment to reissuing the order. Why is truth restricted to assertions in the way that it is?

A second issue is that **Brandom** is couched in terms of sentences being justified and used as premises. But surely it's asserted, meaningful sentences that are so used. To enter into inferences a sentence must be meaningful. One might contend that inference patterns involve sentences, devoid of meaning, appearing in causally constrained patterns of utterances. I don't think that is inference. Or, one might suggest that sentences entering into inferential relations can do so just by expressing mental states. But what were these mental states? If they are beliefs, then they are already truth-apt. If so, truth-aptness is not explained.

A third concern is unasserted embedded sentences. In embedded sentences U does not produce *S* ready to give reasons, so how are they truth-apt? One response is that embedded sentences are potential assertions. But we face the same issue already noted in §1. How does being potentially-used-in-assertion make a sentence truth-apt rather than merely potentially truth-apt? We might suggest that *S*'s truth-aptness resides in the fact that it's potentially produced in an act – assertion – that's truth-apt. But this analysis is a cheat. It just means embedded sentence truth-aptness is the potentiality to have the real truth-aptness of assertions. It's not real truth-aptness after all.

3. Global Expressivism

A viable theory of truth-aptness has so far eluded us. We have not yet found an adequate theory of why assertions and beliefs, but not orders and wishes, are truth-apt. Nor have we explained how sentences in logical compounds can be truth-apt. I now turn to a completely different approach that delivers an account. This is the *global expressivism* (GE) framework of Barker (2004, 2007, 2021). In GE assertion is not explained in terms of a force-operation on a content. Rather, we propose an *expressivist* treatment of assertion. Furthermore, once this expressivist treatment of assertion is set up, we naturally develop the concept of an act I call

proto-assertion. Proto-assertions are neither assertions nor *force*-less sentences representing states-of-affairs.

I now sketch GE. GE is animated by two ideas. First, GE proceeds by generalizing value-expressivism to all domains of talk. According to value-expressivism, value-utterances express affective-states, viz., non-cognitive states, that is, mental states that are neither beliefs nor truth-apt. GE is not the idea that all assertions express affective-states (see Schroeder 2007). Rather, it's the idea that all assertions express non-cognitive, non-truth-apt mental states. I call the mental states expressed by all assertions *Π-states*. I use a bland term without folk-psychological connotation, since they are not beliefs or subjective probability states, etc. The Π-states expressed by value-sentences are essentially linked to affective-states, but others are not. Your assertions about colors, mathematics, or causation, express Π-states that are not linked to the affective, they are linked to other faculties of mind. Hence, we don't think of them as evaluative assertions.

The second idea in GE concerns truth-aptness. It seems reasonable to assume *Inheritance* (see Schroeder 2007):

> *Inheritance*: Assertions inherit their content and logical features (including truth-aptness) from the mental states that get manifested in their utterance or contemplation.

Given *Inheritance*, if all assertions express non-truth-apt mental states then no assertion has propositional content or is truth-apt. That would be a disaster for GE. The standard response that expressivists take to the issue of value-sentence truth-aptness is to distinguish between substantial assertions and minimal assertions. Substantial assertions obey *Inheritance*. They gain their truth-aptness and assertoric status from expressed beliefs, which are signs for facts. However, value-utterances only have minimal assertoric status and truth-aptness in virtue of meeting certain use-conditions, the latter being that these sentences are *W*-embeddable (see §1). It's because we *W*-embed value-sentences that, despite expressing desires, they are minimally truth-apt and assertoric (see Sinclair 2012).

There are two problems with this proposal. First, it assumes that there is a tenable conception of truth-aptness for sentences with substantial truth-conditions based on the idea

that truth-aptness is definable by representation. We have already shown in §1-2 this is doubtful. Secondly, we have also seen that a ***Wright***-style account of truth-aptness in terms of ***W***-embedding is problematic. So GE cannot adopt it.

GE's alternative proposal is to deny ***Inheritance***. All assertions express non-truth-apt Π-states, as indicated. However, the truth-aptness of the assertions comes not from the mental states being expressed but rather from the nature of expressing itself. Assertions involve what I call *defensively-expressing* Π-states. As a folk-psychological gloss, defensive-expression is production of a sentence with the goal of manifesting reasons for an expressed mental state. We shall characterize *defensive-expression* below (§4).

Assertions are truth-apt, but then so are beliefs and judgements. In the GE-framework all assertions, judgements and beliefs involve at some level defensive-expression of Π-states. That's why they are all truth-apt. Orders, questions, wishes, etc., are not truth-apt because they involve mere expression of Π-states. We can set out the program schematically in ***Fig 1***:

Fig 1

Truth-Apt	Non-Truth-Apt
Assertion - Judgement - Belief	Order – Implicature – Optative - Wish
Defensively-expressing (non-truth-apt) Π-states	Merely expressing (non-truth-apt) Π-states

In an assertion, U defensively-expresses a Π-state. In a judgement, there is a private production of symbols defensively-expressing a Π-state. In a belief there is a disposition to defensively-express a Π-state. In contrast, in non-truth apt illocutionary acts – like orders, questions, optatives and conventional implicatures – speakers merely express Π-states.[1] In desires, wishes and hopes, speakers are disposed to perform optatives (even if only sub-vocally), hence these states are not truth-apt.

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[1] I conjecture, that in adjectival uses, like 'The black cat is purring', 'black cat' involves mere expression of a Π-state, whose canonical input is perception, whereas use of 'purring' involves defensive-expression.

Beliefs and desires, in one sense, have a symbolic (linguistic) component. They involve dispositions to perform certain symbol-laden acts. But we have said that the input for Π-states expressed in such acts, both assertions and optatives, etc., include desires (motivation and affect) and perceptual states. The desires and perceptions qua input for Π-states are not symbol-laden states/acts. Call them *ur-desires* and *ur-perceptions*. These ur-states have complex behavioral, somatic, phenomenological features, and involve complex, differential responsiveness to the world. Ur-perceptions can be thought of as signs for facts. They have causal-covariation between state and reality. Ur-desires are associated with programs for action, towards getting something or removing something. However, in GE, insofar as we see them playing a role in the explanation of production of speech-acts, we don't think of them as representational. Representation has no explanatory role in the GE system, though GE does not deny there is representation. Rather, GE gives an expressivist account of what goes on in utterances about representation (see Barker 2021). There is no account of what representation is anymore than there is an account of what value is. We say more about this below in §6.

To sketch GE's program – which cannot be carried out purely by philosophy – I adopt an uncontroversial hypothesis that the mind-brain is a network of interconnected systems and sub-systems, characterized by input and output patterns, etc. The states expressed by utterances, Π-states, are sub-systems of the great network that each speaker U's mind embodies. All illocutionary acts by a given speaker U express Π-states, linked to non-cognitive states that are constituents of U's *Π-network*. Basic Π-states have various kinds of canonical input: affect, perception, etc. Π-states are compositional, though not semantically compositional, since they are not truth-apt or propositional. So, the Π-state has components corresponding to grammatical constituents, viz., files corresponding to referring terms and predicates and logical terms. Π-states also form a network. You have a network of beliefs, corresponding to assertions you are disposed to make. That belief-assertoric network is underpinned by a network of Π-states: *the Π-network*. Π-states get into the network mainly through specific pathways.

Each kind of Π-state has its inputs, that is, canonical causes, which may be motivation-affect, perception, manipulation of objects, internal process, and language-

processing. The canonical causes lead to Π-states appearing in the Π-network if the inclusion meets certain constraints. Thus, a state of affect can generate a Π-state in U's Π-network, which leads her to defensively expressing a Π-state through uttering 'Joe is good'. Activation of a perceptual state generates a Π-state that underpins utterance of 'Flag is red', or manipulation of an object activates a state, whose output is X, leading to utterance of 'Brick is solid' defensively-expressing X. However, not all utterances defensively-expressing Π-states are produced through canonical causes. Π-states can appear in the Π-network through pathways underpinning testimony or reason. Someone may tell me that Joe is good, Flag is red, or Brick is solid. In short, I can sincerely, clear-headedly assert Jane is good, but not have an affect-state, or that Flag is red but without ever having seen Flag, or that Brick is solid without having manipulated the brick.

Pathways of testimony require understanding and then epistemically trusting someone. U's understanding H depends on sub-doxastic systems that largely automatically process speech-patterns. H's claims that U means Jane is good involve H defensively-expressing a Π-state whose canonical cause is the output of H's language-processing system directed towards U's speech. That language-processing system, one might speculate, lights up a potential Π-state Σ in H's cognitive noumenon. Thus a causal pathway, corresponding to production of an assertion, is activated in a sub-system. Naturally there is a question here of what grounds the rightness of H's judgement of what U means. I won't discuss this here. (See Barker 2007, 2021.) Secondly, trust requires a system for folk-psychological attribution. One needs the concept of a trustworthy speaker. The canonical cause of H's production of 'U is trustworthy' is simply that the sub-systems underpinning H's folk-psychological and meaning-attributions assigns Σ in the Π-network. What guides that process? That's an empirical question about the sub-systems of language-agents. It's not a question for philosophical analysis.

GE is expressivist about sentences that are logical compounds. Take negation. A statement of the form 'O is not good' expresses a Π-state with the form $N[\Pi]$ whose canonical input is exclusion of the state Π in the Π-network. N is not negation. It's the causal trace of 'not' within the processing system enabling use of 'not'. For example, a functional

feature of *N* is that the system is disposed not to token, Π and *N*[Π]. This is not because it perceives a contradiction. Rather our perceiving a contradiction in 'O is good and not good', is just the fact that the Π-network won't tolerate tokening together Π and *N*[Π]. They *exclude* each other. Exclusion is not a semantic relation. It's causal. Your intuitions about logic are ultimately grounded in the causal dispositions of your cognitive-noumenon. The story we tell about other logical terms is just a variation on what we have said about negation. Detail concerning the dispositional patterns underlying use of 'either…or', 'if', or 'every' need to be supplied. But we can't do that here.

GE does not define validity or consistency. Relations of reason or entailment don't hold between Π-states. We don't find reason or consistency in the systems that govern inclusion of Π-states in the Π-network. GE gives no expressivist account of what validity is. Rather it gives an expressivist analysis of what goes on when U asserts sentences like 'That's valid' or 'That's contradictory'. Assertions of such sentences defensively-express Π-states whose inputs are outputs from sub-systems that detect relations between Π-states that underpin our claims about reason. It's up to theoretical and empirical hypothesis formation and testing to determine what these are.[2]

We are not phenomenally aware of Π-state network or the functional machinery that governs its dynamics. We are aware of sentences and words (in the head) when we token sentences and our feelings about what to assert, judge or believe. Thus feelings of what we want to say, and how we provide reasons for what we say, are explained by the dynamic architecture of the Π-network.

4. Truth-aptness and Assertion

With that picture of GE on board, we can return to truth-aptness and the concept of defensively-expressing Π-states. Consider the following sentences:

(1) Joe ought to leave.

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[2] See Barker 2004, 2007 for a speculation about what these relations are.

(2) Leave!

(3) It's desirable that Joe leaves.

(4) Oh, let Joe leave! (If only he would leave!)

(1) is standardly used to perform an assertion, (2) an order, (3) an assertion and (4) an optative. (1) and (3) are truth-apt whereas (2) and (4) are not. All these utterances involve expression of Π-states linked to affect (a desire that a person, Joe, leave). Though the kind of desire involved is slightly different in each case. But somehow utterance of (1) and (3) are truth-apt and assertoric, whereas (2) and (4) are not. How? The answer is that in the assertions speakers are defensively-expressing Π-states, whereas in the orders and optatives they are merely expressing Π-states. That's set out in the schema above. I now explain this contrast.

What's defensively-expressing? We noted that **Brandom** failed as an account of assertion but a tweaked version of it seemed promising. My tweaked version, translated into expressivist terms, is this. Assertion is an act whose goal is to express a mental state *M* and manifest a disposition/readiness to display reasons for *M*, even if U is only disposed to do so to him/herself. Contrast orders. In orders the purpose is merely to express mental states. It's not to display reasons for them. We may provide reasons for them, but that's not internal to the nature of the act of ordering. That's why assertions are truth-apt and orders not.

This analysis leads to a concern. What is the mental state *M* that we offer reasons for? If we say they are beliefs or judgements then we are assuming already truth-apt states. But it is truth-aptness, of assertions, judgements, beliefs, that we are trying to explain. To deal with this problem our theory of assertion has to descend to the level of the Π-network, posited by GE. What U manifests in an assertion is a Π-state embedded in their Π-network and a disposition to manifest relevant features of the Π-network, viz., produce sentences, linked to other Π-states whose relations we express in claims of reason.

Say U produces (1). She thereby manifests a Π-state, Γ, whose canonical cause is motivation. But U is doing more than that. The *goal* of the utterance is to show herself as primed to offer, even if only to herself, further utterances and indications manifesting other Π-states in the network in which Γ is integrated. Some of the utterances are assertions

defensively-expressing their own Π-states. Others can be non-assertions such as pointings. U may point with horror at Joe's slovenly ways. U's pointing manifests a Π-state linked to a perceptual state. The normative utterances, about rudeness, etc., have Π-states ultimately linked to affective-states.

We are not supposing in this story that audiences in interpreting U's utterance of (1), or any others, become aware of U's Π-network. They aren't. They are aware of U's sentences and gestures. In processing U's utterances aspects of their own Π-network are activated. Nor are we supposing that U or her audience are aware of their respective Π-networks. We are aware of our feelings about sentences being meaningful or appropriate or about which sentence follows from which. Moreover, in making an assertion U is not *intending* to defensively-express a Π-state. U does not have the concept of Π-state. Rather we suppose that the language system is *directed towards* doing so, where *being directed towards* is goal orientation in the sense that a praying mantis is directed towards catching some prey without having a concept of *prey*. Language activity is sub-doxastic. Our formation of intentions depends on it rather than it depending on our formation of intentions.

In sum, there is no truth-aptness at the level of the Π-network. Rather, acts of defensively expressing Π-states are truth-apt viz., acts of producing publically or privately a sentence directed towards manifesting relevant components of the Π-network in which a specific Π-state is enmeshed. Thus assertions, judgements and beliefs are truth-apt. On the other hand, the production of orders and optatives, or the disposition to produce optatives – as in wishes – just involve U expressing Π-states. In the case of orders and optatives these have affective canonical causes. But other cases they do not.

GE's treatment of the truth-aptness of assertions dovetails with an explanation of the contrast between beliefs and desires and so called *direction of fit*. Why is it that beliefs are truth-apt, whereas desires are not truth-apt? We saw that we cannot see direction of fit as residing in beliefs being signs for facts, or somehow embeddable mentalese-sentences functioning as signs for facts. In GE, beliefs are truth-apt for the reasons we have given: they involve dispositions to defensively-express Π-states. Hopes are not truth-apt, since they are not states involving defensively-expressing Π-states.

5. Proto-Assertion and Truth-apt Sentences

We have set out GE's approach to assertion and why assertions are truth-apt and orders, optatives, etc., are not. But asserted sentences are not the class of truth-apt sentences. Some unasserted declaratives embedded in logical compounds or just contemplated are truth-apt. What does their truth-aptness reside in? The answer lies in the promised concept of *proto-assertion*. Very roughly, proto-assertions are acts in which speakers engage in the behavior characteristic of speakers with the expressive goals of asserting. But there is no implication that the speaker communicates they have those goals or indeed have them. That's why they can embed.

We can understand proto-assertions by considering the habitual nature of speech. If U utters (1) above as a literal assertion, U's utterance is the end result of a mental process, which involves structured speech habits. These habits correspond to inner procedures for forming speech, given that speakers are directed towards certain communicative goals. Let's apply this idea, in very rough outline, to U's production of (1), in literal speech. We could say that underlying utterances of (1) is a *repertoire disposition* – abbreviated, **RD** – along these lines, which defines literal use of (1):

> **RD(1)**: If U's system is disposed to defensively-express Π with a sentence, she may produce *Joe ought to leave* as a result of that disposition.

So, if U is directed towards defensively-expressing Π, one of the things she is disposed to do is produce (1). Of course, with the same expressive aim, U might produce other sentences, like: 'That guy is no good'. These other sentences can be used to defensively-express Π. That's no accident. The repertoire dispositions for each sentence are generated in a systematic way from a basic set of very general speech-habits.

Repertoire dispositions are not rules for conduct sanctioned by a supposed linguistic community. They are individual dispositions in the speaker's system of speech habits. I don't propose that speakers have intentions with the content outlined above. Π-states are theoretical

entities. So just as dispositions to defensively-expressing Π-states are not folk psychological intentions – rather it's manifested phenomenologically as an impulse to express convictions – repertoire dispositions are theoretical entities in a natural explanation of speakers' linguistic-functional systems. Still we police each other's use of words. We are concerned with normatively sanctioned practice. But GE does not invoke norms in explaining language. Rather, being globally expressive, GE provides an expressivist analysis of talk of norms, viz., the kinds of states that are defensively-expressed when speakers assert claims about how speakers ought to use language.

Repertoire dispositions link expressive-dispositions to utterance outputs. Repertoire dispositions enter into the process of uttering sentences in two ways. The first way resides simply in the fact that a sentence, say (1), on a given reading, is identified by its association in U with *RD(1)*. Any utterance by U of (1), private or public, will be partly guided by *RD(1)*. If U merely entertains (1) in thought, then *RD(1)* is already activated at part of the causation behind U's inner utterance. In other words, the speech-habit *RD(1)* is part of any process leading up to U's uttering (1), whether or not U is directed towards defensively-expressing Π. Call this causal role of *RD(1)*, which is general and applies to all utterances of (1) – on a given interpretation for U – *the locutionary path*.

The second causal-role of *RD(1)* only arises in the context of sincere, clear-headed assertion. This is when U has the goal of defensively-expressing Π and produces (1) as output. Here *RD(1)* enters into the production of (1) through the locutionary path – we have already described – but also U is directed-towards defensively-expressing Π, that being the goal of the utterance.

It's the first causal role of *RD(1)*, common to all utterances, which is used to define the functional core of proto-assertion, as follows:

> Proto-assertion of (1) comprises utterance of (1) guided by *RD(1)* through the
> *locutionary path*.

So, an embedded utterance of (1) is an utterance of (1) in a proto-assertion, that is, an utterance of (1) wherein *RD(1)* is a key mental antecedent of the utterance.

The proto-act structure described is common to both self-standing utterances and embedded utterances. Moreover, proto-illocutionary acts carry a *trace* of its associated illocutionary act. That means the proto-assertion is an utterance produced through the repertoire disposition for an assertion; a proto-order is an utterance produced through the repertoire disposition for an order. It is illocutionary-act specific. There is no force-content separation on the view we are proposing. Yes, there are different illocutionary acts, like assertions and orders. But differences between illocutionary acts are not explained by the idea of different *forces* added to propositions. FCD is repudiated.

Proto-assertions are the neutral act that appears in the utterance of both embedded and asserted sentences. Our sense that there is a common content in both assertions of *S* and embedding of *S* is grounded in the common act performed in both cases: the proto-assertion. Consider the embedding of (1) in (5):

(5) If Joe ought to leave, Pang ought to leave.

In (5), utterance of (1) has **RD(1)** as its key mental antecedent. Being directed to defensively-express Π isn't part of the cause of utterance of (1) in (5). So U is not asserting (1) embedded in (5). Utterance of the whole conditional (5), involves expressing a Π-state whose canonical cause is the output of a processing system, one that underpins our capacity to intuitive inferential relations. So an audience accepts (5) if they intuit that there is an inference from 'Joe ought to leave' to 'Pang ought to leave'.

Schematically, we can represent the structures underpinning speech acts of sincere, clear-headed assertion, insincere assertion, embedding and fictional utterance in *Fig 2*:

Fig 2

Sincere Assertion	Insincere Assertion	Embedding	Fictive Assertion
U proto-asserts. Signals: Defensive-expressive purpose. Has this purpose.	(Pretense 1) U proto-asserts. Signals: Defensive-expressive purpose. Lacks this purpose.	(No Pretense) U proto-asserts. Signals lacks: Defensive-expressive purpose. Lacks any such purpose.	(Pretense II) U proto-asserts. Signals lacks: Defensive-expressive purpose. Pretending to be an assertor or hearer.

The notion of signalling is somewhat technical (see Barker 2007). Speakers don't communicate in a folk-psychological sense that they are defensively-expressing Π-states since Π-states are sub-doxastic. But they engage in activity that is processed, sub-doxastically by others, and which is interpreted, at the folk-psychological level, as the speaker being sincere or displaying certainty. Insincere assertions involve pretense. Embedding does not involve pretense. Fictional pretense involves speaker and audience imagining they are tellers and hearers. No such imagining goes on in embedding. Embedding just involves uttering *S* performing a proto-assertion and signalling that defensive-expression is not a cause of the utterance. On the folk level this is communicating there is no belief manifested in the utterance. The judgement that U is making an assertion is itself an expressive judgment.

Proto-assertions are not assertions. But proto-asserted sentences are not force-less sentences representing states-of-affairs. A proto-assertion is defined by a repertoire disposition for assertion, not for ordering or for questioning. So *conceptually* proto-assertion are dependent on assertion. Force-less sentences representing states-of-affairs are not conceptually dependent on assertion. In GE, you don't get an assertion by adding a force (*tropic* in Hare's 1971 sense) to a proto-assertion. Rather in the proto-assertion U engages in the behavior characteristic of someone with a defensive-expressive goal and in an assertion U does the same thing but has the defensive-expressive goal. (The defensive-expressive goal appearing in the assertion, which is associated with the proto-assertion is *akin* to the *neustic* force in Hare's (1971) sense.)

We can now answer our question: what are the truth-apt sentences? The answer is that they are sentences produced in proto-assertions that are *assertion-ready*. We have explained proto-assertion. What is being *assertion-ready*? Utterance of (1) in (5) is an assertion-ready proto-assertion. The proto-act, given its interpretation, is ready to be used in an assertion. All that's required is that U in fact has the defensive-expressive goal. Now contrast the following:

(6) I hereby name this ship *Pinafore*.

(7) You will be on that train tomorrow at 6am.

(8) Jack is such a genius.

(6) to (8) all involve proto-assertions but they have non-assertoric interpretations. That means U that in performing the proto-assertions U also performs a non-assertoric proto-act with the sentence. So in uttering (6) U performs a proto-assertion but also a proto-performative. U presents themselves as having the goal of naming a ship, and in a sincere utterance, has that goal. Given this performative interpretation, the proto-assertion is not *assertion ready* since its performative interpretation blocks its use in an assertion. In (7) and (8), U performs proto-assertions, but uses those proto-assertions to perform non-assertoric proto-acts – a proto-order with (7) and a proto-ironic utterance with (8) – which block assertion. Hence they are not assertion ready.

Sentences produced in assertion-ready proto-assertions are the truth-apt sentences. In GE grammatical mood is the linguistic device that signals the kind of proto-act being performed. The declarative mood is the invariant *indicator* that the speaker is performing a proto-assertion with the sentence.[3] But, of course, since proto-assertions have different uses, the declarative does not signal that sentence is truth-apt or being asserted, as we have seen.

What's truth and why restricted to assertion-ready proto-assertions? In GE, truth is not successful representation, correspondence, or coherence. Nor are we accepting minimalism, according to which truth is the property defined by the (supposed) infinite set of T-sentences (Horwich 2005). Rather, the explication of truth comes by looking at the expressive role of the term 'true'. The truth-predicate, as with all predicates, receives an expressivist analysis:

> In producing '*S* is true' U defensively-expresses a Π-state Σ whose canonical cause is a disposition to use an assertion-ready proto-assertion in a self-standing act.

It follows trivially from this characterization that truth-aptness is restricted to assertion-ready proto-acts, be they embedded or in assertions. However, this restriction is not unmotivated.

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[3] We can treat this indicating as representing. But mood is not truth-conditional, since, as already argued, representing how things are is not truth-conditional (see Barker 2004). See Schmitz (manuscript) for a somewhat different framework in which mood is representational.

Truth-ascription is linked to what we are willing to assert. The current proposal reflects this fact. What you are willing to assert are assertion-ready proto-assertions.

Truth – *pace* Hanks – is not a kind of correctness (see §2). Assertion correctness has truth as one component. Hypotheses can be true but that's not an aspect of their correctness qua hypotheses. One judges a hypothesis correct just in case one is willing to entertain it, viz., it meets certain conditions of consistency with currently accepted statements. One then has no objection to entertaining the proto-act and seeing what follows from it. Hypotheses are assertion-ready proto-assertions and so truth-apt but their truth is not correctness.

6. Truth-Conditions and Interpretation

GE's account of truth-aptness leaves us with a rather pressing question concerning representation. If Π-states and canonical causes are not representational, how do sentences get representational content? GE does not deny there is representation. All proto-illocutionary acts are representational. GE just denies representation explains truth-aptness. Assertions have truth-conditions and orders have fulfilment conditions. But this content does not percolate upward from Π-states. There is no naturalistic account of what representation is (see Kripke 1981). GE then looks to expressivism about representation.

GE offers an expressivist treatment of what goes on when we assign representational content, truth-conditions, or fulfilment conditions to utterances. Thus an assignment of truth-conditions to (1) looks like this:

(9) In H's judgement that (1) means Joe ought to leave, U defensively-expresses a Π-state Σ whose canonical cause is output from H's language-processing system.

(9) appeals to the language-processing system of U. It's not an a priori philosophical task to work out how this system works. It's a task for empirical theory. In this sense GE is inherently programmatic as philosophy. According to GE's program, in interpreting U's utterance, H's system activates the locutionary path for production of a sentence with some

particular Π–state is. This is the activity pattern that would be launched if H issued a statement that (from H's perspective) means the same as U's statement.

We might in some future theoretical development of GE, fully characterize H's cognitive noumenon and fully reveal H's Π-network, and sub-systems, and so on. But even then, we could not side-step interpretation and on the basis along of knowledge of H's cognitive noumenon assign meaning to H's words. Rather, it's only by inhabiting our own interpretative stances – animated by our own language-processing systems – that we discern meaning and can affirm what H means: 'H means Joe ought to leave'. Meaning is irreducibly interpretative. We can characterize the systems that are in place enabling production of meaningful words and underpinning our interpretative stance and attributions of meaning. But meaning is not a natural object in the world subject to causal/dispositional analysis. Thus, GE does not give us a theory of what constitutes having specific truth-conditions or fulfilment conditions. Rather it gives us an expressivist analysis of utterances in which we attribute such contents.

To conclude, global expressivism (GE) provides a framework in which we can make sense of truth-apt sentences. There is no hint of FCD (§1) in this framework. However, GE is qua philosophy of language programmatic. GE's goal is to provide a conceptual framework in terms of which empirical research into the nature of a language agent can be carried out.

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